

# 2 Timothy 2:24-26 Commentary

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## ENDURANCE AND SEPARATION IN THE MINISTRY

Click chart to enlarge

Charts from [Jensen's Survey of the NT](#) - used by permission

[Second Timothy](#) - Swindoll

| 2 TIMOTHY                                         |                                                        |                                                        |                                                  |
|---------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| 2 Timothy 1:1-18                                  | 2 Timothy 2:1-26                                       | 2 Timothy 3:1-17                                       | 2 Timothy 4:1-22                                 |
| Retain<br>the Standard                            | Rightly<br>Divide the Word                             | Difficult Times<br>Will Come                           | Preach<br>the Word                               |
| PAST                                              | PRESENT                                                | FUTURE                                                 |                                                  |
| Foundation of<br>Christian Service                | Pictures of<br>Christian Servant                       | Dangerous Times for<br>Christian Servant               | Commission of<br>Christian Servant               |
| Unashamed as a<br>Witness:<br>Guard<br>the Gospel | Unashamed as a<br>Workman:<br>Suffer for<br>the Gospel | Adequate as a<br>Workman:<br>Continue in<br>the Gospel | Awarded as a<br>Workman:<br>Preach<br>the Gospel |
| Power of<br>the Gospel                            | Perseverance of the Gospel<br>Message                  | Protection of<br>the Gospel                            | Proclamation of<br>the Gospel                    |
| Reminder                                          | Requirements                                           | Resistance                                             | Requests                                         |

|                              |                          |                             |                                     |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Encouragement<br>in Ministry | Examples<br>in Ministry  | Exhortations<br>in Ministry | Exhortations<br>to Fulfill Ministry |
| Commendation<br>& Charge     | Commission<br>to Fulfill | Conflict<br>to Face         | Course<br>to Finish                 |

Compiled from Jensen's Survey of the NT and Wilkinson's Talk Thru the Bible

2 Timothy 2:24 The **Lord's bond-servant must (3SPA1) not be quarrelsome (PMN), but be (PAN) kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged**, ([NASB: Lockman](#))

**Greek:** [doulon de kuriou ou dei \(3SPA1\) machesthai \(PMN\) alla epion einai \(PAN\) pros pantas. didaktikon. anexikakon,](#)

**Amplified:** And the servant of the Lord must not be quarrelsome (fighting and contending). Instead, he must be kindly to everyone and mild-tempered [preserving the bond of peace]; he must be a skilled and suitable teacher, patient and forbearing and willing to suffer wrong. ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

**KJV:** And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient,

**NLT:** The Lord's servants must not quarrel but must be kind to everyone. They must be able to teach effectively and be patient with difficult people. ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

**Phillips:** And the Lord's servant must not be a man of strife: he must be kind to all, ready and able to teach: he must have patience ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

**Wuest:** And the Lord's bondservant must not in the nature of the case quarrel but be gentle to all, skillful in teaching, forbearing, ([Eerdmans Publishing](#) - used [by permission](#))

**Young's Literal:** and a servant of the Lord it behoveth not to strive, but to be gentle unto all, apt to teach, patient under evil,

#### AND THE LORD'S BONDSERVANT: doulon de kuriou:

- Dt 34:5; Josh 1:1; 2Chr 24:6; Da 6:20; 1Ti 6:11; Titus 1:1; 3:2; James 1:1
- 2 Timothy Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [2 Timothy 2:23-26 The Gentle Art of Correction](#) - Steven Cole
- [2 Timothy 2:23-26 An Honorable Vessel, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur

The concept of **bondservant** is not just a New Testament concept...

Dt 34:5+ — So Moses the **servant** of the LORD died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the LORD.

Joshua 1:1+ — Now it came about after the death of Moses the **servant** of the LORD that the LORD spoke to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' servant, saying

Josh 24:29+ It came about after these things that Joshua the son of Nun, the **servant** (Lxx = **doulos**) of the LORD, died, being one hundred and ten years old. (**Oh, to die known as a doulos of God!!!**)

Da 6:20+ — And when he had come near the den to Daniel, he cried out with a troubled voice. The king spoke and said to Daniel, "Daniel, **servant** of the living God, has your God, whom you constantly serve, been able to deliver you from the lions?"

**Paul** is not calling Timothy (or us) to be something he was not willing to be for in his opening passage to Titus he wrote...

**Titus 1:1+** — Paul, a **bond-servant** of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the faith of those chosen of God and the knowledge of the truth which is according to (or leads to) godliness

Even the Lord's brother **James** understood the importance of his role as a bondservant writing....

**James 1:1+** — James, a **bond-servant** of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes who are

dispersed abroad, greetings.

**Spurgeon** comments that in these last section "We have here laid down, then, the duty of the Christian minister, and the duty of each Christian, too, and let us seek, in the Holy Spirit's grace, to carry it out, being at once firm, and gentle, and loving of heart, and yet honest for the truth as it is in Jesus.

**Morris** writes "We should not minimize the force of **bondservant**'. It does not mean a person who is paid wages and who has a considerable area of freedom. It means a **slave**." But praise God believers have a Benevolent Master Who always seeks our good and His glory.

**Bondservant** (1401) (**doulos**) (**Click** word study of **doulos**) describes one who is bound to another or in the state of being completely controlled by another, in the present context describing one not controlled by the old flesh nature that desires to quarrel but the new nature that is submitted to and controlled by the Holy Spirit.

**Doulos** conveys the picture of the absolute surrender to ones' master to whom he or she gives total devotion.

**THOUGHT-** Does this definition of a "vessel of honor" describe you beloved?

Originally **doulos** described a person who had no personal freedom, one whose will was totally subordinated to that of another person. Such persons were forever "on duty," with no free time or personal life.

In the writings of the Stoics **doulos** was applied to religious service and sadly many religious slaves were tied to the temple in a pitiful life of prostitution. Wherever **doulos** is found in Greek literature, it speaks of a despised class of slaves, whose lives were not their own.

When the Hebrew Old Testament was translated into Greek (Septuagint LXX), **doulos** word was also used to describe Israel's slavery in Egypt. Though the Jews had felt the harsh discipline of slavery, they later also held slaves. However, when Jews enslaved other Jews (for debt), those slaves had to be released after six years (Ex 21:5) or in the Year of Jubilee (Lev. 25:30), whichever came first. Once, believers also were the bondservants of the harsh master, **Sin**, but now we are the slaves of righteousness (Ro 6:11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17-see notes Ro 6:11, Ro 6:12-14, Ro 6:15-17) and the source of that righteousness, the Righteous One Himself. And so like the OT bond-servants in Exodus who were set free...all believers today can declare "**I love my master** (Jesus)...**I will not go out as a free man** (or woman)" (Ex 21:5)

**John Calvin** claimed that "No one gives himself freely and willingly to God's service unless, having tasted His Fatherly love, he [the Christian] is drawn to love and worship Him in return."

**Freedom in Christ is not the right to do as one pleases but the power to please God by doing what is right**-- this is the power His bond-servants possess. Stated another way, we become really "free" only by subjecting our own will to the will of another, One Who is always the perfect Master. And the paradox is that we now as believers achieve self-control by letting ourselves be Savior controlled! **Are you free indeed?** When the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed!

The use of **doulos** by the NT writers emphasizes their acknowledgement that they are no longer their own but that they have been bought at great price (1Cor 6:29). Paul recognized this new relationship and frequently called himself a **bond-servant of Christ Jesus** (**Click these occurrences**).

However, lest we be lulled into a sense of false security, we would be wise to remember that the Lord's bondservants do not have an easy time teaching the Word. Satan opposes and tries to trap the listeners (2Ti 2:26) and some people are naturally difficult to teach. Others would rather feed on "foolish and ignorant speculations" (see note 2 Timothy 2:23) and have little or no desire to feed on the pure milk of the Word (which is the **ONLY** way spiritual babes grow in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ - 1Pe 2:2-note) Until you have experienced resistance to His Word, you will have no idea how difficult it can be to impart spiritual truth. How easy it would be to ignore those who are resistant! Paul admonished Timothy to avoid the arguments that create strife, **but not** to ignore the people. It is not enough just to expose error and refute it, for if would seek to imitate our Lord, we must also teach sound doctrine by which the saints will become firmly established in the faith.

**Barclay** has excellent notes on **doulos** in several of his commentaries, the first being in the Second Letter to Peter...

- (i) To call the Christian the **doulos of God** (**Ed**: Christ) means that he is inalienably possessed by God. In the ancient world a master possessed his slaves in the same sense as he possessed his tools. A servant can change his master; but a slave cannot. The Christian inalienably belongs to God.
- (ii) To call the Christian the **doulos of God** means that he is unqualifiedly at the disposal of God. In the ancient world the master could do what he liked with his slave; he had even the power of life and death over him. The Christian has no rights of his own, for all his rights are surrendered to God.

(iii) To call the Christian the **doulos of God** means that he owes an unquestioning obedience to God. A master's command was a slave's only law in ancient times. In any situation the Christian has but one question to ask: "Lord, what will you have me do?" The command of God is his only law.

(iv) To call the Christian the **doulos of God** means that he must be constantly in the service of God. In the ancient world the slave had literally no time of his own, no holidays, no leisure. All his time belonged to his master. The Christian cannot, either deliberately or unconsciously, compartmentalize life into the time and activities which belong to God, and the time and activities in which he does what he likes. The Christian is necessarily the man every moment of whose time is spent in the service of God. ([2 Peter 1 - William Barclay's Daily Study Bible](#))

In the letter to the Romans, **Barclay** comments on **doulos**

(i) He (Paul) calls himself the slave (doulos) of Jesus Christ. In this word slave there are two backgrounds of thought.

(a) Paul's favourite title for Jesus is Lord (kurios). In Greek the word kurios describes someone who has undisputed possession of a person or a thing. It means master or owner in the most absolute sense. The opposite of Lord (kurios) is slave (doulos). Paul thought of himself as the slave of Jesus Christ, his Master and his Lord. Jesus had loved him and given himself for him, and therefore Paul was sure that he no longer belonged to himself, but entirely to Jesus. On the one side slave describes the utter obligation of love.

(b) But slave (doulos) has another side to it. In the Old Testament it is the regular word to describe the great men of God. Moses was the doulos of the Lord (Joshua 1:2). Joshua was the doulos of God (Joshua 24:29 - Lxx = **doulos**). The proudest title of the prophets, the title which distinguished them from other men, was that they were the slaves of God (Amos 3:7 = Lxx = **doulos**; Jeremiah 7:25 = Lxx = **doulos**). When Paul calls himself the slave of Jesus Christ he is setting himself in the succession of the prophets. Their greatness and their glory lay in the fact that they were slaves of God, and so did his. ([Romans 1 - William Barclay's Daily Study Bible](#))

In the letter to James **Barclay** comments on **doulos**

At the very beginning of his letter James describes himself by the title wherein lies his only honour and his only glory, the slave of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ. With the exception of Jude he is the only New Testament writer to describe himself by that term (doulos) without any qualification. Paul describes himself as the slave of Jesus Christ and his apostle (Romans 1:1; Philippians 1:1). But James will go no further than to call himself the slave of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ. There are at least four implications in this title.

(i) **It implies absolute obedience.** The slave knows no law but his master's word; he has no rights of his own; he is the absolute possession of his master; and he is bound to give his master unquestioning obedience.

(ii) **It implies absolute humility.** It is the word of a man who thinks not of his privileges but of his duties, not of his rights but of his obligations. It is the word of the man who has lost his self in the service of God.

(iii) **It implies absolute loyalty.** It is the word of the man who has no interests of his own, because what he does, he does for God. His own profit and his own preference do not enter into his calculations; his loyalty is to him.

(iv) **Yet, at the back of it, this word implies a certain pride.** (Ed: Surely Barclay does not mean fleshly pride but godly pride) So far from being a title of dishonour it was the title by which the greatest ones of the Old Testament were known. Moses was the doulos of God (1 Kings 8:53; Daniel 9:11; Malachi 4:4); so were Joshua and Caleb (Joshua 24:29; Numbers 14:24); so were the great patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Deuteronomy 9:27); so was Job (Job 1:8); so was Isaiah (Isaiah 20:3); and doulos is distinctively the title by which the prophets were known (Amos 3:7; Zechariah 1:6; Jeremiah 7:25). By taking the title doulos James sets himself in the great succession of those who found their freedom and their peace and their glory in perfect submission to the will of God. The only greatness to which the Christian can ever aspire is that of being the slave of God. ([James 1 - William Barclay's Daily Study Bible](#))

**Mabel Williamson** was a missionary to China who powerfully described the sacrifice of **her rights** to a normal standard of living, ordinary safeguards of health, private affairs, marriage, and even a home life. She was human like you and I and thus just like us she struggled with suffering and self-denial and the fact that she had to give up so many of what she thought were her "rights". But she finally came to the conclusion that part of serving and becoming like her Master Christ was becoming like **one who had not rights**, as epitomized by the picture of a **bond-servant**. In her book [Have We No Right? \(BORROW\)](#) she wrote the following poem

## He Had No Rights

He had no rights

No right to a soft bed, and a well-laid table.

No right to a home of His own, a place where His own pleasure might be sought.

No right to choose pleasant, congenial companions, those who could understand Him and sympathize with Him.

No right to shrink away from filth and sin, to pull His garments closer around Him and turn aside to walk in cleaner paths.

No right to be understood and appreciated; no, not by those upon whom He had poured out a double portion of His love.

No right even never to be forsaken by His Father, the One who meant more than all to Him.

His only right was silently to endure shame, spitting, blows; to take His place as a sinner at the dock; to bear my sins in anguish on the cross.

He had no rights. And I?

A right to the "comforts" of life? No, but a right to the love of God for my pillow.

A right to physical safety? No, but a right to the security of being in His will.

A right to love and sympathy from those around me? No, but a right to the friendship of the One who understands me better than I do myself.

A right to be a leader among men? No, but the right to be led by the One to whom I have given my all, led as is a little child, with its hand in the hand of its father.

