

A CHARGE TO KEEP

The following article is a recent ordination message considerably “revised and extended” [as the senators say] and is presented in this expanded form with personal references to the candidate removed because I believe that the areas touched in relationship to the ministry are appropriately re-emphasized in our lax times.

Our subject is “ordination.” I confess that I might wish to have this man lined up as my target regarding other subjects; however, while I have the inclination, I have neither the mandate nor the time. We, therefore, will confine our thoughts (or most of them) to the theme of ordination. Tonight, I have the solemn sacred tasks of charging him and of charging this church regarding three separate and distinct aspects of ordination: the Biblical significance of ordination, the responsibilities that this church assumes in voting for the presbytery to lay hands upon this man, and the obligations that he accepts in submitting himself to this church for ordination.

An important principle of Biblical interpretation bears the simple title of “the Law of First Use.” The flavor of the meaning and the spiritual application of a word or phrase seems to be established by the first context in which the word or phrase appears. God chose the words of this Book and did so with omnipotent wisdom. We Americans in particular are increasingly careless in our use of words; we play with the meanings of words. We have contracted the Humpty-Dumpty syndrome. Humpty is described as telling Alice “a word means what I want it to mean, nothing more, and nothing less.” America has become so adept in this regard, that she now has a former president that could not or would not acknowledge that he knew the definition of the word “is.” America has elected a considerable number of presidents, senators, congresspersons, and governors that were or are *politicians* and not *statesmen*. Politicians use words to denote whatever they wish them to signify at a given moment. I assure you that the God of Heaven is not a politician. The meanings of the words, yea the words themselves, of this Book, the word of God, are not tossed to and fro with every wind of human opinion—they are forever settled in Heaven. Therefore, when the God of the word selected a particular word, that choice was on purpose and for a reason and the God of the word provided by example and by precept the definition and the use of the word. I may also assure you that we do not have to go looking for the words that God gave; the God Who gave those words has kept those words safe through providential preservation.

When I entered the Gospel ministry, no Baptist preacher had to explain what he meant when he said something similar to that which I just wrote. I could not begin to number the preachers that I remember standing behind pulpits, holding up their Bibles, and, while waving it over their heads, openly, confidently, and loudly identifying the Book *in their hands* as “the very words of the very God of Heaven.” Without exception, the Book that those preachers labeled as the words of God was a well-worn copy of the Authorized Version. I never heard a Baptist preacher ever refer to that old black [or red] leather Book in his hand as anything other than the word of God. The congregations were not confused; they understood exactly what was intended by the preacher for them to understand: they also had the words of God in the Bibles in their hands. However, in the span of my ministerial life, the same Bible that those men and those congregations accepted as the word of God has come under an attack of such diabolical nature from its enemies and has endured such duplicitous abuse by its friends that today I am required to explain my meaning in precise terms.

As Moses recorded Genesis, the very Hebrew words that he penned on that first original

scroll were the exact words that were selected by the Holy Ghost. Moses wrote in Hebrew what the Spirit of God moved him to write. Every writer that followed unto John penned in Greek his final “amen” on Patmos was given the words he was to inscribe. That act of “God selecting the words” is identified as God speaking the words [Matthew 4:4] and is called [2 Timothy 3:16] inspiration—“God breathed words.” In the process of time when someone else translated those words into a language beyond Hebrew and Greek, if that person [and the individuals and committees that followed him] performed the work as an honest translator, the result was an accurate, legitimate, reflective rendition of that which Moses recorded. Any translator of the Hebrew and Greek texts of Scripture, who was [or is] a person of integrity, even if he himself were an atheist, could and would accomplish an accurate and reflective translation. The only inspired translators of Scripture—and understand this well—were the prophets and the apostles who translated what JEHOVAH had said for those to whom they ministered [such as Daniel for Cyrus, Jonah for the Assyrians, the apostles for the nationals gathered at Jerusalem, Paul for the people in Lycaonia, etc.]. Other translators of the Scripture texts were not inspired; they were either honest or dishonest, either adequate to the task or inadequate, and either faithful or unfaithful to the text that they were translating. The same is true for all translators active now or who will be translating in the future.

What is true in general of all translators is true in particular of translators of scripture. Translators [whether at the United Nations or on a mission field] translate words already spoken or written into equivalent words. Translators are never employed for the business of “mind reading”; they are not empowered to seek the unwritten thoughts of the author and substituting those for the written words received by the translator. Translators do not convey the perceived or assumed intent of the original; they are to duplicate in a different language the words of that text which they receive. The Scriptural texts are the records of the words given to the writers through inspiration. Translations of Scripture are the honest or dishonest, the clear or distorted reflections of the text that was delivered to the translator. I believe that the translators of the Authorized Version were no more [but no less] than honest men who did no more than their collective best to provide no more than an accurately reflective English translation of the Hebrew and Greek texts which they received and which were before them. I also believe that the texts from which they translated were [and remain] superior to the texts that they rejected—in effect, those texts which they rejected and ignored contain every alteration pursued by the followers of the Westcott and Hort theory of “lost and recovered” Scriptures. Others may throw the Authorized Version away and use the texts that a wandering scholar rescued from the monastery trash can or from an ancient landfill—even while holding a copy of the Authorized Version in their hand and saying “This Book is the word of God . . . a completed work and not a Book under construction.” (actual situation and quote of a noted fundamentalist), *but I have no intention of doing so.* I have no more sympathy for that position than I do for the position of Dr. Ruckman. Both camps, in my view, are promoting extremist distortions of truth. It is not their motives that I question, but their philosophy.