A right to a home, and dear ones? No, not necessarily, but a right to dwell in the heart of God.

A right to myself? No, but oh, I have a right to Christ.

All that He takes I will give. All that He gives I will take.

He, my only right! He, the one right before which all other rights fade into nothingness.

I have full right to Him.

Oh, may He have full right to me!

Read the following lines again as you ask yourself, as I am sure Timothy did, "Am I truly a bond-servant of Jesus? Can I honestly say..."

**All that He takes I will give.**

**All that He gives I will take.**

**He, my only right!**

**MUST NOT BE QUARRELSOME: ou dei (3SPA) machesthai (PMN):**

- Mt 12:19; Acts 15:2; 2Cor 10:4; Phil 2:3,14; 1Ti 3:3; Titus 1:7; Jas 1:19,20; Jude 1:3
- Jn 6:52; Acts 7:26; 23:9; Jas 4:2
- 2 Timothy Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [2 Timothy 2:23-26 The Gentle Art of Correction](#) - Steven Cole
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## OUR OBLIGATION: NOT ARGUMENTATIVE

**2Co 10:4** (Why should we not be quarrelsome?) for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses.

**James 1:19-20** This you know, my beloved brethren. But let everyone be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger; for the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God.

Remember that an **argument** is the longest distance between two points of view.

As **Spurgeon** wrote "Better keep out of a quarrel than fight your way through it. We never do much for truth or goodness by getting angry about it. Whenever a man debates about the truth, and loses his temper, he has also lost his cause. I have heard of one who knew little of true religion, who watched a missionary and a Brahmin disputing, and he decided that the missionary was in the right; when he was asked why he thought so, he said, "Because he kept cool, and the other man flew into a passion." Although that may not always be a good test of the truth of the matter in question, it certainly is a good test of how the dispute is going.

**Must** (1163) (**dei** from **deo** = to bind) means that it is necessary (binding) or needful. **Dei** is an obligation out of intrinsic necessity or inevitability. It describes an action which is inevitable in the nature of things. To avoid this reaction is a **must** for **anger** is only one letter from **danger**.

Someone has said it well that "An angry man is seldom reasonable; a reasonable man is seldom angry, because anger is a feeling that makes your mouth work faster than your mind.

**Spurgeon** wrote that "Men can with a few hasty words set loose a torrent of anger and uncharitableness, and cause the sweeping away of much good service and sweet fellowship, but who shall rule, restrain, or call back the raging flood. Anger does a man more hurt than that which made him angry. It opens his mouth and shuts his eyes and fires his heart and drowns his sense and makes his wisdom folly.

**Present tense** calls for the **doulos** to continually be inwardly constrained. As a lifestyle the Lord's bondservant must daily, moment by moment make the volitional choice (active voice - not my will but my Master's) trusting on His empowerment by the Holy Spirit to not quarrel or fight with words. Note however that Paul is not saying the Lord's bondservant should allow obvious false teaching to go unopposed.

**Not (ou)** conveys the meaning of absolute negation. This is **never** to be a bondservant's attitude. **How are you doing dear servant of the Most High God?**

For **quarrelsome** the Amplified renders it **not fighting and contending**.

**Quarrelsome** (3164) (**machomai**) means to war, quarrel, dispute fight or strive. This word describes a serious conflict, either physical (especially military combat as with armed combatants who engage in a hand to hand struggle) or non-physical, but clearly intensive and bitter. It was used of those of those who contend at law for property and privileges.

**Machomai** in secular Greek is used to describe a wind of such high intensity that it leveled everything in its path, much like a hurricane. The servant of the Lord must not engage in a "war of words" and "blow away" those who block his path in one way or another.

**Machomai** is used 4 times in the NASB (John 6:52; Acts 7:26; 2Ti 2:24; Jas 4:2) and is translated: argue, 1; fight, 1; fighting together, 1; quarrelsome, 1

Upon hearing **Jesus'** statement that they must eat His flesh "The Jews therefore began to **argue** (**machomai**) with one another, saying, "How can this man give us His flesh to eat? (Jn 6:52)

In the section of **Stephen's** sermon describing Moses actions in Egypt, he recalls that "On the following day he appeared to them as they were **fighting** together, and he tried to reconcile them in peace, saying, 'Men, you are brethren, why do you injure one another (Acts 7:26)

**James** uses **machomai** writing "You lust and do not have; so you commit murder. You are envious and cannot obtain; so you fight and **quarrel**. You do not have because you do not ask. (James 4:2) **Warren Wiersbe** comments on this use in James writing that this shows that "The **wars among us** are caused by the **wars within us**. We want to please ourselves, even if it hurts somebody else. ([With the Word](#))

**Machomai** is used 19 times in the **Septuagint (LXX)** (Gen. 26:20, 22; 31:36; Exod. 21:22; Lev. 24:10; Deut. 25:11; Jos. 9:18; Jdg. 11:25; 2 Sam. 14:6; 2 Ki. 3:23; 2 Chr. 27:5; Neh. 5:7; 13:11, 17, 25; Song 1:6; Isa. 27:8; 28:20; Jer. 33:5) where the military meaning predominates.

Once again the ministry of the church will have ceased  
While we quarrel over the Prince of Peace.

**Ray Stedman** comments that "The Lord's servant must not be an argumentative, pejorative, belligerent type of person who is ready to come out with guns blazing. There are many people like that who shoot from the lip, always ready for an argument. But the Lord's servant is not out to win arguments; he is not out to squash the opposition or silence dissent by overbearing, heavy-handed approaches. Rather, he is there to encourage discussion and examination. He does not put down opponents or resort to name-calling or diatribe. He is not argumentative, not contentious. ([2 Timothy 2:23-26 Guidelines for Controversies](#))

**Barnes** writes the following of the **Lord's bondservant** "He may calmly inquire after truth; he may discuss points of morals, or theology, if he will do it with a proper spirit; he may "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints," (Jude 1:3;) but he may not do that which is here mentioned as strife. The Greek word-- machomai --commonly denotes, to fight to make war, to contend....The meaning is, that the servant of Christ should be a man of peace. He should not indulge in the feelings which commonly give rise to contention, and which commonly characterize it. He should not struggle for mere victory, even when endeavouring to maintain truth; but should do this, in all cases, with a kind spirit, and a mild temper; with entire candor; with nothing designed to provoke and irritate an adversary; and so that, whatever may be the result of the discussion, "the bond of peace" may, if possible, be preserved. Comp. See [see note Romans 12:18]. (Albert Barnes. Barnes NT Commentary)

**Charles Spurgeon** warned against being the **Lord's bondservant** being one who goes "about with theological revolvers in their ecclesiastical trousers."

**Oswald Chambers** wrote that "No one damns like a theologian, nor is any quarrel so bitter as a religious quarrel."

Do not quarrel. It is possible to disagree without quarreling.

**Jewish Proverb** - Quarrels are the weapons of the weak.

#### **No Time for Kicking**

A horse can't pull while kicking.

This fact we merely mention.

And he can't kick while pulling,

Which is our chief contention.

Let's imitate the good old horse

And lead a life that's fitting;

Just pull an honest load, and then

There'll be no time for kicking.

#### **--Bits and Pieces**

**Not quarrelsome** does not mean we are not to defend the integrity for the faith...

Jude 1:3 Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.

**Steven Cole** writes that...

You can't effectively correct if you are antagonistic. The most effective correction takes place when the other person knows that you love and care for him. If you go to "set him straight" or "prove that he's wrong," but do not show genuine concern for him, he will probably not adopt the viewpoint that you're arguing for, even if it is biblical.

Also, you must determine before you go to the other person that you will not get into an argument, because often the one in sin will counter by attacking you or your motives. If you allow yourself to be drawn into that kind of quarrel, you cannot be effective in the ministry of correction. You can be firm and unwavering without raising your voice or losing your temper. This applies also to husbands and wives. You can talk with your mate about a problem that concerns his or her behavior without yelling, arguing, name calling, or attacking. In fact, these things are sin because they do not stem from biblical love. (Read his entire excellent sermon [2 Timothy 2:23-26 The Gentle Art of Correction](#))

The **NIV Application Commentary** - Fred Heeren, author of Show Me God, has engaged in stimulating dialogues with scientists with a secular viewpoint. He recently said, "If I've found any one thing to be key in getting through to skeptics today, this is it ... Have an attitude of gentleness and respect toward unbelievers and their views. Put negatively, the greatest single turn-off for skeptics is the Christian who sets up an us-versus-them argument between Christianity and science."

**John Angell James** in his 1828 publication **Christian Love** (or the Influence of Religion upon Temper) wrote...

Christian Love would soften the harshness, and remove the bitterness, of CONTROVERSY. We are not enemies to well-conducted controversy. As long as the truth is attacked—it must be defended; and as long as error exists—it must be assailed. To give up the truth for the sake of peace, is a conspiracy against the Bible, and establishing a covenant with the enemies of the Lord. Not an iota of God's Word must be surrendered to error and infidelity. We must "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints," and resist, if need be—unto imprisonment, torture, and death. A hollow, fawning, indulgent spirit—which would conciliate the friendship of men who are in rebellion to the Scriptures—by giving up, or treating lightly, any of their contents, has the curse of heaven upon it...

It is highly probable that all controversy will never cease, until truth stands revealed amid the light of eternity. But there will come a period, when men will discuss their differences in the spirit of brotherly affection; when perhaps, there will be fewer points unsettled, and those few will be debated with toleration and mutual esteem. Too many, in their disputations about religion, contend for truth, until they have destroyed love; and even, in reference to the former, present it in so mutilated a form, as to deprive it of much of its own engaging beauty.

**Luther's prayer should be presented by all—**

From frivolous, fruitless controversies, good Lord, deliver us!"

It is well observed by an old writer, that

Disputations in religion are sometimes necessary—but always dangerous; drawing the best spirits into the head from the heart, and either leaving it empty of all, or too full of fleshly zeal and passion, if extraordinary care be not taken still to supply and fill it anew with pious affection towards God, and love towards man.

There is no case in which good men are more under the power of the deceitfulness of the heart, than when engaged in religious controversy; and when, under the idea that they are only "contending earnestly for the faith," they indulge in all kinds of unhallowed tempers, dip their pens in gall, deliberately write, as deliberately print, and no less deliberately justify, the bitterest sarcasms—the severest irony—the most railing accusations—the grossest misrepresentations—the most uncharitable surmises. In short, when, as the controversy is about religion—a circumstance which ought to produce a spirit directly the reverse—there is no degree of abuse, reviling, and defamation, to which they do not have recourse. Such has been too often the tone of religious controversy, and by which it would seem as if the graces were mere heathen courtesans, in whose company a Christian should blush to be found; while 'the furies' were so many personifications of holy zeal, whose assistance is to be solicited in the support of truth.

Oh, what a handle has the spirit of angry controversy given to infidels against the whole system of Christianity! They have fought against Christianity with poisoned arrows, and the gall of furious church squabbles has supplied the venom in which they have dipped their sarcasms, ironies, and jests. It is high time that the apostle's exhortation should be practically remembered—"Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words, and slander, as well as all types of malicious behavior." All who contend for the faith should remember Paul's advice to Timothy—

"And the Lord's servant must not quarrel; instead, he must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful. Those who oppose him he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth." 2 Tim. 2:24-25.

"For man's anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires." James 1:20

Let any one read this chapter, and say if it be possible to justify the spirit in which contentions for the truth are generally carried on. Let it not be pleaded that we are commanded to 'rebuke sharply', as if this furnished an apology for uncharitableness; for duties cannot be in opposition to each other, and therefore even this must be performed in a manner that is compatible with meekness and love. Unfortunately, the spirit of harsh embittered controversy is as popular as it is sinful—those pugnacious disputers, by whom it is carried on, are generally the leaders of a party, which thinks itself happy in a representative who with his shield can defend them, and with his tremendous sword can vanquish their enemies—and thus lead them on to victory and supremacy. It would be amusing, if it were not too serious a matter for entertainment, to hear how these people exult in the exploits of their 'formidable Hercules'; and to see how securely they repose under the protection of his fearsome and far-reaching club. What deep disgrace is it upon the professors and teachers of the religion of the lowly Savior, to suppose that his doctrines and his precepts require the aid of sinful and unhallowed passions to give them effect. (John Angell James. Christian Love)

## BUT KIND TO ALL: alla epion einai (PAN) pros pantas:

- Isa 40:11; 2Cor 10:1; Gal 5:22; 1Thes 2:7; Titus 3:2; Jas 3:17; 1Pet 3:8
- 2 Timothy Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [2 Timothy 2:23-26 The Gentle Art of Correction](#) - Steven Cole
- [2 Timothy 2:23-26 An Honorable Vessel, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur

Amplified = "mild-tempered [preserving the bond of peace]"

**But** - Note the contrast. With what is kind contrasted? Notice also that one behavior/attitude proceeds from the fallen flesh (quarrelsome) but the other proceeds (and is only possible) from one who is filled with the Holy Spirit. To be kind is to be like Jesus and to be like Jesus we must walk as He walked, filled with and empowered by the Spirit (Lk 4:1, 14, Acts 10:38, Gal 5:22). In short the Lord's bondservant must continually be filled with the Spirit (Eph 5:18), continually walking in the power of the Spirit (Gal 5:16). Stated another way, it is not possible to be kind to all (all the time) relying on our natural (old Adam) ability. It is only possible supernaturally, as we daily jettison self-reliance, choosing as an act of our will to rely wholly on the Holy Spirit. Would you say you have generally been quarrelsome or kind this past day or week? All God's children are to be His bondservants and should order their steps in accord with these exhortations (negative - don't quarrel, positive - be kind). How are doing dearly beloved slave of the Lord?

**Kind** (2261) (**epios**) is one who is placid (serenely free of interruption or disturbance), gentle, mild, easy, compliant (like a nursing mother see below in 1Thes 2:7). In fact **epios** was frequently used by Greek writers as characterizing a nurse with trying children or a teacher with refractory scholars, or of parents toward their children. We find **epios** in a secular Greek writing which describes "a day **favorable** (**epios**) for beginning a thing". **Epios** was used to describe medicines as soothing or assuaging. **Kindness** presupposes a peaceable attitude. Such a mindset speaks and acts in goodness. This does not mean spineless acquiescence to popular opinion or to those who may oppose us. Kindness must remain firmly rooted in truth. **Epios** implies gentleness in demeanor, as *prautes*, meekness of disposition.

The only other use of **epios** is by Paul describing his own behavior writing to his beloved church at Thessalonica reminding them that "we proved to be **gentle** among you, as a nursing mother tenderly cares for her own children. (1Thes 2:7-note)

**Steven Cole** applies this "definition" of "**kind**" asking "Husbands, do you correct your wives with the tenderness of a nursing mother? Parents, do you correct your children with the same kindness you show to a nursing infant? ([2 Timothy 2:23-26 The Gentle Art of Correction](#))

The Lord's **bondservant** must be "**kind**" to "**all**" (**pas** = everyone, all without exception!). There is nothing worse than a servant of the Lord who loses their control. The bond-servant of the Lord must show by his or her gentleness to others that they are subject to the commanding power of the life transforming gospel which they are preaching and teaching.

These qualities Paul is outlining for bondservants were those very traits that characterized Jesus in His incarnation Who said

Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am **gentle** (*praus*) and humble in heart (Mt 11:29).

**Ray Stedman** - No matter if it is a cultist he is debating, or someone who is very upset about an issue, somebody with an ax to grind, some difficult person who is obviously out to cause trouble and create dissension, the Lord's servant is to be kindly to everyone. ([2 Timothy 2:23-26 Guidelines for Controversies](#))

**MacArthur** - "As much as we are to speak boldly for the Lord without compromise, we are to do so with the attitude of meekness, gentleness, and humility. We are never to be harsh, abusive, overbearing, unkind, thoughtless, or pugnacious. There is to be a softness in the authority of a Christian leader..." (MacArthur, J. 2 Timothy. Chicago, Ill.: Moody Press)

## ABLE TO TEACH: didaktikon:

- 1Ti 3:2,3; Titus 1:9
- 2 Timothy Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [2 Timothy 2:23-26 The Gentle Art of Correction](#) - Steven Cole
- [2 Timothy 2:23-26 An Honorable Vessel, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur

Amplified has "a skilled and suitable teacher"

**Able to teach** (1317) (**didaktikos** from **didaktos** = pertains to that which is taught or instructed from **didasko** [from **dáo**= know or teach; see study of related noun **didaskalia**]) means to provide instruction or information in a formal or informal setting. = provide instruction in a formal or informal setting by imparting positive truth; English = **didactic** = designed or intended to teach, particularly in having moral instruction as an ulterior motive) (Click word study on related word **didaskalia**) is one who is highly skilled in teaching and able to communicate truth.

Heresy flourishes where sound Christian teaching lags. Inherent in **didaktikós** is the intent to influence understanding of the person taught, shaping their will and doing so by communication of knowledge and/or by the content of what is taught

**Didaktikós** does not refer so much to possessing vast knowledge as to one who has the ability to communicate effectively whatever knowledge and understanding they might have. Though truth can seem harsh, carrying with it conviction or judgment of sin, it must be delivered with compassion and kindness because God always works for the restoration or repentance of the sinner.

This is a specific requirement for overseers (episkopon) and elders (presbuteron). Paul writes in his first epistle that "An overseer, then, **must be** (dei = an obligation out of intrinsic necessity) above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, **able to teach**. (**didaktikós**) (1Ti 3:2)

An overseer or elder who is **notable to teach** is like a surgeon who can't use a scalpel. **Are the elders in your church able to teach and are they actively utilizing this gift to edify and equip your local body?**

Again Paul instructs Titus that the overseer **must be** (again this is obligatory not merely a suggestion) "holding fast (strongly clinging or adhering to) the faithful word (committed to the authority and sufficiency of God's Word as the only source of moral and spiritual truth) which is in accordance with the teaching, that he may be able (have inherent Spirit wrought [sword of the Spirit] power) both to exhort (giving the saints a balanced diet of healthy encouraging, edifying teaching) in sound (healthy, wholesome) doctrine and to refute those who contradict (literally speak against)." (Titus 1:9-note)

A **bond-servant** of God must instruct those who oppose him, for this is the only way he can rescue them from Satan's captivity. Satan "does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature; for he is a liar, and the father of lies" (Jn 8:44) and he captures people by his lying promises, just as he did Eve telling her "You surely shall not die! For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." (Ge3:4-5) Paul spoke of Satan's craftiness writing to the saints at Corinth

"I am afraid, lest as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds should be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ." (2Cor 11:3)

**Warren Wiersbe** quotes "Phillips Brooks, famous American bishop of the 1800s, said, "Apt to teach—it is not something to which one comes by accident or by any sudden burst of fiery zeal." A pastor must be a careful student of the Word of God, and of all that assists him in knowing and teaching that Word. The pastor who is lazy in his study is a disgrace in the pulpit. ([Wiersbe, W: Bible Exposition Commentary. 1989. Victor](#))

**Ray Stedman** describes one "able to teach" as "skillfully dealing with the facts involved, not with feelings, not with fantasies, but with the facts of Scripture. There is where we must always return. It is so easy for an argument to slide off the facts and onto feelings, experiences, and reactions to things. The Lord's servant must call people back to facts." ([2 Timothy 2:23-26 Guidelines for Controversies](#))

The bondservant who is able to teach does not have as his main purpose to win arguments but to win the souls of those he is teaching or talking with. He needs to speak truth to counter the enemies lies so that the deceived person is brought to repentance and exhibits a godly sorrow for his or her sin, turning around and going in the opposite direction (which is genuine repentance), and acknowledging the Truth.

**Vine** has some practical thoughts on "**able to teach**" writing that "this quality our great source must be the holy Scriptures. As to the mode of teaching, we cannot do better than observe the characteristics of Christ's teaching. An outstanding feature of this was His presentation of even the profoundest truths in the simplest language. Instead of being mysterious and incomprehensible, He imparted the great lessons for His hearers by means of illustrations and details drawn from the most familiar facts of nature and from the treasury of our household affections.

Jewish teachers and philosophers (like the Stoics) also advised patience in instructing others, but they carried this out in the power of their flesh not the power of the Spirit (and His fruit gentleness).

Bond-servants must not just expose error and refute it; but must also teach positive truths and establish the saints in faith. We are not to be moralists, like the Cynics, who verbally abused passersby with their "wisdom."

The sharp edge of the sword of truth requires the skilled hand of one who relates compassionately with others.

#### PATIENT WHEN WRONGED: *anexikakon*:

- Eph 4:2; Col 3:13
- 2 Timothy Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [2 Timothy 2:23-26 The Gentle Art of Correction](#) - Steven Cole
- [2 Timothy 2:23-26 An Honorable Vessel, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur

#### Related Passages:

Ephesians 4:2+ with all humility and gentleness, with patience ([makrothumia](#) = having a "long fuse" before you "explode!"), showing tolerance ([anéchomai](#)) for one another in (locative of sphere) love,

Colossians 3:13+ bearing ( [anéchomai](#) in present tense - don't try this in dependence of your fallen flesh! Depend on [the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) with one another, and forgiving (present tense only possible as you rely on [the Holy Spirit](#)) each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; **NEED SOME MOTIVATION TO FORBEAR AND FORGIVE?**) just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.

### A MOST DIFFICULT EXHORTATION TO HEED!

This one in my opinion is "IM-possible," but it is "HIM-possible" that is, supernaturally

**Guzik** - God's work often takes time. Sometimes we can see why it takes so much time, sometimes we can't - but God is not in a hurry, and wants us to learn how to patiently trust Him.

**Patient when wronged** (420) (*anexikakos* from *anécho* = bear, put up with, holding back + *kakós* = bad, evil) is literally "holding back under bad or evil". It is tolerating difficulties without "[blowing a fuse](#)," without "[losing your cool](#)" and losing control. Instead you are enabled (by [the Holy Spirit](#)) to endure difficulties without becoming angry or upset. A reasonable synonym is "longsuffering" ([makrothumia](#) = having a "long fuse" before you "explode!").

**Anexikakos** describes the person who is puts up with, patiently forbears or tolerates evil without resentment (CHALLENGE: JUST TRY TO ACCOMPLISH THIS BY DEPENDING ON YOUR FALLEN FLESH!) and so who is marked by their forbearance (patient self-control; restraint and tolerance). It is (supernaturally) enduring patiently what is naturally difficult to bear with in the attitude and conduct of others. The the Lord's servant must not be contentious but kindly, apt to teach, and "forbearing" even with opponents. In secular Greek *anexikakos* was used in medicine to describe enduring pain or evil.

**Patience** is the fruit of the Holy Spirit (cf Gal 5:22+), and it is the Spirit Who provides the inner power we need for bearing this aspect of His fruit. The **Spirit controlled bondservant** (see Gal 5:16+; Gal 5:18+; Gal 5:25+; Eph 5:18+) does not let himself or herself be controlled by injustices done against them, does not harbor these things waiting for an opportunity to take revenge and is quick to forgive and forget and go on.

**Steven Cole** wisely warns us that "Often when you try to correct others, they will respond by attacking you. They will falsely accuse you of wrong motives (**ED**: E.G., YOUR JUDGING AND BIBLE SAYS DO NOT JUDGE!) or they will bring up shortcomings in your behavior to try to divert matters away from their own sins. If you are impatient when wronged, you lose the ability to correct effectively. ( [2 Timothy 2:23-26 The Gentle Art of Correction](#))

**Patient when wronged** is perhaps one of the greatest challenges to the Lord's bondservant. When we are wronged our old nature "screams" out "*They can't do that to me...They can't get away with that.*" You know exactly what I am saying. We must resist the temptation to listen to our old MASTER (**Sin**), submitting to our NEW MASTER, the controlling power of the Spirit of Christ and "in everything give thanks" (1Th 5:18+). If we practice these things the God of peace will be with us (Php 4:6+; Php 4:7\+ ) and we will come to learn the secret that we can do all things through Christ Who continually is our source of strength (Php 4:11, 12, 13-see **notes** Php 4:11; 12; 13). When we are faithfully witnessing and living for the Lord, it is not easy to graciously accept unjust criticism which is guaranteed to come for "all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted." (2Ti 3:12+).

**Barnes** comments that because we are not our own but belong to Christ, when we are persecuted for His sake, Jesus would remind us that it is "Because you are attached to Me; because you are Christians. We are not to seek such things. We are not to do things

to offend others; to treat them harshly or unkindly, and court revilings. We are not to say or do things, though they may be on the subject of religion, designed to disgust or offend. But if, in the faithful endeavor to be Christians, we are reviled, as our Master was, then we are to take it with patience (**Ed**: made possible only through the empowerment of the Spirit of Christ), and to remember that thousands before us have been treated in like manner. When thus reviled, or persecuted, we are to be meek, patient, humble; not angry; not reviling again; but endeavoring to do good to our persecutors and slanderers. In this way, many have been convinced of the power and excellence of that religion which they were persecuting and reviling. They have seen that nothing else but Christianity could impart such patience and meekness to the persecuted; and have, by this means, been constrained to submit themselves to the gospel of Jesus. Long since, it became a proverb, "that the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church." (Albert Barnes. Barnes NT Commentary)

**Dwight Edwards** gives the following illustration of **patient when wronged** writing that it "was well demonstrated by John Selwyn, a missionary in the South Pacific some years ago. While in university, Selwyn became renowned for his boxing skills and great strength. During his years in the South Pacific, he had occasion to strongly rebuke a native, and that native struck him violently across his face. Selwyn responded by folding his arms and looking intently into the eyes of the native, who realized that Selwyn could easily have knocked him cold. But Selwyn made not the slightest effort to retaliate and simply gazed at him with loving concern. The native fled into the jungles, too ashamed to face this missionary. Several years after John Selwyn had returned home, that same native came forward to confess Christ and be baptized by Selwyn's replacement. When asked what new name he wished to be called by, the native replied, "Call me John Selwyn, for it was he who taught me what Jesus Christ is like.." May the same be said of us!"

**Ray Stedman** says that **patient when wronged**. "means (the Lord's bondservant) must keep his cool, be unruffled and not respond in kind to what people are handing him. That is not easy to do. When somebody attacks me personally in a debate, I want to attack back. I want to start with his remote ancestry and point out to him what is wrong with that, then bring it right down to the present, and show him how fouled up he is, and, furthermore, how much worse he is going to get as he proceeds into the future! But that is not what a servant of the Lord is to do. He is to recognize that when he is reviled, if he reviles in return, he has departed from the example of his Lord, who, "When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; ... but he trusted to him who judges justly," (1Pe 2:23RSV-note). ([2 Timothy 2:23-26 Guidelines for Controversies](#))

**MacArthur** writes that "If the old self is not firmly resisted, we are likely to become more offended when we ourselves are wronged than when our Lord and His truth are attacked. When we are faithfully witnessing and living for the Lord, it is not easy to graciously accept unjust criticism. ([MacArthur, J. 2 Timothy. Chicago: Moody Press](#))

We do have Jesus as our example and we are called to follow Him "For (we) have been [called](#) for [this](#) purpose, [since Christ also suffered](#) for (us), [leaving](#) (us) [an example](#) for (us) to [follow](#) in His [steps](#) (1Pe 2:21-note)

**David Jeremiah** tells the story of "Dr. Hudson Taylor, a great missionary statesman, was once dressed in Chinese costume waiting for a boatman to take him across the river in his country. A richly dressed Chinese was waiting for transportation, too. When the boat came, the man decided to move up in line. Not seeing Mr. Taylor was a foreigner, he hit him in the head and pushed him off into the mud. Taylor's first impulse was to jump up and lay the man out. But God wouldn't let him. When the man discovered that Taylor was not a native, he said, "Are you a foreigner and you did not strike back?" Hudson Taylor said, "Friend, this is my boat. Get in and I'll take you wherever you want to go." Dr. Taylor began telling him about Jesus. By the time they got to the other side of the river, the man had accepted Christ. (Fruit of the Spirit : Study Guide. Nashville, Tenn.: Thomas Nelson Publishers)

**R Kent Hughes** has the following comments on this the importance of being patient when wronged writing...

**William Barclay** remarks, "There may be greater sins than touchiness, but there is none which does greater damage in the Christian church."