{Recently, a friend notified me that a newly published work claiming to be a study of the concept of the preservation of Scriptures labels me as a defender of “Ruckmanism.” Though I am flattered to be identified as a defender of the doctrine of textual preservation who is considered worthy of a national attack, I charge that author with shoddy research and libelous accusations. He found it far easier to smear my position with inflammatory code words than to challenge my written record over five decades. That writer took eight pages of one issue of The Baptist Heritage and summarized those words with one sentence *of his own construction.* No Reader’s

Digest condenser ever had that much editorial brass. The author thereby falsely attributes beliefs to me that he cannot find evidenced in any of my written works, taped sermons, or private conversations with others—certainly not with him, since he and I have never met or spoken. He may quote me all he wishes—permission is freely granted in every issue; but for him to place fictitious words in my mouth or to create forged words for my pen is an act of deliberate and desperate dishonesty. Somehow, my writings must have irritated him greatly. Like King Saul, he has left his throne and taken up arms to pursue a flea. It is interesting to observe that he chastises certain individuals for challenging the position of such a one as he with his years of ministry, but he finds no hesitation in abusing a man who has been in ministry longer than he has been alive and sees no inconsistency. He is wrong on all counts; age, position, or academic training are not grounds to “lord it over God’s heritage.” The arrogance of conferred position and the pride of claimed scholarship are demonstrated throughout his writing by his effrontery.

The God of Heaven used Samuel to rebuke Eli. However, Samuel had a humble spirit. I am willing to defend my position and eager to receive correction for any error. I will discuss, even debate, what I believe, because I am willing to be instructed. An elder brother or a child in the faith may guide me well—but I have difficulty gaining any leading from a wisenheimer adolescent .}

Since there were no errors in what Moses wrote, *if* the translator translated honestly and rendered a faithful translation, then, obviously, there are no errors in the translation. *If* I have a translation that mirrors the original, then I have the original faithfully translated. The original is the work of Deity, while the translation is the work of humanity. The original was perfect, coming from the mouth of God [Matthew 4:4] and could never be improved upon in any manner or fashion; the second can never be perfectly perfect, because it is the work of humanity. Deity is infallible; humanity is fallible.

What the God of Heaven recorded is suitable for any culture, any era, and any audience, because it is “forever settled in heaven.” I believe that several concepts are conveyed in that declaration: “forever settled in heaven.” At the very core, would be the absolute that unpins all understanding of the Scriptures. The written word originated in heaven, is determined in heaven, and is defined in heaven. The following verses provide the seventy-five verses where the underlying Hebrew word is used in the Old Testament according to Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance. I make no claim to Hebrew language scholarship—I do claim that the translators of the Authorized Version were individually and collectively among the greatest Biblical language scholars who have ever lived. They certainly had personal biases; however, their strongest bias was to be faithful to the words of the texts from which they translated. When they used the word “settled” to translate the word [נצב] in Psalm 119:89, they did not use the random toss of a coin to decide the term. They also did not select “settled” out of thin air, but in the context of how they translated the Hebrew term in the other seventy-four texts. Even the learned Brother Strong decided the translators were wrong in giving the word for a proper name [Nahum 2:7]—just as other textual critics do when they do not comprehend a text. Surely, they think, if we cannot fit this verse into our preconceived theology, then the translators must have erred. Why do they not let the text stand and adjust their pet theories? My answer is that they have a vested interest in their doctrinal theories and refuse to consider that they might be wrong.

Strong's number 5324 נָצַב *nâtsab naw-tsab'*

A primitive root; to *station*, in various applications (literally or figuratively): - appointed, deputy, erect, establish, X Huzzah [by mistake for a proper name], lay, officer, pillar, present, rear up, set (over, up), settle, sharpen, stablish, (make to) stand (-ing, still, up, upright), best state.

Genesis 18:2 And he lift up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood <05324> by him: and when he saw *them*, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground,

Genesis 21:28-29 And Abraham set <05324> seven ewe lambs of the flock by themselves. And Abimelech said unto Abraham, What *mean* these seven ewe lambs which thou hast set <05324> by themselves?

Genesis 24:13 Behold, I stand <05324> *here* by the well of water; and the daughters of the men of the city come out to draw water:

Genesis 24:43 Behold, I stand <05324> by the well of water; and it shall come to pass, that when the virgin cometh forth to draw *water*, and I say to her, Give me, I pray thee, a little water of thy pitcher to drink;

Genesis 28:12-13 And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up <05324> on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. And, behold, the LORD stood <05324> above it, and said, I *am* the LORD God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed;

Genesis 33:20 And he erected <05324> there an altar, and called it Elelohe-Israel.

Genesis 35:14 And Jacob set up <05324> a pillar in the place where he talked with him, *even* a pillar of stone: and he poured a drink offering thereon, and he poured oil thereon.

Genesis 35:20 And Jacob set <05324> a pillar upon her grave: that *is* the pillar of Rachel's grave unto this day.

Genesis 37:7 For, behold, we *were* binding sheaves in the field, and, lo, my sheaf arose, and also stood upright <05324>; and, behold, your sheaves stood round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf.

Genesis 45:1 Then Joseph could not refrain himself before all them that stood <05324> by him; and he cried, Cause every man to go out from me. And there stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself known unto his brethren.

Exodus 5:20 And they met Moses and Aaron, who stood <05324> in the way, as they came forth from Pharaoh:

Exodus 7:15 Get thee unto Pharaoh in the morning; lo, he goeth out unto the water; and thou shalt stand <05324> by the river's brink against he come; and the rod which was turned to a serpent shalt thou take in thine hand.

Exodus 15:8 And with the blast of thy nostrils the waters were gathered together, the floods stood upright <05324> as an heap, *and* the depths were congealed in the heart of the sea.

Exodus 17:9 And Moses said unto Joshua, Choose us out men, and go out, fight with Amalek: to morrow I will stand <05324> on the top of the hill with the rod of God in mine hand.

Exodus 18:14 And when Moses' father in law saw all that he did to the people, he said, What *is* this thing that thou doest to the people? why sittest thou thyself alone, and all the

people stand <05324> by thee from morning unto even?
Exodus 33:8 And it came to pass, when Moses went out unto the tabernacle, *that* all the people rose up, and stood <05324> every man *at* his tent door, and looked after Moses, until he was gone into the tabernacle.
Exodus 33:21 And the LORD said, Behold, *there is* a place by me, and thou shalt stand <05324> upon a rock:
Exodus 34:2 And be ready in the morning, and come up in the morning unto mount Sinai, and present <05324> thyself there to me in the top of the mount.
Numbers 16:27 So they gat up from the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, on every side: and Dathan and Abiram came out, and stood <05324> in the door of their tents, and their wives, and their sons, and their little children.
Numbers 22:23 And the ass saw the angel of the LORD standing <05324> in the way, and his sword drawn in his hand: and the ass turned aside out of the way, and went into the field: and Balaam smote the ass, to turn her into the way.
Numbers 22:31 Then the LORD opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel of the LORD standing <05324> in the way, and his sword drawn in his hand: and he bowed down his head, and fell flat on his face.
Numbers 22:34 And Balaam said unto the angel of the LORD, I have sinned; for I knew not that thou stoodest <05324> in the way against me: now therefore, if it displease thee, I will get me back again.
Numbers 23:6 And he returned unto him, and, lo, he stood <05324> by his burnt sacrifice, he, and all the princes of Moab.
Numbers 23:17 And when he came to him, behold, he stood <05324> by his burnt offering, and the princes of Moab with him. And Balak said unto him, What hath the LORD spoken?
Deuteronomy 29:10 Ye stand <05324> this day all of you before the LORD your God; your captains of your tribes, your elders, and your officers, *with* all the men of Israel,
Deuteronomy 32:8 When the most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set <05324> the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel.
Joshua 6:26 And Joshua adjured *them* at that time, saying, Cursed *be* the man before the LORD, that riseth up and buildeth this city Jericho: he shall lay the foundation thereof in his firstborn, and in his youngest *son* shall he set up <05324> the gates of it.
Judges 9:6 And all the men of Shechem gathered together, and all the house of Millo, and went, and made Abimelech king, by the plain of the pillar <05324> that *was* in Shechem.
Judges 18:16-17 And the six hundred men appointed with their weapons of war, which *were* of the children of Dan, stood <05324> by the entering of the gate. And the five men that went to spy out the land went up, *and* came in thither, *and* took the graven image, and the ephod, and the teraphim, and the molten image: and the priest stood <05324> in the entering of the gate with the six hundred men *that were* appointed with weapons of war.
Ruth 2:5-6 Then said Boaz unto his servant that was set <05324> over the reapers, Whose damsel *is* this? And the servant that was set <05324> over the reapers answered and said, *It is* the Moabitish damsel that came back with Naomi out of the country of Moab:
1 Samuel 1:26 And she said, Oh my lord, *as* thy soul liveth, my lord, I *am* the woman that stood <05324> by thee here, praying unto the LORD.
1 Samuel 4:20 And about the time of her death the women that stood <05324> by her said

unto her, Fear not; for thou hast born a son. But she answered not, neither did she regard *it*.

- 1 Samuel 13:21 Yet they had a file for the mattocks, and for the coulter, and for the forks, and for the axes, and to sharpen <05324> the goads.
- 1 Samuel 15:12 And when Samuel rose early to meet Saul in the morning, it was told Samuel, saying, Saul came to Carmel, and, behold, he set him up <05324> a place, and is gone about, and passed on, and gone down to Gilgal.
- 1 Samuel 19:20 And Saul sent messengers to take David: and when they saw the company of the prophets prophesying, and Samuel standing *as* appointed <05324> over them, the Spirit of God was upon the messengers of Saul, and they also prophesied.
- 1 Samuel 22:6-7 When Saul heard that David was discovered, and the men that *were* with him, (now Saul abode in Gibeah under a tree in Ramah, having his spear in his hand, and all his servants *were* standing <05324> about him;) Then Saul said unto his servants that stood <05324> about him, Hear now, ye Benjamites; will the son of Jesse give every one of you fields and vineyards, *and* make you all captains of thousands, and captains of hundreds;
- 1 Samuel 22:9 Then answered Doeg the Edomite, which was set <05324> over the servants of Saul, and said, I saw the son of Jesse coming to Nob, to Ahimelech the son of Ahitub.
- 1 Samuel 22:17 And the king said unto the footmen that stood <05324> about him, Turn, and slay the priests of the LORD; because their hand also *is* with David, and because they knew when he fled, and did not shew it to me. But the servants of the king would not put forth their hand to fall upon the priests of the LORD.
- 2 Samuel 13:31 Then the king arose, and tare his garments, and lay on the earth; and all his servants stood <05324> by with their clothes rent.
- 2 Samuel 18:17 And they took Absalom, and cast him into a great pit in the wood, and laid <05324> a very great heap of stones upon him: and all Israel fled every one to his tent.
- 2 Samuel 18:18 Now Absalom in his lifetime had taken and reared up <05324> for himself a pillar, which *is* in the king's dale: for he said, I have no son to keep my name in remembrance: and he called the pillar after his own name: and it is called unto this day, Absalom's place.
- 1 Kings 4:5 And Azariah the son of Nathan *was* over the officers <05324>: and Zabud the son of Nathan *was* principal officer, *and* the king's friend:
- 1 Kings 4:7 And Solomon had twelve officers <05324> over all Israel, which provided victuals for the king and his household: each man his month in a year made provision.
- 1 Kings 4:27 And those officers <05324> provided victual for king Solomon, and for all that came unto king Solomon's table, every man in his month: they lacked nothing.
- 1 Kings 5:16 Beside the chief of Solomon's officers <05324> which *were* over the work, three thousand and three hundred, which ruled over the people that wrought in the work.
- 1 Kings 9:23 These *were* the chief of the officers <05324> that *were* over Solomon's work, five hundred and fifty, which bare rule over the people that wrought in the work.
- 1 Kings 16:34 In his days did Hiel the Bethelite build Jericho: he laid the foundation thereof in Abiram his firstborn, and set up <05324> the gates thereof in his youngest *son* Segub, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by Joshua the son of Nun.
- 1 Kings 22:47 *There was* then no king in Edom: a deputy <05324> *was* king.
- 2 Kings 17:10 And they set them up <05324> images and groves in every high hill, and under every green tree:

1 Chronicles 18:3 And David smote Hadarezer king of Zobah unto Hamath, as he went to stablish <05324> his dominion by the river Euphrates.