Many of us are quick to take offense and slow to forgive. The great **Samuel Johnson** once made a sarcastic remark about an acquaintance that was repeated by a hearer to the man, but without the accompanying remark that "he was a very good man." His biographer Boswell writes that the man "could never forgive this hasty contemptuous expression. It rankled in his mind; and though I informed him of all that Johnson said, and that he would be very glad to meet him amicably, he positively declined repeated offers which I made, and once went off abruptly from a house where he and I were engaged to dine, because he was told that Dr. Johnson was to be there. I have no sympathetic feeling with such persevering resentment."

Indeed God's Word has no such sympathy either, because God's honored servants must bear evil without being resentful. There are few things more beautiful than a forbearing spirit in God's servants, and this is so good for the church. There is power in a life that refuses to quarrel and is gentle with detractors—the power of Christlikeness. ([1–2 Timothy and Titus: To Guard the Deposit](#))

**Octavius Winslow** in Evening Thoughts (or Daily Walking with God) wrote...

One exercise of Christian love will be its endeavor to avoid all occasions of offence. These, through the many and fast-clinging infirmities of the saints of God, will often occur. But they are to be avoided, and, in the exercise of that love which proves our Christian character, they will be avoided. The child of God will desire to "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." Whatever tends to weaken that bond he will endeavor to lay aside. Whatever He may discover in his communion with the saints calculated to wound, to distress, to alienate, to offend, either in his manner or in his spirit, the healthy exercise of holy love will constrain him to overcome. He will avoid "giving offence." He will be modest in the expression of his own opinion, respectful and deferential towards the opinion of others. He will avoid that recklessness of spirit which, under the cover of faithfulness, cares not to estimate consequences; but which, pursuing its heedless way, often crushes beneath its rough-shod heel the finest feelings of the human heart; saying and doing what it pleases, regardless of the wounds which, all the while, it is deeply and, irreparably inflicting. How sedulous, too, will he be to avoid anything like a dictatorial manner in enunciating his judgment, and all hard words and strong expressions in differing from authorities of equal, perhaps of greater, weight than his own. Oh! were this divine affection but more deeply lodged in the hearts of all those who "profess and call themselves Christians," what courtesy of manner-what grace of deportment-what tender regard of each other's feelings-what kindness in word and in action-what carefulness to avoid inflicting even a momentary pain-what putting away, as becomes saints, all wrath, anger, evil speaking, and malice-and what constant remembrance of His solemn words who said, "Whoever shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better that a mill-stone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depths of the sea," would each believer exhibit! Lord, fill our souls more and more with this lovely grace of love!

Especially in Church communion will the grace of forbearance be called in requisition. When the providence of God has thrown together a community of individuals, composed of a great variety of character, of mind, and of constitutional temperament, although each grade may be more or less modified by the renewing of the Spirit, there will still be a broad field for the passive exercise of love. In a Church, necessarily imperfect, there may exist many things, in which taste as well as judgment will be found at fault, calculated to engender a feeling of dislike, and even of disgust, in a mind refined and delicate. But here Christian forbearance must be exercised. They are the infirmities of the weak of Christ's flock, and they who are stronger in grace should kindly and patiently bear them. In pursuing a different course, we may wound some of the most gracious, humble, and prayerful saints of God. We may be but little aware with what frequent and deep humiliation in secret their conscious failings may overwhelm them. And we ought to bear in mind, that if we sometimes might wish to see in them less that was rough in speech, abrupt and forward in manner, and fault-finding in disposition, they may detect in us a loftiness of spirit, a coldness of demeanor, and an apparent haughtiness of carriage, which may be an equal trial to them, demanding the exercise on their part of the same grace of forbearance towards us. How watchful, how tender, how kind, then, should we be, ever standing with the broad mantle of charity in our hands, prepared to cast it over the failings of a Christian brother, the moment it meets the eye!

2Timothy 2:25 with [gentleness correcting](#) ([PAPMSA](#)) [those](#) who are in [opposition](#) ([PMPMPA](#)), [if perhaps God](#) may [grant](#) ([3SAAS](#)) them [repentance leading to the knowledge](#) of the [truth](#), ([NASB: Lockman](#))

**Greek:** [en prauteti paideuonta](#) ([PAPMSA](#)) [tous antidiatithemenous.](#) ([PMPMPA](#)) [mepote doe](#) ([3SAAS](#)) [autois o theos metanoian eis epignosin aletheias.](#)

**Amplified:** He must correct his opponents with courtesy and gentleness, in the hope that God may grant that they will repent and come to know the Truth [that they will perceive and recognize and become accurately acquainted with and acknowledge it], ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

**KJV:** In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;

**NLT:** They should gently teach those who oppose the truth. Perhaps God will change those people's hearts, and they will believe the truth. ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

**Phillips:** and the ability gently to correct those who oppose his message. He must always bear in mind the possibility that God will give them a different outlook, and that they may come to know the truth. ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

**Wuest:** in meekness correcting those who set themselves in opposition, if perchance God may grant them repentance resulting in a precise, experiential knowledge of the truth ([Eerdmans Publishing](#) - used [by permission](#))

**Young's Literal:** in meekness instructing those opposing -- if perhaps God may give to them repentance to an acknowledging of the truth,

#### WITH GENTLENESS CORRECTING: en prauteti paideuonta (PAPMSA):

- Mt 11:29; Gal 6:1; 1Ti 6:11; 1Pet 3:15
- Jer 13:15, 16, 17; 26:12, 13, 14, 15; Jn 5:34; Acts 22:1-23
- 2 Timothy Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [2 Timothy 2:23-26 The Gentle Art of Correction](#) - Steven Cole
- [2 Timothy 2:23-26 An Honorable Vessel, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur

### GENTLE CORRECTION

**With gentleness** - Literally in gentleness (in the sphere of, under the influence of, "marinated in" gentleness), like **Jesus...** Who gave this "gentle" command - "**Take** (aorist imperative) My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am **gentle** (praus in NAS; praos in KJV) and humble (tapeinos) in heart; and YOU SHALL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS. 30 "For My yoke is easy (chrestos), and My load is light." (Mt 11:29,30-note)

**Remember** that "a gentle and quiet spirit...is precious in the sight of God." (1Pe 3:4-note)

Often a greater argument than what we say is how we bear being differed from. (J. Sidlow Baxter)

**Gentleness** (KJV = **meekness**) ([4240](#)) (**prautes**) (Click word study on prautes) or (**praiotes** - 4236) describes the quality of not being overly impressed by a sense of one's self-importance, gentleness, humility, courtesy, considerateness, meekness.

**Prautes** was used to describe colts that were broken for riding. In such training, care must be taken to bring the animal's will into submission to the rider without breaking its energetic and lively spirit. It describes the person who is never angry at the wrong time but always angry at the right time.

**Edwards** notes that this **gentleness** teaches that the Lord's bondservant "must learn to speak like the Lord did to Elijah -- in a *still, small voice*." Yet there will be other times that we must "*be angry*" without sinning. (Ep 4:26-note). In those instances, we must learn to speak like the Lord did to Job -- "*out of a whirlwind*." The man who is truly "meek" is able to go in either direction at the proper time.

Contrary to the connotation that **meekness** often carries today, **prautes** has no relation to weakness but denotes power that is under willing control. The godly person possesses a spirit of humility that does not focus on self but on the Lord and on others (cp our Lord's example - Php 2:3-note). Meekness has nothing to do with impotence or shyness or weakness or cowardice. It is power supplied by, and willingly put under the control of, the Holy Spirit, in faithful submission to the Word and will of God. When one is truly meek, he talks not of himself but of his Lord. The meek person does not have to fly off the handle because he has everything under control. Meekness in Scripture is selflessness. Meekness is not letting yourself get involved; it is not taking things personally, in other words.

**Jerry Bridges** has written that "**Gentleness** is an active trait, describing the manner in which we should treat others. **Meekness** is a passive trait, describing the proper Christian response when others mistreat us. (The Practice of Godliness)

**Billy Graham** defined **gentleness** as "mildness in dealing with others ... it displays a sensitive regard for others and is careful never to be unfeeling for the rights of others.

**John Calvin** wrote that "Paul's meaning is that **gentleness** should be shown even to those who least deserve it, and even if at first there is no apparent hope of progress, still the challenge must be accepted.

**Rienecker** writes that **Prautes** "denotes the humble and gentle attitude which expresses itself, in particular, in a patient submissiveness to offense, free from malice and desire for revenge...controlled strength, the ability to bear reproaches and slights without bitterness and resentment; the ability to provide a soothing influence on someone who is in a state of anger, bitterness and

resentment against life...the word indicates an obedient submissiveness to God and His will, with unwavering faith and enduring patience displaying itself in a gentle attitude and kind acts toward others, and this often in the face of opposition. It is the restrained and obedient powers of the personality brought into subjection and submission to God's will by the Holy Spirit (Gal 5:23-note)...the opposite of arrogance...the word stands in contrast to the term *orge* (wrath, anger as a state of mind)...It denotes the humble and gentle attitude which expresses itself, in particular, in a patient submissiveness to offense, a freedom from malice and desire for revenge...mildness, patient trust in the midst of difficult circumstances." (2Cor 10:1) (Compiled from the "Linguistic and Exegetical Key to the Greek NT")

**Barclay** adds that **prautes** "describes the man whose temper is always under complete control. He knows when to be angry and when not to be angry. He patiently bears wrongs done to himself but is ever chivalrously ready to spring to the help of others who are wronged. ([Barclay, W: The Daily Study Bible Series. The Westminster Press](#))

**Aristotle** defined **prautes** as the correct mean between being too angry and being never angry at all. It is the quality of the man whose anger is so controlled that he is always angry at the right time and never at the wrong time. It describes the man who is never angry at any personal wrong he may receive, but who is capable of righteous anger when he sees others wronged.

**Pritchard** explains that as the Lord's bondservants "we are not to match the tactics of those who may oppose us and ridicule our faith. We must keep our cool all the time, at all costs. One reason for this is very practical: You can't argue a person into the kingdom of God. You can't insult them into becoming a Christian. You can't intimidate them into accepting Christ as Savior. It is quite possible to argue them away from the kingdom, but you can't argue them into it. Salvation is a miracle of God that takes place in the human heart. Only the Holy Spirit can convert the soul. It's not our arguments that win the lost. Unless the Lord works on the heart, all our words will be of no avail...If we lose our temper, we may win the verbal battle but we will surely lose the war for the soul. ([2 Timothy 2:14-26: The Life God Blesses](#))

**Calvin** writes that "Paul's meaning is that **gentleness** should be shown even to those who least deserve it, and even if at first there is no apparent hope of progress, still the challenge must be accepted.

**Derick Bingham** was right when he said "Gentle words fall lightly, but they have great weight.

**George Bethune** - Perhaps no grace is less prayed for, or less cultivated than gentleness. Indeed it is considered rather as belonging to natural disposition or external manners, than as a Christian virtue; and seldom do we reflect that not to be gentle is sin.

**John MacArthur** writes that...

**gentleness** is essential for those who want to walk worthy (Ep 4:1,2-see **notes** Ep 4:1; 4:2). How can you tell if you're gentle? I'll give you some practical questions so you can evaluate yourself honestly.

**First of all, are you self-controlled?** Do you rule your own spirit (Pr 16:32), or does your temper often flare up? When someone accuses you of something, do you immediately defend yourself, or are you more inclined to consider whether there's any truth in what's being said?

**Second, are you infuriated only when God is dishonored?** Do you get angry about sin or when God's Word is perverted by false teachers?

**Next, do you always seek to make peace?** Gentle people are peacemakers. Ephesians 4:3 (note) says they are "diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." If someone falls into sin, do you condemn or gossip about that person? Galatians 6:1 instructs us to restore sinning brothers "in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, lest you too be tempted." Gossip and condemnation divide believers; forgiveness and restoration unite them. Gentle people don't start fights; they end them.

**Fourth, do you accept criticism without retaliation?** Whether the criticism is right or wrong, you shouldn't strike back. In fact, you can thank your critics, because criticism can show you your weaknesses and help you grow.

**Finally, do you have the right attitude toward the unsaved?** Peter says,

Always [be] ready to make a defense to every one who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence (1Pe 3:15-note)

If we're persecuted, it's easy for us to think, They can't treat me like that—I'm a child of God. But God wants us to approach the unsaved with gentleness, realizing that God reached out to us with gentleness before we were saved (Titus 3:3, 4, 5, 6, 7-see note Titus 3:3-7).

Consider carefully your answers to these questions, and commit yourself to being characterized by

gentleness. (Adapted from Strength for Today)

**Jerry Bridges** said that...

Gentleness is illustrated by the way we would handle a carton of exquisite crystal glasses; it is the recognition that the human personality is valuable but fragile, and must be handled with care. Both gentleness and meekness are born of power, not weakness. There is a pseudo-gentleness that is effeminate, and there is a pseudo-meekness that is cowardly. But a Christian is to be gentle and meek because those are Godlike virtues...

Paul appealed to the Corinthian Christians "by the meekness and gentleness of Christ" (2 Corinthians 10:1). How does the New Testament describe the gentleness of Christ? A familiar passage provides a picture of Christ's gentleness:

Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light. (Matthew 11:28–29)

William Hendriksen says that the Syriac New Testament translates the word gentle as "restful"; accordingly Jesus' expression is,

"Come to me ... and I will rest you ... for I am restful ... and you shall find rest for yourselves."