2 Chronicles 8:10 And these *were* the chief of king Solomon's officers <05324>, *even* two hundred and fifty, that bare rule over the people.

Psalms 39:5 Behold, thou hast made my days *as* an handbreadth; and mine age *is* as nothing before thee: verily every man at his best state <05324> *is* altogether vanity. Selah.

Psalms 41:12 And as for me, thou upholdest me in mine integrity, and settest <05324> me before thy face for ever.

Psalms 45:9 Kings' daughters *were* among thy honourable women: upon thy right hand did stand <05324> the queen in gold of Ophir.

Psalms 74:17 Thou hast set <05324> all the borders of the earth: thou hast made summer and winter.

Psalms 78:13 He divided the sea, and caused them to pass through; and he made the waters to stand <05324> as an heap.

Psalms 82:1 God standeth <05324> in the congregation of the mighty; he judgeth among the gods.

Psalms 119:89 LAMED. For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled <05324> in heaven.

Proverbs 8:2 She standeth <05324> in the top of high places, by the way in the places of the paths.

Proverbs 15:25 The LORD will destroy the house of the proud: but he will establish <05324> the border of the widow.

Isaiah 3:13 The LORD standeth up <05324> to plead, and standeth to judge the people.

Isaiah 21:8 And he cried, A lion: My lord, I stand continually upon the watchtower in the daytime, and I am set <05324> in my ward whole nights:

Jeremiah 5:26 For among my people are found wicked *men*: they lay wait, as he that setteth snares; they set <05324> a trap, they catch men.

Jeremiah 31:21 Set thee up <05324> waymarks, make thee high heaps: set thine heart toward the highway, *even* the way *which* thou wentest: turn again, O virgin of Israel, turn again to these thy cities.

Lamentations 2:4 He hath bent his bow like an enemy: he stood <05324> with his right hand as an adversary, and slew all *that were* pleasant to the eye in the tabernacle of the daughter of Zion: he poured out his fury like fire.

Lamentations 3:12 He hath bent his bow, and set <05324> me as a mark for the arrow.

Amos 7:7 Thus he shewed me: and, behold, the Lord stood <05324> upon a wall *made* by a plumbline, with a plumbline in his hand.

Amos 9:1 I saw the Lord standing <05324> upon the altar: and he said, Smite the lintel of the door, that the posts may shake: and cut them in the head, all of them; and I will slay the last of them with the sword: he that fleeth of them shall not flee away, and he that escapeth of them shall not be delivered.

Nahum 2:7 And Huzzab <05324> shall be led away captive, she shall be brought up, and her maids shall lead *her* as with the voice of doves, tabering upon their breasts.

Zechariah 11:16 For, lo, I will raise up a shepherd in the land, *which* shall not visit those that be cut off, neither shall seek the young one, nor heal that that is broken, nor feed that that standeth <05324> still: but he shall eat the flesh of the fat, and tear their claws in pieces.

The words of the originals are settled in Heaven—forever settled. God established the words and they stand, because He set them up and they are settled, because He appointed them as His

deputies. A particular word choice of the translator, however, may need translation itself in the passage of time. The battle before us today is not the issue of “updating” words as it is often subtly portrayed. That cleverly devised claim is, as politicians know, all smoke and mirrors. It is deliberate verbal sleight of hand, crafted to deceive. The battleground in the present hour is not “updating words” but the willful casting aside of both the Hebrew and Greek texts as they have stood for thousands of years and substituting in their places *reconstituted* texts concocted by scholarship—scholarship that is tainted by a propensity for the disbelief of the direct intervention of God in the affairs of humanity. The observable influence of the prejudices of the contemporary translators on their product disqualifies them as honest translators operating with integrity. [See endnote for an example of the convoluted reasoning of the defamers of the Authorized Version.]

The word of God was written originally in the Hebrew language for the Old Testament [with a small amount of Chaldean words] and in the Greek language for the New Testament [with a small amount of Aramaic words]. The Old Testament and, later, the New Testament were repeatedly copied and were often translated into other languages. The originals, termed the autographs by scholars, eventually disappeared; probably, they simply wore out through generations of use. By the time that this occurred, the autographs had been replicated multiple times. Contrary to popular myth, there were no restrictions during Bible days that prevented the common people from having access to the words of the word of God. Deuteronomy requires every Israelite home to have portions of the Scriptures in the home. In the process of time, however, a religious institution rose that did seal off the words of God from the people within her walls; but even then, in spite of her attempted domination of the word of God, innumerable copies of the Scriptures were to be found wherever true believers gathered. God raised up individuals who gave their time, fortune, and often their very lives to translate the word of God for the people. The Bible came into the English language and, right now, I have a copy of the words of God in my hand that I believe it to be an accurate, reliable, and true reflection rendered in the English language of the Hebrew and Greek autographs. I cannot prove it; I accept it by faith as I do all else in my relationship with God.

I accept by faith the existence of God; I cannot prove that God is. I accept by faith the existence of the word of God; I cannot prove that God has spoken. I accept by faith the preservation of the word of God; I cannot prove that it was. I accept all three premises by faith. Thomas Manton, writing in 1693 concerning the canonicity of the Epistle of James, defended the preservation of the word of God as well as any human attempt ever has. The battle, my friend, is not new.

Concerning the divine authority of this epistle, I desire to discuss it with reverence and trembling. It is dangerous to loosen foundation stones. I should wholly have omitted this part of my work, but that the difference is so famous; and to conceal known adversaries is an argument of fear and distrust. The Lord grant that the cure be not turned into a snare, and that vain men may not unsettle themselves by what is intended for an establishment! That which gave occasion to doubt of this epistle was some passages in Jerome and Eusebius, in which they seem, at least by reporting the sense of others, to infringe the authority of it. I shall give you the passages, and then show you what little reason there is why they should jostle James out of the canon. The passage of Eusebius runneth thus: [Manton provides the Latin, but I have omitted it.]

And these things concerning James, whose epistle that is reported to be, which is the first among the epistles called universal; yet we are to understand that the same is not void of

suspicion, for many of the ancients make no mention thereof, nor of Jude, being also one of the seven called universal; yet notwithstanding we know them to be publicly read in most churches: so far Eusebius.

The other passage of Jerome, [I again omitted the Latin.]

James wrote but one epistle, which is also said to be put forth by another in his name, though by little and little in process of time it gained authority in the church.

These are the clauses which first begat a doubt of this epistle, but without reason—these two authors reporting the sense of others rather than their own; and if any part of scripture should be laid aside because some have questioned it, the devil would soon obtain his purpose. One time or another the greatest part of it hath been impeached by men of a wicked and unsober wit, who, when they could not pervert the rule to gratify their purposes, reflected a scorn and contempt upon it. Now it would exceedingly furnish the triumphs of hell if we should think their private cavils to be warrant sufficient to weaken our faith, and besides disadvantage the church by the loss of a most considerable part of the canon; for the case doth not only concern this epistle, but divers others, as the Second of Peter, the Second and Third Epistles of John, the Book of the Revelation, the last chapter of Mark, some passages in the 22nd of Luke, the beginning of the 8th of John, some passages in the 5th chapter of the First Epistle of John. Where would profaneness stay? and, if this liberty should be allowed, the flood of atheism stop its course? But, besides all this, why should a few private testimonies prejudice the general consent of the church, which hath transmitted this epistle to us, together with other parts of the New Testament? For if we go to external testimony, there is no reason but the greater number should carry it.

Do you not hear the walls ring as he declares: *“if any part of scripture should be laid aside because some have questioned it, the devil would soon obtain his purpose.”* The challenge to the content of this Book that I hold in my hand is not of human origin. That fact, I believe, is self-evident. From the Garden of Eden until the present hour, the voice asking, “Yea, hath God said?” is that of the subtle Serpent. Today, as then, Satan seeks to undermine the credibility of the Godhead, to produce doubt and suspicion of the integrity of the Creator, to create a lack of certitude as to what God’s word actually is.

I submit that this candidate for ordination may have a dream, a vision, or an ambitious goal, but if he has not the words of the word of God, then he has no message from God to deliver. A general approximation in nearly all essential areas of what God might have meant is inadequate to preach and is unworthy to be titled “The word of God.”

Our general topic is ordination, which itself is not a Bible word, but the word “ordain” is. The first time we find the word “ordain,” it appears in the past tense and is written in Numbers 28 where the term is used in relation to the burnt offering—which indeed does have a definite significance for our understanding of ordination—the sacrifices were established *by* God and were set aside *for* God and were not to be tampered with in any way. That which was ordained as a burnt offering was entirely devoted to the LORD through fire. While part of nearly every offering was burnt in the fire, the entire burnt offering was wholly consumed in the fire. Burnt offerings were presented to the LORD long before the Book of Leviticus was written; burnt offerings were the offerings of Abel, of Noah, of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and were offered by the children of Israel in Egypt before the Exodus. The burnt offering was holy unto the LORD and entirely made “to ascend”—which is the root meaning of the Hebrew word behind our term “burnt offering.” The offering ascended in the smoke of the fire. The concept is so beautifully pictured in Judges 13 where the future parents of Samson meet the Angel of the LORD and offer

a burnt offering—the Angel of the LORD ascends in the flame of the offering. The burnt offering ascended to the very Throne and was acceptable to JEHOVAH.

Therefore, we may understand immediately through our first encounter with the word “ordain” that ordination is a business most serious and one with which we dare not trifle. We will discover our word “ordain,” in the present tense, first in First Chronicles. The first ten chapters consist of genealogies—genealogies which are crucial for the lineage of the Messiah of Israel, the Saviour of the world, but which are tedious to the average reader. The chronicler, whom I believe to be Ezra, begins with Adam and continues through eight long chapters of 170 verses, filled with 6062 words, presenting well over 1200 names that requires an expert to read—the chronicler continues from the creation of Adam until he arrives to the time of the return of the Jews from the Babylonian captivity. Were we to have the time, it would be profitable to consider all that lies between the beginning word of this Book [Adam] and our text, which is to be found in chapter 9. However, for our purposes, we need to be content to begin with chapter 9, which opens with the return of the captives. The first two verses are rather a summary of the previous eight chapters and will serve our purposes of placing the text in the context.

1 Chronicles 9:1-2 So all Israel were reckoned by genealogies; and, behold, they *were* written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah, *who* were carried away to Babylon for their transgression. Now the first inhabitants that *dwelt* in their possessions in their cities *were*, Notice, as the verse continues, that four groups will be distinguished from each other and are named in a particular order:

(1) the Israelites,--the people of the nation, (2) the priests, --the sons of Aaron—all priests are of the tribe of Levi, but not all Levites are priests, (3) Levites, the Gershonites: Kohathites: Merarites—each of whom had different responsibilities related to the Tabernacle and later to the Temple, and (4) the Nethinims.

Then, our attention specifically is directed to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, which are presented in the order that follows this four-point outline. The first to be mentioned are the body politic, the general population, identified by the title, Israelites. I remind you in passing that this is after the return from the seventy years of captivity. The next verse will refer to the tribes as they were identified under the two kingdoms; it is worthy of noticing that there are no lost tribes as far as Scripture is concerned.