Christ's whole demeanor was such that people were often restful in His presence. This effect is another outworking of the grace of gentleness. People are at rest, or at ease, around the Christian who is truly gentle.

Matthew 12:20 gives us another picture of the gentleness with which Christ treats us

A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out, till he leads justice to victory.

The bruised reed and the smoldering wick refer to people who are hurting, spiritually weak, or of little faith. Jesus deals gently with such people. He does not condemn them for their weakness; He does not come down with a "heavy hand"; rather, He deals with them gently until their true need is exposed and they are open to Him for help. How beautifully His encounter with the Samaritan woman illustrates His gentleness. Firmly, yet gently, Jesus continued to probe her need until she recognized it herself and turned to Him to meet it.

In the very act of his appeal to the Corinthians by "the meekness and gentleness of Christ," Paul illustrated that gentleness for us. We could paraphrase his remarks as,

Acting as Christ would act in this situation I appeal to you. I do not demand; I do not insist, but I appeal to you."

Paul could have berated the Corinthians for allowing into their fellowship those who sought to undermine his apostolic authority, but he didn't; instead, he chose to exercise the Spirit-produced fruit of gentleness.

When Paul wrote to the Philippians, "Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus," he was specifically referring to Christ's humility; but we can apply this command to all of Christ's character traits. As His followers, we should cultivate the same gentleness that characterized His life.

A profile of gentleness as it should appear in our lives will first include actively seeking to make others feel at ease, or "restful," in our presence. We should not be so strongly opinionated or dogmatic that others are afraid to express their opinions in our presence. Instead, we should be sensitive to others' opinions and ideas. We should also avoid displaying our commitment to Christian discipleship in such a way as to make others feel guilty, taking care not to break the bruised reed of the hurting Christian or snuff out the smoldering wick of the immature Christian.

Second, gentleness will demonstrate respect for the personal dignity of the other person. Where necessary, it will seek to change a wrong opinion or attitude by persuasion and kindness, not by domination or intimidation. It will studiously avoid coercion by threatening, either directly or indirectly (as Paul, for example, avoided it in his appeal to the Corinthians).

Gentleness will also avoid blunt speech and an abrupt manner, instead seeking to answer everyone with sensitivity and respect, ready to show consideration toward all. The gentle Christian does not feel he has the liberty to "say what I think and let the chips fall where they may." Instead he is sensitive to the reactions of others to his words, and considerate of how others may feel about what he says. When he finds it necessary to wound with his words, he also seeks to bind up those wounds with words of consolation and encouragement.

The gentle Christian will not feel threatened by opposition or resent those who oppose him. Instead, he will seek to gently instruct, looking to God to dissolve the opposition, just as Paul taught Timothy to do in chapter 2 of his second letter.

Finally, the gentle Christian will not degrade or belittle or gossip about the brother who falls into some sin. Instead he will grieve for him and pray for his repentance. If it is appropriate for him to become personally involved with the erring brother, he will seek to restore him gently, as Paul instructs us in Galatians 6, aware that he himself is also subject to temptation.

The Christian who truly seeks to obey God through gentle character will actively pursue gentleness, striving to clothe himself with it (see Colossians 3:12 and 1 Timothy 6:11). He will place this godly virtue high on his list of spiritual traits and look to God the Holy Spirit to produce this fruit in his life. (Ibid)

**F B Meyer** in **Our Daily Walk**, writes the following devotional related to "**gentleness**"....

IT IS not easy to cultivate this fruit of the Spirit because it has many counterfeits. Some people are naturally easy-going, devoid of energy and ambition, at heart cowardly, or in spirit mean. Many of us are characterized by a moral weakness and decrepitude that make it easy for us to yield rather than contest in the physical or intellectual arena.

But in **gentleness** there must be the consciousness of a considerable reserve of force. The gentleness of God is combined with omnipotence. The movements of creation, in which there is neither voice nor language, prove the infinite forces which are at work. When a boy is trying to lift or carry a heavy beam, as likely as not there will be a great crash when he reaches the end of his task, and puts it on the ground. His strength is so nearly exhausted that he is only too glad to get rid of his burden, anyhow, and at any cost. But if a strong man shoulders the same burden, and carries it for the same distance, he puts it down gently, because he has not taxed his strength and has plenty left.

**It is the prerogative of great strength to be gentle.** Always remember that you are linked with the Infinite God, and that all things are possible to you. There must also be infinite pity. We must be tolerant and pitiful to those who abuse us, or have been embittered by disappointment, or have been ill-used. It must be our aim to make allowances for such, and always to be sweetly reasonable towards any brusqueness, rudeness and bad manners of their behaviour. Let us be willing to admit that much is due to congenital moroseness. Therefore, we bear gently with the erring, and with those who are out of the way, because we also are encompassed with infirmity.

**It is necessary also that there should be a deep humility.** Thomas a Kempis says:

If thou wilt be borne with, bear also with another. Endeavour to be patient in bearing with the defects and infirmities of others, what sort soever they be: for that thyself also hast many failings which must be borne by others.

Our resentment against others should be always tempered by our remembrance of our own sins. So shall we be God's own gentlefolk.

**PRAYER: O God, our behaviour has not manifested all the fruits of the Spirit, or been full of the graciousness and gentleness of Christ. Forgive us, and enable us so to live that His beauty may be on our faces, the tone of His voice in our speech, the gentleness of His tread in our steps, the unselfishness of His deeds in our hands. AMEN.** (F B Meyer. **Our Daily Walk**)

You might ask how does 2 Timothy 2:25 relate to not casting your pearl before swine in Mt 7:6<sup>note</sup>? One key to answering this question is to ask what does the Greek word **opposition** mean? **Zodhiates** has an excellent comment writing that [antidiatithemi](#) speaks "either those who directly oppose the Gospel or those who are ill-disposed toward or unaffected by it. **The latter meaning seems preferable** because the Apostle directs Timothy to treat the antidiatitheménous, those whose attitudes are contrary or ill-disposed to the gospel, in a very different manner from the [anthistaménous](#) (436), opposers, those actually opposing the gospel, from whom he was to turn away ("Avoid [apostrepho](#) in the [present imperative](#) = command to **keep on avoiding** them!) such men as these" - 2 Ti 3:5-<sup>note</sup>)" (Complete Word Study Dictionary – New Testament)

So it is a question of "**discernment**" -- if you have shared the Gospel since you became a follower of Christ (and if you haven't shared it, you should!), over time you can generally get a good "feel" for whether there is simply general resistance to the Good News (as was frankly true of me before I came to Christ and is true of all of us because Paul says all of us "were enemies [Greek word [echthros](#) means hostile and speaks of our intrinsic hatred of God and His Good News]." - Ro 5:10<sup>note</sup>). General resistance is quite different than vicious attacks of "dogs" and "swine" Jesus describes in Matthew 7:6-<sup>note</sup>! It is the latter to whom we are to

**shake the dust off our sandals and move on!** We are to depart without even saying ["Sayanora!"](#) or ["Auf wiedersehen!"](#) (cf Lk 9:5-note)

- See also explanation from Gotquestions, a website that is highly recommended.

**Correcting** (3811) (**paideuo** from **país** = child) (**Click** in depth word study of **paideuo**) is used of training a child and means to provide instruction for informed and responsible living and to assist in the development of a person's ability to make appropriate choices and practice discipline.

This "child training" is to be done "gently" and continually (**Present tense**). Paul is talking about training them and showing them another way to handle the problem. This verb clearly that the Lord's bondservant is not to be a "spiritual doormat" but in some issues is called to take a stand against for the purpose of change in the person who is opposed. To be sure, the Lord's bondservant must be ready to take an authoritative stand for God's truth against those who would challenge or pervert it, but his or her stand must be done with Spirit filled balance -- in a spirit of humility and meekness.

**Paideuo** originally meant to bring up a child, to educate and was used of activity directed toward the moral and spiritual nurture and training of the child, so as to influence their conscious will and consequent actions.

**Paideuo** conveys the closely related meanings of teaching, training, discipling, educating, and nurturing and gives us the English terms "pedagogue" & "pedagogy" which means to train in accord w proper rules of conduct/behavior, punish for the purpose of improved behavior.

Education in Christian behavior is seldom a painless process since it involves the correction of human behavior which by nature stands in opposition to God.

**Paideuo** then involves the upbringing and handling of a "spiritual child" who is growing up to maturity and who thus needs direction, teaching, instruction and a certain measure of compulsion in the form of discipline or even chastisement.

Those who oppose the truth are to be instructed for instruction is the Scriptural method of dealing with the erroneous and is more likely to convince them of their errors.

**Vine** writes that "forbearance does not require abstention from faithful dealing, where evil demands correction. It is the meek spirit, however, that wins, and that spirit is requisite even in circumstances where a rebuke or other censure is necessary."

**Steven Cole** writes that...

Paul says that the Lord's bond-servant must be "able to teach." The word "correcting" (2 Ti 2:25) is the word for "child training." It refers to giving instruction, correction, or discipline to a child. The standard for all such teaching is God's Word of truth. In other words, we should never attempt to correct by saying, "I think," or, "in my opinion, you're wrong." My opinion carries no weight. God's opinion what matters! You must be careful here, because it's easy to mix up your opinions or your way of doing things with God's clear commandments. They may not be one and the same. We sometimes inherit certain views from our upbringing or from cultural notions about right and wrong.

For example, I've heard people say to children who are rambunctious in a church building, "You shouldn't behave that way in God's house!" But, church buildings are not God's house! God's people are His house, but the building is just a convenient place where the church gathers. It may be that the children need to be have in a more subdued manner in a group setting, but God's house has nothing to do with it. To view this building as a sacred place is to confuse a cultural idea with a biblical truth.

The same thing applies to what is appropriate attire at a church service. The Bible commands us to dress modestly, but it never says that we must wear a suit or dressy clothes when we gather with the church. Some argue that if you were going to meet the President, you would dress up, so you should do the same when you come to meet with the Lord. If that is so, then you'd better put on your suit before you have your morning quiet time! I actually heard a lecture in seminary where the professor used Titus 2:10, which urges slaves to "adorn the doctrine of God" in every respect, to argue that as pastors, we should wear a suit even when we went to the local hardware store! He was misusing Scripture to try to support a cultural value! Biblical correction must stem from biblical standards of truth and morality.

When you offer correction, emphasize that obedience to God's Word is the only path to blessing. I often ask, "You want God's blessing in your life, don't you? You can't ask God to bless your life when you are living in violation of His Word." Your correction must offer constructive help that shows the other person practically how

to live in a manner that is pleasing to the Lord. As the one offering correction, you are subject to the same biblical standards. So you should be able to point to your life as an example and show the one in sin how to apply the Bible in daily life. Thus correction must be done wisely and in love. It must be based on and in accordance with God's Word of truth. (**Read his entire excellent sermon [2 Timothy 2:23-26 The Gentle Art of Correction](#)**)

#### Related Resources:

- Notes on Galatians 5:23 - Fruit of the Spirit;
- Discussion of gentleness (prautes)
- [Gentleness - Baker's Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology](#)
- [Gentleness - Hastings' Dictionary of the New Testament](#)

#### THOSE WHO ARE IN OPPOSITION: *tous antidiatithemenous* (PMPMPA):

- 2 Timothy Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [2 Timothy 2:23-26 The Gentle Art of Correction](#) - Steven Cole
- [2 Timothy 2:23-26 An Honorable Vessel, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur

**Those who are in opposition** (475) (*antidiatithemi* from *anti* = over against, opposite to, instead of + *diatithemai* = to dispose of, arrange, make a covenant from *dia* = through or intensifies meaning of + *tithemi* = place, put) means literally to set oneself opposite. In the present passage the picture is of those who are habitually inclined to argument and are continually (Paul emphasis continuous attitude/action with the present tense) offer resistance by placing themselves in opposition to the way, the truth, and the life. They are hostile toward the truth and personally oppose it in an engaged way. The opposition involves not only a psychological attitude but also a corresponding behavior.

**Louw and Nida** have an interesting note regarding the translation of *antidiatithemi* writing that...

in some languages **opposition** is often expressed idiomatically as 'to show a sour face toward,' 'to have a mean heart toward,' or 'to turn one's back on.' ([Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains. United Bible societies](#)) (Bolding added)

Judaism emphasized correcting another person humbly and privately before giving public reproof, in the hope of restoring that person to the right way. Those that place them self in opposition to the true servant of the Lord and to true doctrine are to be dealt with tenderly and considerately.

**Ray Stedman** comments that "The King James Version has a very good translation here. It says, instructing **those who oppose themselves**." That shows what error does to us. When we get stubborn, when we are sure we are right, when we insist on our own point of view, and get personal, etc., what we are doing is opposing ourselves. We stand in our own way, we become our own worst enemy, and we create our own problems. That is the revelation of this. Until we change ourselves, we will never solve the controversy. The thing we all know, but so easily forget, is that the only person we can change in a controversy is ourselves. You cannot change other people. You can force their behavior to be different, but you do not change them inside. We all know about the little boy whose mother tried to get him to sit down and forced him to do so, but he said, "I may be sitting down outside, but I'm standing up inside." "A man convinced against his will is of the same opinion still." And a woman -- well, she is almost as bad as a man. No, you only can change yourself. We do not think we are contributing anything to the problem, but we always are. When an argument exists, and especially when it gets heated, angry, and personal, then we are definitely contributing to it and we are opposing ourselves; we are standing in our own way to the blessing God wants to bring. ([2 Timothy 2:23-26 Guidelines for Controversies](#))

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Strong and Gentle - There was a time in my life when I enjoyed debating with people who represented religious cults. When they said that Jesus is not God or that another book has equal authority with the Bible, I had them read Scripture passages that proved them wrong. I felt a bit smug when I saw them eager to end the conversation. But I never led any of them to the Savior.

I may have won an argument, but that's all. I'm afraid they saw me as arrogant, not the gentle and humble man I should have been as a servant of the Lord (2 Tim. 2:24). I really don't blame them. I find myself annoyed when a know-it-all tries to force his views on me.