1 Chronicles 9:3-9 And in Jerusalem dwelt of the children of Judah, and of the children of Benjamin, and of the children of Ephraim, and Manasseh; Uthai the son of Ammihud, the son of Omri, the son of Imri, the son of Bani, of the children of Pharez the son of Judah. And of the Shilonites; Asaiah the firstborn, and his sons. And of the sons of Zerah; Jeuel, and their brethren, six hundred and ninety. And of the sons of Benjamin; Sallu the son of Meshullam, the son of Hodaviah, the son of Hasenuah, And Ibneiah the son of Jeroham, and Elah the son of Uzzi, the son of Michri, and Meshullam the son of Shephathiah, the son of Reuel, the son of Ibrijah; And their brethren, according to their generations, nine hundred and fifty and six. All these men *were* chief of the fathers in the house of their fathers.

The Priests are recognized and commended as “very able men” with certain more prominent priests named.

1 Chronicles 9:10-13 And of the priests; Jedaiah, and Jehoiarib, and Jachin, And Azariah the son of Hilkiyah, the son of Meshullam, the son of Zadok, the son of Meraioth, the son of Ahitub, the ruler of the house of God; And Adaiah the son of Jeroham, the son of Pashur, the son of Malchijah, and Maasiai the son of Adiel, the son of Jahzerah, the son of Meshullam, the son of Meshillemith, the son of Immer; And their brethren, heads of the house of their

fathers, a thousand and seven hundred and threescore; very able men for the work of the service of the house of God.

Then, the Levites are recognized.

1 Chronicles 9:14-16 And of the Levites; Shemaiah the son of Hasshub, the son of Azrikam, the son of Hashabiah, of the sons of Merari; And Bakbakkar, Heresh, and Galal, and Mattaniah the son of Micah, the son of Zichri, the son of Asaph; And Obadiah the son of Shemaiah, the son of Galal, the son of Jeduthun, and Berechiah the son of Asa, the son of Elkanah, that dwelt in the villages of the Netophathites.

Only one of the four groups remains unnamed: the Nethinims.

1 Chronicles 9:17-21 And the porters were, Shallum, and Akkub, and Talmon, and Ahiman, and their brethren: Shallum *was* the chief; Who hitherto *waited* in the king's gate eastward: they were porters in the companies of the children of Levi. And Shallum the son of Kore, the son of Ebiasaph, the son of Korah, and his brethren, of the house of his father, the Korahites, were over the work of the service, keepers of the gates of the tabernacle: and their fathers, *being* over the host of the LORD, were keepers of the entry. And Phinehas the son of Eleazar was the ruler over them in time past, *and* the LORD *was* with him. *And* Zechariah the son of Meshelemiah was porter of the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

This is an interesting designation. We find the Nethinims only in the Books of the Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah. The name does not designate residents of a particular city, area, or nation. It does not describe descendants of a particular ancestor. The name is derived from a word meaning “given” and has the idea of “those who are set apart for a particular service.” This was the title given to those who were hereditary Temple servants after the return from the Babylonian captivity. The descendants of the Gibeonites [Joshua 9] and, perhaps, other captives taken in battle, these individuals and their families were given to Israel: first by the judicial decree of Joshua and the princes of Israel—the hewers of wood and the drawers of water for the service of the house of God [9:27]—and then by the ordination of David to the Levites [as Ezra 8:20 and our text will now show] to do the general menial work of the sanctuary.

As we are introduced to these Nethinims, the word “ordain” is introduced.

1 Chronicles 9:22 All these which were chosen to be porters in the gates were two hundred and twelve. These were reckoned by their genealogy in their villages, whom David and Samuel the seer did ordain in their set office.

Before we go farther, I must pause for some explanation, because Samuel was deceased before David became King. The critics, therefore, consider this a scribal error, if not an outright fabrication. This is one of those places where even fundamentalist scholarship rises “to correct the error that has crept unaware into our Bible.” *Tiny minds have a tiny capacity for thought.* The critic of Scripture, whether liberal, conservative, **or fundamentalist**, will never give the Authorized Version the tiniest courtesy, the least benefit of doubt, or the faintest presumption of creditability, and, therefore, will never accept the Bible as inherently infallibly inerrant or intrinsically inerrantly infallible—but will always gallop to the conclusion that the text is error prone. My suggestion is that whenever you find someone who speaks about error having crept unaware into our Bible, whether into the underlying Greek texts or the English of the Authorized Version, that you find someone else to whom to listen. Understand, I may not comprehend or be able to explain all that I find recorded in this Book, but the failure is mine, not that of the Author. *Let the text stand as it is.*

I intend to write plainly since, certain readers of this publication that promote the criticism of the “underlying Greek text and the English of the Authorized Version,” delight in selected partial

quotations, rejoice in lifting those comments from context, and jubilate in describing those distorted selections as cultic “King James onlyism.” I learned to recognize this as a shameful trick of a weak debater when I was in a High School debate class; namely, “when the opposite view cannot be countered with facts, call the advocate names, condemn him through selected quotations, and cover him with the guilt of implied association with predefined error.” That tactic is commonly identified as “McCarthy-ism.” *[Since I lived through the days of Senator Joseph R. McCarthy and the House Un-American Activities Committee ad these fifty plus years beyond, I know that “old Joe” was right. His critics sneered that they did not know how to define “an un-American activity”; his chief offense was that he defended what the majority of his colleagues allowed to be attacked. “McCarthyism” is better demonstrated by what his detractors practiced against him.]* The honest reading of my nearly fifty-year record of writing on the integrity of the Authorized Version will easily authenticate the distinction between the concept advocated by Dr. Peter Ruckman and that position which I have consistently presented. The truth is that my stand is as far from that of the critics of the Authorized Version as it is from that of those who have adopted and adapted the private interpretation of Dr. Ruckman. Sadly, both of these militant extremist camps would rather slander [vocalize] and even libel [print] fellow believers than sincerely and candidly discuss the issue of textual preservation. I do not depreciate the passion of conviction; however, fanaticism is not listed as a synonym of passion by Merriam-Webster. Fanatics are best defined as those who redouble their efforts as soon as they lose sight of the goal. Therefore, writing plainly and willing to accept any and all challenges to defend what I have written, the translators that King James I employed to complete the revision of the previous English translations were not inspired in any form, figure, or fashion, but they did render an honest, reliable, accurate, and understandable translation that is a legitimate, justifiable, correct, true and faithful reflection of the underlying Greek text. *Therefore, I am content always to let the text stand as I find it.*