We are not to be weak, though, bending to the winds of error. We can be firm in our convictions without coming across with an I'm-

better-than-you attitude. We can communicate the truth without beating the other person over the head with it.

By dealing gently with people who have been caught up in religious error, I have seen some of them come to know Jesus Christ as their personal Savior. When we humbly try to correct those who are deceived, we open the door for God to lead them to repent and to acknowledge the truth. --H V Lugt ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

What wisdom lies in gentleness!  
What force true meekness holds!  
As truth combines with Christlike love,  
God's wondrous grace unfolds. --DJD

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### The Good News shouldn't be shared in bad taste.

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Hiebert sums up this section noting that...

The demeanor...is presented both negatively and positively. Negatively, **"the Lord's servant must not strive."** Instead of continuing in the second person, - Paul now uses the third person, thus including himself and any other man who holds a position as **"the Lord's servant."** As the Lord's **"bondservant,"** carrying out his Master's will, he must not yield to the temptation to engage in worthless controversy with others.

**"But,"** on the contrary, he must be characterized by a very different demeanor, which is is given a fourfold description.

First, he must be **"gentle toward all,"** the opposite of harsh and irritable. He must be mild, benevolent, and approachable **"to all,"** even those who are antagonistic to him.

Second, he must be **"apt to teach."** He must possess not only the ability but also that readiness which leads him to impart counsel and instruction as opportunity arises.

The third requirement is that he be **"forbearing."** His gentleness will not always be reciprocated but will be met with hostile scorn and ridicule; then he must be **"forbearing,"** patient under injuries, putting up with the evil without loss of temper.

The final requirement is, **"in meekness correcting them that oppose themselves."** The false teachers and those led astray by them may **"oppose themselves"** and reveal their hostility, but they are to be met with **"meekness,"** without pride or an air of superiority, while he aims at **"correcting them."** The word rendered **"correcting"** is literally "child training," and implies instruction, correction, and discipline. In meekness he must instruct the uninstructed, correct the erring, and discipline the undisciplined. For this difficult task a spirit of meekness is indispensable. (2 Timothy by D. Edmond Hiebert) (Bolding added)

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### IF PERHAPS GOD MAY GRANT THEM REPENTANCE : mepote doe (3SAAS) autois ho theos metanoian:

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- Jer 31:18,19,33; Ezek 11:19; 36:26,31; Zech 12:10; Acts 5:21; 11:18; Jas 1:17; 1Jn 5:16
- Acts 8:22; 1Ti 2:4
- 2 Ti 3:7; Mt 21:32; Mk 1:3,4,15; Acts 2:38; 20:21; Titus 1:1
- 2 Timothy Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [2 Timothy 2:23-26 The Gentle Art of Correction](#) - Steven Cole
- [2 Timothy 2:23-26 An Honorable Vessel, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur

## REPENTANCE IS A GIFT

**Grant** (**1325**) (**didomi**) means to give and is based on a decision of the will of the giver (God in this case) with no merit in the recipient. The fact that repentance is a gift reminds the Lord's bondservant that it is only the hand of God which can untangle the twisted thoughts of men. We cannot make them repent. God may use our reasonings and exhortations, but He is in no way dependent upon them. We are utterly dependent upon Him to show the "kindness of God which leads them to repentance" (Ro 2:4-note). God is the Agent of change while we are but a channel through which He dispenses His life-changing grace. Therefore, it is crucial that we be clear channels, who do not obstruct what He would send through us.

**Hiebert** writes that "This hope for their repentance is stated hesitatingly--**"if peradventure"**--not because God is unwilling to give them repentance but because the habit of the errorists to contradict the truth has made it hard for them even to listen to the truth. Only God can effect the change in them. He must **"give"** it to them as a gift, using Timothy's efforts as the means to work the needed **"repentance"** in them. What they need is a definite change of heart and will. Their doctrinal perversions rooted in a moral perversity. Vital religious error has its roots in sin, and its removal demands not merely a change of mind but a change in the moral nature as well. The needed repentance is **"unto the knowledge of the truth,"** the full apprehension and realization of (the) truth. (2 Timothy by D. Edmond Hiebert).

Only through a change in the moral disposition do men attain to the full knowledge, the believing apprehension, of the Gospel (Harvey).

**Brian Bell** - Our weapon is the Word; but the vital handling of it is in the spirit we show, & the way we behave. We need a loving spirit & prayerful dependence on the H.S.

**Repentance** (3341) (metanoia from meta = after + noieo = perceiving clearly with the mind) (Click study of metanoia) means a change of mind which results in an action of the will. If a sinner honestly changes their mind about sin, the result is that they will turn from it. If they sincerely change their mind about Jesus Christ the result is that they will turn to Him, trust Him, and be saved.

**Repentance** is a change of attitude toward sin which leads to a desire to change our behavior accordingly. The way you can tell that repentance has been granted is that the opposers begin to agree with the Scripture. They accept it, they know it to be true, and though it may involve painful adjustments on their part, they are committed to it, they follow it.

**Repentance** is a change in one's mind and is not the same as regret which is "being sorry I got caught." Repentance is not remorse or a hopeless attitude that can lead to despair. True repentance is a godly sorrow for sin, and involves a decisive act of turning around and going in the opposite direction. This type of repentance leads to a fundamental change in a person's relationship to God.

**A W Tozer** - I think there is little doubt that the teaching of salvation without **repentance** has lowered the moral standards of the Church and produced a multitude of deceived religious professors who erroneously believe themselves to be saved when in fact they are still in the gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity. God will take nine steps toward us, but He will not take the tenth. He will incline us to repent (see note Romans 2:4), but He cannot do our repenting for us.

This is surprisingly the only use of this great word **repentance** in the Pastoral epistles.

**Repentance** is a gift to undeserving sinners granted by a merciful, kind God. This does not deny human decision in repentance but rather points to the fact that even our repentance is rooted in God's act and the opportunities granted by God.

The goal, when the "Lord's bondservant" instructs or corrects, is never **to get even**. The motivation of such correction should be the sincere desire that perhaps God may grant them repentance. That is always the motivation of a humble and compassionate heart. Paul told the immature, worldly believers in Corinth, "I now rejoice, not that you were made sorrowful, but that you were made sorrowful to the point of **repentance**; for you were made sorrowful according to the will of God, in order that you might not suffer loss in anything through us" (2Cor 7:9).

Even when those who are corrected are resentful of us and unrepentant, as some in Corinth were in regard to Paul, there is never a place in godly correction for personal animosity or judgmental self righteousness.

**Repentance** leads disobedient believers out of their sin and falsehood into the knowledge of the truth.

The **Shaw Pocket Bible Handbook** defines conversion as "The decisive act in which a sinner turns away from sin in genuine **repentance** and accepts the salvation that Christ offers. The imagery in conversion is that of turning. A person is going along a road and realizes that he or she is on the wrong track. They will never reach the destination if they continue in that direction. So the person "turns," or "is converted." He or she ceases to go in the wrong direction and begins going in the right one. Conversion changes the direction of one's course of life from the wrong way to the right way, the way that God wants.

The Presbyterian Shorter Catechism says that **"Repentance** is a saving grace whereby a sinner out a true sense of his sin and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ doth with faith and hatred turn from it to God with full purpose of an endeavor after new obedience."

Here are some other quotes on **repentance** from Puritan writers...

**"Repentance** with man is the changing of his will; repentance with God is the willing of a change." (John Trapp)

"Whoever delays his **repentance** does in effect pawn his soul with the devil" (Thomas Manton)

"By delay of **repentance**, sin strengthens, and the heart hardens. The longer ice freezeth, the harder it is to be broken." (Thomas Watson)

"You cannot **repent** too soon, because you do not know how soon it may be too late." (Thomas Fuller)

"Though true **repentance** is never too late, yet late **repentance** is seldom true." (Thomas Brooks)

"It is an old saying, **Repentance** is never too late; but it is a true saying, **Repentance** is never too soon." (Henry Smith)

If thou hast fallen into sin through violent temptations, seek speedily for **repentance** for it, recovery out of it, and reformation from it.

**Charles Spurgeon** wrote that "**Repentance** is the inseparable companion of faith. All the while that we walk by faith and not by sight, the tear of repentance glitters in the eye of faith. That is not true **repentance** which does not come of faith in Jesus, and that is not true faith in Jesus which is not tintured with repentance. Faith and **repentance**, like Siamese twins, are vitally joined together. ... Faith and repentance are but two spokes in the same wheel, two handles of the same plow. **Repentance** has been well described as a heart broken for sin and from sin, and it may equally well be spoken of as turning and returning. It is a change of mind of the most thorough and radical sort, and it is attended with sorrow for the past and a resolve of amendment in the future... **Repentance** of sin and faith in divine pardon are the warp and woof of the fabric of real conversion. Repentance adds nothing to faith but is rather an integral part of it. Saving faith is repentant faith. "**Repentance** toward God and faith in [the] Lord Jesus Christ" are inseparable (Acts 20:21). Because they are inseparable, Scripture sometimes refers to salvation as **repentance**. Paul declares that "the kindness of God leads you to **repentance**" (Ro 2:4-note), and Peter that God does not desire "for any to perish but for all to come to **repentance** (2Pe 3:9-note).

**Thomas Brooks** (1608-1680) in his book **Precious Remedies Against Satan** has the following thoughts related to repentance...

DEVICE 6. By persuading the soul that the work of repentance is an easy work; and that therefore the soul need not make such a matter of sin. Why! Suppose you do sin, says Satan, it is no such difficult thing to return, and confess, and be sorrowful, and beg pardon, and cry, 'Lord, have mercy upon me!' and if you do but this, God will forgive your debt, and pardon your sins, and save your souls.

By this device Satan draws many a soul to sin, and makes many millions of souls servants of sin, or rather slaves to sin.

Remedy (1). The first remedy is, seriously to consider, That repentance is a mighty work, a difficult work, a work that is above our power. There is no power below that power which raised Christ from the dead, and which made the world—which can break the heart of a sinner, or turn the heart of a sinner! You are as well able to melt adamant, as to melt your own heart; to turn a flint into flesh, as to turn your own heart to the Lord; to raise the dead and to make a world, as to repent. Repentance is a flower which does not grow in nature's garden! 'Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard its spots? Neither can you do good who are accustomed to doing evil.' (Jer. 13:23). Repentance is a gift that comes down from above. Men are not born with repentance in their hearts, as they are born with tongues in their mouths: (Acts 5:31): 'Him has God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Savior—to give repentance.' Those who oppose him he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth, and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will." (2Timothy 2:25, 26) It is not in the power of any mortal to repent at pleasure. Some ignorant deluded souls vainly conceit that these five words, 'Lord! have mercy upon me,' are efficacious to send them to heaven; but as many are undone by buying a counterfeit jewel, so many are in hell by mistake of their repentance. Many rest in their repentance, which caused on to say, 'Repentance damns more than sin!' It was a vain brag of king Cyrus, that caused it to be written upon his tombstone, 'I can do all things!' So could Paul, too—but it was 'through Christ, who strengthened him.'

#### LEADING TO THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE TRUTH: eis epignosin aletheias:

**Leading** (1519) (**eis**) is the preposition of motion into any place or thing. In this context into the devil's will. So the idea is literally "into" or "unto" the full knowledge of truth.

**Knowledge of the truth** - This phrase is found 5x - 1Ti 2:4, 2Ti 2:25, 3:7, Titus 1:1, Heb 10:26

**Knowledge** (1922) (**epignosis** from **epí** = upon, gives force of "fully" + **ginosko** = to know) (**Click** in depth word study of **epignosis**) means more than mere factual information. It is deep, thorough spiritual knowledge of God's truth, which, as with repentance, only He can supply. **Epignosis** is precise, experiential knowledge. **Epignosis** always describes moral and religious knowledge in the NT and especially refers to full and comprehensive knowledge of God's will that rests on the knowledge of God and of Christ found today in His Word.

**Vine** rightly observes that "refusal to accept and obey the truth is a sure way to induce the blinding deception of error and of the evil one, who seeks ever to spread it. Only the mercy of God can produce the spirit of repentance in such cases, and the Lord may be pleased to use one of His servants to bring this about where the opposition is met with in the spirit of meekness."

**Trench** writes that concerning "**epígnōsis**, as compared with **gnosis**, it will be sufficient to say that **epí** must be regarded as intensive, giving to the compound word a greater strength than the simple possessed." He goes on to explain that "Paul, it will be remembered, exchanges the **ginóskō**, which expresses his present and fragmentary knowledge, for **epignosomai** when he would express his future intuitive and perfect knowledge (1Cor 13:12 "For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I **know** (**ginóskō**) in part, but then I **shall know fully** (**epiginóskō**) just as I also **have been fully known** (**epiginóskō**).

**Trench** goes on to explain that the idea in **epígnōsis** is that "It is bringing me better acquainted with a thing I knew before; a more exact viewing of an object that I saw before afar off. That little portion of knowledge which we had here shall be much improved, our eye shall be raised to see the same things more strongly and clearly.' All the uses of **epígnōsis** which St. Paul makes, justify and bear out this distinction (Ro 1:28; 3:20; 10:2; Eph 4:13; Phil. 1:9; 1Ti 2:4; 2Ti 2:25; cf. Heb 10:26 --see **notes** Ro 1:28; 3:20; 10:2; Eph 4:13; Phil. 1:9; **1Ti 2:4**; 2Ti 2:25; cf. Heb 10:26; this same intensive use of **epígnōsis** is borne out by other similar passages in the NT (see notes 2Pe 1:2, 8; 2:20) and in the Septuagint (Proverbs 2:5; Hosea 4:1; 6:6); and is recognized by the Greek Fathers." (Trench, R. C. Synonyms of the New Testament. page 285)

**Marvin Vincent** says **epígnōsis** is "Clear and exact knowledge. Always of a knowledge which powerfully influences the form of the religious life and hence containing more of the element of personal sympathy than the simple **gnōsis** knowledge, which may be concerned with the intellect alone without affecting the character." Vincent goes on to comment on Paul's use of **epígnōsis** in Ro 3:20 (note) ("...by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes the **knowledge** of sin.") noting that "the knowledge of sin here (Ro 3:20) is not mere perception, but an acquaintance with sin which works toward repentance, faith, and holy character." (Vincent, M. R. Word studies in the New Testament. Vol. 3, Page 1-40)

**Truth** (225) (**aletheia** from **a** = without + **lêthō** = that which is hidden) in this context is whatever God says, for when He speaks in His Word, there is always a correspondence between what He says about any subject and what is the actual reality concerning that subject. In other words, God's truth is a declaration which has corresponding reality or a reality which is correctly set forth. Since God is Himself the great reality, that which correctly sets forth His nature is pre-eminently the Truth, the Word of God.