Samuel knew that David was to be the king when Saul was removed from the throne. In the last years and months before his death, Samuel and David were together so much [1 Samuel chapters 19 through 25] that when Saul went looking for David, he would ask where Samuel and David were. Does it take very much thinking to grasp that the two of them would have talked of the future and how the kingdom should be governed? Does anyone think that Samuel had no suggestions to make—or that God did not use Samuel to teach David how to establish the kingdom? Surely, most of us have minds capable of bigger thoughts than the narrow bandwidth of the critic.

So, the question is never regarding the authority of the text, but what does the text say that these porters were ordained to do or to be and what was involved in that ordination? This word “porters” is elsewhere translated as “doorkeepers,” which is a very interesting insight in itself. The porters were doorkeepers; their primary function was to keep the door. They were guardians of the entry.

1 Chronicles 9:23-25 So they and their children *had* the oversight of the gates of the house of the LORD, *namely*, the house of the tabernacle, by wards. In four quarters were the porters, toward the east, west, north, and south. And their brethren, *which were* in their villages, *were* to come after seven days from time to time with them.

There were Levites in supervisory roles over them.

1 Chronicles 9:26 For these Levites, the four chief porters, were in their set office, and were over the chambers and treasuries of the house of God.

They had an office; ordination has to do with an office. And, it is a “set office.” The word given

to us five times in the Old Testament as “set office” has the root meaning of faithfulness, that is stability, permanence, steadiness. Check the word “set” when used as an adjective in Merriam-Webster and you will find that remains the “modern” usage. In view is not the gold, the silver, the jewels, but the total provisions needed for the worship.

1 Chronicles 9:27-29 And they lodged round about the house of God, because **the charge** was upon them,

Those who were ordained were ordained to a “set office” and were given a “charge.”

and the opening thereof every morning *pertained* to them. And *certain* of them had the charge of the ministering vessels, that they should bring them in and out by tale. *Some* of them also *were* appointed to oversee the vessels, and all the instruments of the sanctuary, and the fine flour, and the wine, and the oil, and the frankincense, and the spices.

These were important porters, doorkeepers, with significant responsibilities and essential duties. David had a high regard for the office of the doorkeeper.

Psalms 84:10 For a day in thy courts *is* better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.

Note that he does not refer to tents that wickedness built or to tents where wicked things happen. David speaks of tents where men live who are so wicked as to be labeled wickedness themselves. Wickedness owned the tents. Wickedness has many tents, but they are all only temporary. The pleasures of sin endure only for a season. David was convinced that to bear burdens and to open doors for only one day in the earthly Tabernacle of the LORD would be better than to dwell in the tents of wickedness for a thousand days.

In that context of the word, this church has assembled a presbytery to examine this man and to determine if he is both fit and fitted to be ordained to a set office and to be given a charge. In simple terms, is he qualified to be a porter, a doorkeeper in the house of the LORD? It is no stretch to see that how closely this parallels what we are doing here tonight. Hear Paul’s own testimony.

1 Timothy 1:11-12 According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust. And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry;

He returns to the same theme in chapter 2.

3-7 For this *is* good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For *there is* one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time. Whereunto I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle, (I speak the truth in Christ, *and* lie not;) a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity.

Paul refers to his ordination as a gift of God, conferred by the laying on of hands—he is speaking of the office to which he was ordained. In doing so, the apostle is stressing the heavy weight of the accountability that rests upon him and upon Timothy.

2 Timothy 1:6-7 Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands. For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

Paul then reminds Timothy that he needed the Scriptures if he were to war a good warfare.

1 Timothy 1:18 This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare;

The candidate for ordination must make no mistake, he is entering the battlefield and he will be a victor or he will be a victim. The preacher must have a sharp two-edged sword or he will

find himself defenseless. He may have his loins girt about with truth, having on the breastplate of righteousness, his feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace, holding the shield of faith in his hands, and the helmet of salvation on his head, but if he does not have the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, the preacher will win no battles. The previous comments concerning the word of God are essential and not tangential. It makes a vital difference whether or not I have the esteemed sword of esteemed scholarship or the sword of the Spirit.

The apostle then lays stress upon the necessity of learning to pray. No man is ready for the ministry who does not know how to pray. I speak not of form or style, but of the reality of prayer. The pattern of Scripture is that men of God were men of prayer. Abraham, Moses, Daniel, Paul—look where you will, those called of God were first men of prayer.

1 Timothy 2:1-2 I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, *and* giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and *for* all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.

Then, we come what many might consider as a strange word to connect with the office of pastor.

1 Timothy 3:1-7 This *is* a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

The pastor needs a desire. There should be, yea there must be, in his bones as it was in Jeremiah's—a burning. That burning brings a burden—the burden that the prophets spoke of bearing—the burden of the word of the LORD.

We speak of being called—and preachers are—and pastors are—and what we today label as missionaries are—but those who are called also have a desire to fulfill the call. If a man feels that he is forced into the ministry—then he ought to say so and admit that he has no desire. The man called of God is compelled to preach because he desires above all else in life to preach. Dr. Bob Jones SR would often tell us “preacher boys” that if we could do anything other than preach that we should go do it. The preacher preaches because he lives to preach. He endures all else for the opportunity to preach.