2 Timothy 2:26 and they may come to their senses (3SAAS) and escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive (RPPMPN) by him to do his will. (NASB: Lockman)

**Greek:** kai ananephosin (3SAAS) ek tes tou diabolou pagidos. ezogremenoí (RPPMPN) hup' autou eis to ekeinou thelema.

**Amplified:** And that they may come to their senses [and] escape out of the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him, [henceforth] to do His [God's] will. (Amplified Bible - Lockman)

**KJV:** And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.

**NLT:** Then they will come to their senses and escape from the Devil's trap. For they have been held captive by him to do whatever he wants. (NLT - Tyndale House)

**Phillips:** They may come to their senses and be rescued from the power of the devil by the servant of the Lord and set to work for God's purposes. (Phillips: Touchstone)

**Wuest:** and that they may return to soberness out of the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him, [returning to soberness so as to serve] the will of that One [God]. (Eerdmans Publishing - used by permission)

**Young's Literal:** and they may awake out of the devil's snare, having been caught by him at his will.

## AND THEY COME TO THEIR SENSES: kai ananepsosin (3PAAS):

- Lk 15:17; 1Co 15:34; Ep 5:14
- 2 Timothy Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [2 Timothy 2:23-26 The Gentle Art of Correction](#) - Steven Cole
- [2 Timothy 2:23-26 An Honorable Vessel, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur

**Come to their senses** - be restored to (spiritual) soberness!

**Come to...senses** (366) (**ananepho** from **aná** = again + **nepho** = be sober) is literally to become sober again, regaining one's senses and describing one who comes out from a drunken stupor (in the present context spiritually speaking which in some ways is even worse than an alcoholic stupor).

Satan makes people drunk with his lies, and the servant's task is to sober them up and rescue them. The enemy intoxicates his victims with the vintage wines of "the lust of the flesh (pleasure), the lust of the eyes (possessions), and the boastful pride of the life (power and position)." (1Jn 2:15-note, 1Jn 2:16-note)

The victim will forfeit their spiritual senses by drinking of any one of these wines, and only divine intervention is capable of sobering and reviving them from Satan's grip. The truth is that unless God reaches down and supernaturally revives the drunken, slumbering victim (granting them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth), our words and warnings will fall on deaf ears.

**Vine** writes that "**ananepho**, rendered "recover themselves" denotes to return to soberness, as from a state of delirium or drunkenness (see the R.V. marg). The suggestion therefore is that the reception of error produces a state of insensibility to the will of God. The devil is ever seeking to capture the believer in his snare and prevent him from doing the Lord's will. (2 Timothy 2)

**John MacArthur** - The destructive effect of false teaching and sin numbs the conscience, confuses the mind, erodes conviction, and paralyzes the will. (2 Timothy. Moody)

**Barnes** writes that **ananepho** "means to become sober again, as from inebriation; to awake from a deep sleep; and then, to come to a right mind, as one does who is aroused from a state of inebriety, or from sleep. The representation in this part of the verse implies that while under the influence of error, they were like a man intoxicated, or like one in deep slumber. From this state they were to be roused, as one is from sleep, or as a man is recovered from the stupor and dullness of intoxication. (Barnes Notes on the NT)

They were mentally intoxicated, drunk with the cup of the great harlot's abominations, full of her immorality. Lies, half-truths, falsehoods, worldly chatter, foolish and ignorant speculation produce spiritual inebriation, a stupor resulting in loss of judgment and proper control of one's faculties. The destructive effect of false teaching and sin numbs the conscience, confuses the mind, erodes conviction, and paralyzes the will.

This word may refer to a practice in which sowers scattered seeds impregnated with drugs intended to put birds to sleep that a net might be drawn over them to capture them.

**Kent** adds that "These persons who have been trapped by the Devil were not the same type as those described in 2 Timothy 2:21 (note) or Titus 3:10 (note). From such, the minister is to remove himself. Those in 2 Timothy 2:25, 26 are to be dealt with kindly in order to bring about a return to sober thinking. They are captured alive by Satan. There is at least an inference that these persons may be true believers who have become ensnared. If they are, the repentance and recovery may be expected, and the offenders may yet be restored to the will of God." (From Paul Apple - [2 Timothy Passing the Torch of Leadership](#))

## AND ESCAPE FROM THE SNARE OF THE DEVIL: ek tes tou diabolou pagidos:

- Ps 124:7; Isa 8:15; 28:13; Act 26:18; 2Cor 2:11; Col 1:13; 2Th 2:9, 10, 11, 12; 1Ti 3:7; 6:9,10; Rev 12:9; 20:2,3
- 2 Timothy Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [2 Timothy 2:23-26 The Gentle Art of Correction](#) - Steven Cole
- [2 Timothy 2:23-26 An Honorable Vessel, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur

This passage more literally reads "and they may awake out of the devil's snare."

**Escape from** translates the preposition **ek** (1537) which means out of or from.

As **Dean Alford** writes "These people have, in a state of intoxication, been entrapped; and are enabled, at their awaking sober, to escape.

**Snare** (3803) (**pagis** from **pegnumi** = set up, fix) is a trap (as that which is fixed or fastened by a noose or notch) and which can fall unexpectedly or suddenly (so that wild animals and birds are caught by surprise).

**Pagis** was used in Greek for a "net" (a piece of equipment for a bird-catcher), a "snare" or a "mousetrap." In short **pagis** is that which causes one to be suddenly endangered or unexpectedly brought under control of a hostile force.

Who is the one ensnared? Paul does not clearly distinguish the "victim" which leaves the interpretation open to either believers or unbelievers. While we might naturally favor the latter, we would be remiss to ignore fact that Sin is powerful and even believers can be entangled in this wicked web, and then becoming so deceived that they don't even see their grave condition and they can do it all while still being actively involved in church activities! Both groups of "victims" are in desperate need of the gift of repentance, which alone will enable them to escape the intoxicating power of Sin and Satan and this World System. **Dearly beloved, potential vessel of honor, are you ensnared and so deceived that you don't even recognize your tragic condition?**

**Hiebert** comments that "The snare of the Devil into which they have fallen was the error by which they have become intoxicated; in awakening to soberness they will escape the intoxicating snare. "The devil's method of taking men captive is to benumb the conscience, confuse the senses, and paralyze the will" (Horton). As men who are drunken, they are unable to free themselves from the snare of the Devil. (2 Timothy by D. Edmond Hiebert).

**Pagis** is found 5 times in the NT (Luke 21:35; Ro 11:9; 1Ti 3:7; 6:9; 2Ti 2:26) and is translated **snare** (4x) and **trap** (1x) in the NASB.

**Pagis** describes a trick or stratagem (temptation). It pictures that which comes unexpectedly, suddenly even as a snare entices birds or beasts who are caught unaware. This describes that which fastens or holds one fast.

**Pagis** here in 2 Timothy shows that those who resist the gospel are still in the snare of the devil; deluded by him and trapped into doing his will. The idea of gods and demons being equipped with traps and nets was ancient and widespread. The devil is not just an accuser but an active opponent who is at work to capture and destroy people.

Figuratively **pagis** was often used in Greek in connection with seductive women, Solomon writing of the lad who follows the seductress "Until an arrow pierces through his liver. As a bird hastens to the **snare**, so he does not know that it will cost him his life. (**Proverbs 7:23**)

**The Trojan horse** was called a "wooden **pagis**." A religious phrase is "to be caught in the net of Ate" (delusion or perdition or guilt).

**TDNT** on **pagis** - This word means "what fastens" or "holds fast." It is often used for a "net" or "snare," as well as for a "mousetrap." A vivid expression is "snatching at bread." Figuratively the word is often used in connection with seductive women. The Trojan horse is also called "wooden **págis**." A religious phrase is "to be caught in the net of Ate" (delusion or perdition or guilt). The LXX uses the term for snares, often figuratively (Ps. 69:22). The transferred sense stresses the crafty or destructive element (cf. Ps. 35:7). Often the suddenness of the destruction is to the fore. Later the usage is more stereotyped, e.g., for idolatry and for the "snares of the ungodly" (Jeremiah, Psalms, Proverbs). In Prov. 13:14 the reference seems to be to the divine punishment itself. The term is rare in the NT. In Luke 21:34-35 Jesus warns his disciples to be on guard lest the last day come on them like a snare. 1 Tim. 3:7 warns bishops that bad conduct will bring them into disrepute and make them easy victims of the devil's wiles, so that they will be unfit for further service. 2 Tim. 2:25-26 shows that those who resist the Christian message are still in the snare of the devil; deluded by him, they are trapped into doing his will. The idea of gods and demons being equipped with traps and nets is ancient and widespread. The devil is not just an accuser but an active opponent who is at work to capture and destroy people. 1 Tim. 6:9 deals with the danger of the craving for wealth. This leads people into a snare. In the context of desires and destruction, this is clearly again the snare of the devil. In Rom. 11:9 (quoting Ps. 69:22), Paul uses **pagis** in connection with divine judgment. All that the people lives by and does is a snare, offense, and recompense. In the apostolic fathers Did. 2.4 uses the LXX phrase "snare of death" for a double-dealing tongue, and Barn. 19.8 uses it for the mouth in general. (Theological Dictionary of the New Testament: Abridged in One Volume)

**Pagis** is found much more frequently in the **Septuagint (LXX)** where it is snares both literally and figuratively (**Psalms 69:22** "May their table before them become a **snare**; and when they are in peace, may it become a trap", ). **Pagis** in the **Septuagint** -

Jos. 23:13; Job 18:8; Job 18:9; Job 22:10; Ps. 9:15; Ps. 10:9; Ps. 11:6; Ps. 18:5; Ps. 25:15; Ps. 31:4; Ps. 35:7; Ps. 35:8; Ps. 57:6; Ps. 64:5; Ps. 66:11; Ps. 69:22; Ps. 91:3; Ps. 119:110; Ps. 124:7; Ps. 140:5; Ps. 141:9; Ps. 142:3; Prov. 6:2; Prov. 6:5; Prov. 7:23; Prov. 11:9; Prov. 12:13; Prov. 13:14; Prov. 14:27; Prov. 18:7; Prov. 20:25; Prov. 21:6; Prov. 22:5; Prov. 29:6; Eccl. 9:12; Isa. 8:14; Isa. 24:17; Isa. 24:18; Isa. 42:22; Jer. 5:26; Jer. 5:27; Jer. 18:22; Jer. 48:43; Jer. 48:44; Ezek. 29:4; Hos. 5:1; Hos. 9:8; Amos 3:5;

**Pagis** stresses the crafty or destructive element of the trap and the emphasis is often on the suddenness of the destruction.

**Words** are frequently describes as a **snare**...

If you have been **snared** with the words of your mouth, Have been caught with the words of your mouth, 3 Do this then, my son, and deliver yourself; Since you have come into the hand of your neighbor, Go, humble yourself, and importune your neighbor. (**Proverbs 6:2**)

An evil man is **ensnared** by the transgression of his lips, But the righteous will escape from trouble. (**Proverbs 12:13**)

**Sin** is a snare...

By transgression (rebellion) an evil man is **ensnared**, but the righteous sings and rejoices. (**Proverbs 29:6**)

**God** is sometimes the source of snares, the psalmist recording that...

Upon the wicked He will rain **snares**; Fire and brimstone and burning wind will be the portion of their cup. (**Psalm 11:6**) ([Spurgeon's note](#))

**Jehovah** delivers the righteous from snares:

I will say to the LORD, "My refuge and my fortress, My God, in whom I trust!" 3 For it is He who delivers you from the snare of the trapper, And from the deadly pestilence. (**Psalm 91:2-3**) ([Spurgeon's note v2](#) ; [V3](#))

"My eyes are continually toward the LORD, for He will pluck my feet out of the **net**. (what is man's responsibility from this verse?)" (**Psalms 25:15**) ([Spurgeon's Note](#))

**Death** is pictured as snare:

The cords of Sheol surrounded me; The **snares** of death confronted me. (**Psalm 18:5**) ([Spurgeon's note](#))

They have prepared a **net** for my steps; My soul is bowed down; They dug a pit before me; They themselves have fallen into the midst of it. Selah. (**Psalm 57:6**) ([Spurgeon's note](#))

**Evil men** lay snares for the righteous:

Thou wilt pull me out of the net which they have secretly laid for me; For Thou art my strength. **Psalm 31:4**) ([Spurgeon's note](#))

They hold fast to themselves an evil purpose; They talk of laying snares secretly; They say, "Who can see them?" (**Psalm 64:5**) ([Spurgeon's note](#))

Below are all the NT uses of **pagis**...

(Jesus to His disciples) "Be on guard, so that your hearts will not be weighted down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of life, and that day (the day of Christ's return which Jesus invariably enjoins with watchfulness) (Lk 21:34). Nashville: Word Pub.) will not come on you suddenly like a **trap**" (**Lk 21:34**)

And David says, "LET THEIR TABLE BECOME A **SNARE** AND A TRAP, AND A STUMBLING BLOCK AND A RETRIBUTION TO THEM. (**Ro 11:9**) (**J Vernon McGee** explains that... "The table has reference to feasting, which is representative of material prosperity. The children of Israel had great feasts at which they were actually guests of God—they did not invite God to their feasts as the pagans did—rather, God invited them. The Passover was a notable example. The thought here is that they were feasting in a conceited confidence which was entirely pagan. Their carnal security deceived them as to their true spiritual ruin. They trusted the things they ate without any true confidence in God. My friend, this is the condition at the present moment of multitudes of church members. They come to the Lord's Supper without a spiritual understanding." (McGee, J. V. Thru the Bible commentary. Vol. 4, Page 722. Nashville: Thomas Nelson)

(Paul warns overseers that bad conduct will bring them into disrepute and make them easy victims of the devil's wiles, so that they will be unfit for further service) And he must have a good reputation with those outside the church, so that he will not fall into reproach and the **snare** of the devil. (**1Ti 3:7**)

But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and **asnare** (such people are tempted strongly and often caught in painful, debilitating sin) and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction. (**1Ti 6:9**)

Guy King rightly laments...

How many are all unconsciously ensnared in that trap: they would be greatly surprised, and highly incensed, if they were told they were told they were, and it is only when they try to escape that they become really aware of their imprisonment. How cleverly the devil lures us, working with, and working upon, the thing that fascinates us. Mice don't like traps; but they do like cheese - and there lies the tragedy. There is a passage (James 1:14), where we are given what one might call the physiology of temptation - "every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed." That is the way Satan lures us, draws us away: he plays upon our lust, our particular strong leaning or liking - that's the cheese! So he gets us. How did these people of Timothy's get into that undesirable situation? Why, they were just bemused. ([2 Timothy 2:22-26 Meet Three Groups](#))

**Devil** (1228) (**diabolos** from **diabállo** = accuse <> in turn from **dia** = through + **ballo** = throw) (**Click** in depth study of **diabolos**) is one who literally "throws between", picturing what the devil does. In the beginning he "*threw*" lies to Eve and Adam to create a gap between God and man which resulted almost immediately in a "gap" between Adam and his wife Eve. That's the devil's game plan...to wreak havoc in relationships (and churches) by "throwing between"!

Paul's point is that if men will not be the servants of God they inevitably become the captives of the Devil.

Wuest has an interesting comment that the literal meaning of "to throw through" means "to riddle one with accusations." ([Wuest Word Studies - Eerdman Publishing Company Volume 1, Volume 2, Volume 3](#) - used [by permission](#))

**Diabolos** describes not only those one who brings a false charge against others, but also who maliciously, insidiously and with hostility disseminates statements about others.

**Diabolos** is used 16 times in the Septuagint (LXX), the Greek translation of the Hebrew OT, several of the uses recorded below. Note that it is not surprising that 10 of the 16 uses of **diabolos** are in [Job 1-2](#)!

**Diabolos** is applied 34 of 37 times to **Satan**, the god of this world, and in each case has the definite article in the Greek (**"the"** = defining a specific entity) and is never in the plural (the three uses below in the pastoral epistles are all plural) as when applied to men who, by opposing the cause of God, may be said to act the part of the devil or to side with him.

The diabolos is a **false accuser**, **slanderer** (one who utters false charges or misrepresentations which defame and damage another's reputation), **backbiter** (malicious comment about one not present), given to malicious gossip or **acalumniator** (one who utters maliciously false statements, charges, or imputations about, this term imputes malice to the speaker and falsity to the assertions).

There's victory for you over sin and its shame:  
Look only to Jesus, there's power in His name.  
The devil can't harm you nor cause you to sin;  
By trusting the Savior the victory you'll win. --Anon.

Satan's ploys are no match  
for the Savior's power.

**HAVING BEEN HELD CAPTIVE BY HIM TO DO HIS WILL: ezogremenoi (RPPMPN) hup autou eis to ekeinou thelema:**

- Isa 42:6,7; 49:25,26; 53:12; Mt 12:28,29; Lk 11:21; 2Pet 2:18, 19, 20
- Job 1:12; 2:6; Lk 22:31,32; Jn 13:2,27; Acts 5:3; 1Ti 1:20
- 2 Timothy Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [2 Timothy 2:23-26 The Gentle Art of Correction](#) - Steven Cole
- [2 Timothy 2:23-26 An Honorable Vessel, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur

**Held captive** (2221) (**zogreo** from **zoós** = alive + **agreúo** = catch or entrap) means literally to catch alive, capture or ensnare, as hunters or fishermen do their game. The idea is to bring under control and to continue to restrain. Strong's Lexicon says it means to take prisoner in war or to make a prisoner of war, a good play on words since these poor individuals held by the devil are indeed victims of a spiritual war in the heavenlies! It is used figuratively (or spiritually) to describe those who become live captives of the devil in a moral sense.

In 2 Ti 2:26 **zogreo** speaks of Satan's captives to do his will (cf Judas Lk 22:3), whereas in Lk 5:10 **zogreo** speaks of the Savior's captives to do His will! And *never the twain shall meet*, as they say!

The **passive voice** indicates that the captivating influence or power comes from an source outside the one who is captivated, in this case the devil. Those who are in opposition to God's work, whether they know it or not, are bound in a demonic deception, and are doing the devil's work and need to be set free!

The **perfect tense** speaks of past completed action with continuing present effect or result. In other words, these individuals were captured alive at some point in time in the past and are still ensnared, held as a prisoner of spiritual warfare by the deceiver himself. This tense conveys the idea that the devil's intention is to keep them permanently captive. The devil snares people through clever arguments, fear, and appeals to selfish pride and ambition (appealing to our fallen sin nature). Christians should exercise a healthy awareness of (but not a preoccupation with) the participation of the Devil in the thinking of those who oppose us in the spiritual realm. We must be alert to the fact that contending for truth involves contending with spiritual powers. It follows that we must not be so naive as to think we can confront such opposition on purely human terms. On the other hand, as the Lord's bondservants we must maintain a healthy balance and not become so preoccupied with the devil's role that we lose sight of the Lord's sovereignty and omnipotence. Remember this is not a power struggle but a struggle over truth. Remember also that this verse does not instruct us to go off on "witch hunts", seeking demons behind every spiritual problem we encounter. Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness and the proper discernment and adequate empowerment will be supplied by the King, so that we are prepared for every good work.

**Zogreo** is used figuratively (spiritually) by Jesus in Luke's gospel where it refers to catching men by preaching of gospel. After showing the disciples His miraculous ability to bring about an incredible catch of fish, He said to Simon, "**Do not fear**, from now on you will be **catching (zogreo = winning people for God's kingdom)** men. (Lk 5:10-note)

**Edwards** notes that "God's program is to catch men alive and turn them into fishers of men; Satan's program is also to catch men alive, but then to turn them into destroyers of men. It is a rather sobering thought to realize that none of us can escape being used, whether by the Prince of peace or by the Prince of darkness. All of us are playing a part on the stage of human history, and our performance will promote either good or evil, light or darkness, Christ or Satan. There is no comfortable middle ground; no haven for the complacent and mediocre saint, though many would vainly imagine that there is.

**Zogreo** - 8x in 8v in the [Septuagint \(Lxx\)](#) - Nu 31:15,18; Dt. 20:16; Jos. 2:13; 6:25; 9:20; 2 Sam. 8:2; 2 Chr. 25:12

**Zogreo** was used in the [Septuagint \(Lxx\)](#) for saving persons alive from danger (see Nu 31:15, 18, Rahab the harlot in Joshua 2:13, 6:25). Indeed the disciples would soon be rescuing sinners from the worst danger of all, eternal separation from God forever!

#### **Theological Lexicon of the New Testament on zogreo -**

In Greek literature, zōgreō is most often opposed to verbs meaning kill, massacre, annihilate: "The Persians massacred a large number of the Massagetae and made the others prisoners" (Herodotus 1.211); "The Syracusans had either captured a large number of men or killed them" (Thucydides 7.41.4); "Such was the anger of the Crotoniates that they took no prisoners but killed all who fled." The fate of these captives is often dire: weighed down with fetters (Herodotus 1.66; Polybius 5.77), it was not rare for them to be executed in the end: "Seven hundred men of the popular party, taken alive (zōgrēsantes), were put to death; only one escaped, and he was mutilated" (ibid. 6.91); "Of all the enemies that the Scythians capture alive, they sacrifice one out of a hundred." But to be "taken alive" means not simply escaping immediate massacre and "being spared,"<sup>9</sup> but also retaining hope of liberation (Herodotus 5.77). That is why vanquished people plead with their conquerors to spare their lives. That is in fact the nuance in Luke 5:10—keep a captive alive, be gracious and merciful to him, even restore him to life.

The secular texts cited display especially the cruelty of victors toward their prisoners, whom they torture and reduce to slavery, when they do not simply execute them. Thus it is that the devil casts his net over sinners, takes them prisoner (ezōgrēmenoi), subjects them to his will (2 Tim 2:26).

**Guy King** rightly laments "One is reminded of the prodigal, in Luke 15:17, who "came to himself." He had not been himself for a long time. Benjamin Disraeli once said of W. E. Gladstone that he was "intoxicated with the exuberance of his own verbosity"; well, that prodigal, it seems, was intoxicated with the exuberance of his own conviviality - he had completely lost himself. But "when he came to himself" - he saw his utter folly, and found his way back home again. So he recovered himself; and so these parishioners of Ephesus. ([2 Timothy 2:22-26 Meet Three Groups](#))

**To do (1519) (eis)** is the preposition of motion into any place or thing. In this context into the devil's will.

**Will (2307) (thelema** from **thelo** = to will with the **"-ma"** suffix indicating the result of the will = "a thing willed") generally speaks of

the result of what one has decided. One sees this root word in the feminine name "**Thelma**." In its most basic form, **thelema** refers to a wish, a strong desire, and the willing of some event. (**Note**: See also the discussion of the preceding word **boule** for comments relating to thelema).

**Zodhiates** says that **thelema** is the "Will, not to be conceived as a demand, but as an expression or inclination of pleasure towards that which is liked, that which pleases and creates joy. When it denotes God's will, it signifies His gracious disposition toward something. Used to designate what God Himself does of His own good pleasure. ([Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament](#))

**Thelema** has both an objective meaning ("what one wishes to happen" or what is willed) and a subjective connotation ("the act of willing or desiring"). The word conveys the idea of desire, even a heart's desire, for the word primarily expresses emotion instead of volition. Thus God's will is not so much God's intention, as it is His heart's desire.

**Thelema** - 62x in 58v -

Mt 6:10; 7:21; 12:50; 18:14; 21:31; 26:42; Mark 3:35; Luke 12:47; 22:42; 23:25; Jn 1:13; 4:34; 5:30; 6:38, 39, 40; 7:17; 9:31; Acts 13:22; 21:14; 22:14; Ro 1:10-note; Ro 2:18-note; Ro 12:2-note; Ro 15:32-note; 1Cor 1:1; 7:37; 16:12; 2Cor 1:1; 8:5; Gal 1:4; Ep 1:1-note, Ep 1:5-note, Ep 1:9-note, Ep 1:11-note; Ep 2:3-note; Ep 5:17-note; Ep 6:6-note; Col 1:1-note, Col 1:9-note; Col 4:12-note; 1Th 4:3-note; 1Th 5:18-note; 2Ti 1:1-note; 2Ti 2:26-note; He 10:7-note, He 10:9-note, He 10:10-note, He 10:36-note; He 13:21-note; 1Pe 2:15-note; 1Pe 3:17-note; 1Pe 4:2-note, 1Pe 4:19-note; 2Pe 1:21-note; 1Jn 2:17; 5:14; Rev 4:11-note. **NAS** = desire(1), desires(1), will(57).

How were they captured? A trap? Yes a trap of sorts...absolutely ANY DEVIATION from the PLUMBLINE of God's Holy Word results in WRONG THINKING & if not soon corrected will CORRUPT CHARACTER and result in WRONG BEHAVIOR. TRUTH (here EPIGNOSIS) RENEWS THEIR MIND, EXPOSING LIES & ERROR in one's thinking and thus setting the captive free (Isa 61:1, Luke 4:18) as God grants them the repentance so that they can even turn from their sin. Lord give REPENTANT HEARTS TO WES, MEREDITH, LAUREN. PLEASE.

It is a fearful thing that, because of sin and unfaithfulness, the devil can actually snare and hold a person captive...to do his will (see Jn8:44, 59). The vessel of dishonor becomes a pawn of Satan to work his evil will within the body of Christ. Such is the terrible & tragic power of sin.

Note that this verse literally read "having been taken captive **by him** unto the will of **that one**" and thus suggests several interpretations

- (1) That the victims are delivered from the snare of the devil who took them captive to do his will, the interpretation that one is led to from a natural reading of most of the Bible versions.
- (2) That they are taken captive by God's servant to do God's will, where the pronoun "that one" is interpreted as God's servant.
- (3) they are delivered out of the snare of the devil, who took them captive, to do God's will, where the pronoun "that one" is interpreted as God Himself.

**Edwards** explains that "The last part of this verse is a bit difficult to interpret. The difficulty arises in the **differences between the pronouns** "captive by him (autou) to do his (to ekeinou) will." Many take these pronouns to refer to the same person, the devil. This certainly is possible and makes for an easy interpretation. These men have been taken captive by the devil to do the will of the devil. The problem with this interpretation arises in the marked difference between the two personal pronouns. We would have expected Paul to maintain the same words if he was referring to the same person. With the change of pronouns there arises another possibility. The last pronoun ("his will") may refer to the next nearest antecedent, "God" (vs. 25); and so the interpretation would then be that the men have been taken captive by the devil to do God's will. In this case, Paul would be emphasizing God's divine sovereignty in the affairs of man and Satan. Satan's dealings with the Lord's people is always bound within the will of God. (Bolding added)

**Guzik** sums up this section "To be a servant of the Lord - a vessel of honor for Him - we must be empty, clean, and available. If we refuse to empty ourselves, clean ourselves, and make ourselves available to the Lord, we will find ourselves captive to the devil in one sense or another. May it never be!