And, preacher, realize this—it is work. The Nethinims were hewers of wood and drawers of water. They were the keepers of the door: opening in the morning, sweeping as needed, polishing as required, and ever and always guarding the entry. We live in a day when preachers are recognized as “professionals” and it has gone to the heads of pastors, evangelists, and missionaries. There is, in some circles, as much of a distinction between the pew and the pulpit as there is between laity and priest in another circle. Often, pastors are “lords over God's heritage” and evangelists are “prima donnas.” Young preachers are geared to seek “compensation packages.”

As a doorkeeper, it is the task of the pastor to keep the sheep in and the wolves out. A preacher must guard the door of the flock with his life, if need be. Yet there is far more to pastoring than door-keeping. The local church that Timothy pastored is identified as the house of God. Timothy was to behave himself in that house, because of the Owner of that house. I travel a little and have been in Baptist churches from Washington State to New England and down into

Mexico. The different churches have many things in common, but every local body has its own personality and peculiarities—just like the members of that body. Each time I visit a church and note her unique individuality, I am reminded that the Chief Shepherd, through the Spirit of God has “set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.” One of the great tragedies of our day is the illegitimate attempt to make clone churches. The Owner of the churches creates the body of each of His churches according to His Own design. The preacher is the guard of the door, but he is not the owner of the flock. To the best of my study, the only shepherd in all of Scripture who owns his own flock is the Great Shepherd, the LORD Jesus Christ.

1 Timothy 3:14-15 These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know **how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.**

Paul quickly begins a review course on good manners and proper behavior by the pastor, who is (1) to be a six-fold example to the believers.

1 Timothy 4:12 Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

(2) to occupy his time in disciplined ways.

13 Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.

(3) to always reverence the office that he holds.

14 Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.

(4) to remember the responsibility that he holds.

15 Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all.

(5) to never let his guard down morally or doctrinally.

16 Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.

The preacher is to remember that the church is to be treated as one does a family—keep your relationships with the members pure and holy do not allow spiritual incest to enter.

1 Timothy 5:1-2 Rebuke not an elder, but intreat *him* as a father; *and* the younger men as brethren; The elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity.

The apostle does not forget that the man who is ordained is to be held accountable.

1 Timothy 5:19-20 Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses. Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear.

Churches ordain and then never enforce the conditions of the ordination. If this man ever leaves the doctrine that he has sworn to believe today, then this church must rebuke him and should revoke his ordination. If he ever violates the sanctity of the office, remove him. Both this church and this candidate need to remember that neither of you get to pick and to chose which of these instructions to observe and which to go lightly on because you like someone.

1 Timothy 5:21-22 I charge *thee* before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality. Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men’s sins: keep thyself pure.

We have used that word “charge” several times in this service; it is not a small insignificant word. Merriam-Webster records the definition as having the archaic meaning of “to lay or put a load on” and the modern meaning of “to impose a task or responsibility on,” “to command,

instruct, or exhort with authority,” and “to place into custody to give responsibility to trust with the safekeeping.”

To be “charged” is no light matter. It requires a discipline of separation. Separation is two-sided. There is a “separation from” and a “separation unto.”

1 Timothy 6:3-5 If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, *even* the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself.

Paul then calls Timothy to remembrance. He is to remember that this world is not his home.

1 Timothy 6:6-10 But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into *this* world, *and it is* certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and *into* many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

Timothy is to remember that he is to flee the wrong things, follow the right things, and fight for the good things.

1 Timothy 6:11-12 But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.

He is to remember always that he is charged and will give a personal account to a returning LORD.

1 Timothy 6:13-14 I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and *before* Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession; That thou keep *this* commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ:

Timothy is not to become impressed with science—not even the science of the Bible critics.

1 Timothy 6:20-21 O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane *and* vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called: Which some professing have erred concerning the faith. Grace *be* with thee. Amen.

He is to hold on to the very form of sound words. I would that those who have followed Timothy as preachers had not messed with the form of the sound words.

2 Timothy 1:13-14 Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us.

Timothy is faithfully to transmit the truth to the next generation of preachers.

2 Timothy 2:1-2 Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.

All the while, Timothy must remember to keep his priorities straight.

2 Timothy 2:3-7 Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of *this* life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier. And if a man also strive for masteries, *yet* is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully. The husbandman that laboreth must be first partaker of the fruits. Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things.

Timothy is to be a lifelong student of the word of God, avoiding the empty, worldly advice of would-be counselors.

2 Timothy 2:15-16 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane *and* vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness.

Timothy must discipline himself.

2 Timothy 2:22-26 Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart. But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes. And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all *men*, apt to teach, patient, In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; And *that* they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.

He is always to remember the times.

2 Timothy 3:1-7 This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth

He is to do so, never forgetting that he will face persecution.

2 Timothy 3:12-17 Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived. But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned *them*; And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.

Most of all, Timothy is to keep on and not to quit.

2 Timothy 4:1-5 I charge *thee* therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away *their* ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, **do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.**

The only question left to ask is, “Preacher are you willing to enter this ministry?”

The following paragraphs are printed by permission from The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, James Orr, General Editor [commonly called “the old” ISBN] and exemplifies the frustration that I have with the proponents of replacing the so-called “Received Text” [called the Western text in this article] with a text constructed by scholars, even conservative,

fundamentalist scholars. Those preachers and professors encourage us to sacrifice what has endured for millennia and to receive the substitute of an assurance that they are giving us what is *most likely* the “real” text in return. I have underlined the appropriate comments that reflect the situation gained by accepting the NKJV, NASV, NIV, or now the ESV. This statement by recognized scholarship puts the lie to those that claim to have the word of God and yet run after every new version. The advocates of replacing the Authorized Version will speak of holding the word of God, even while they confess that they cannot assure us that they have the words of God.

The question chiefly exercising scholars at the present time is, accordingly, the relation of the Westcott and Hort, The New Testament in the Greek text based on Codex Sinaiticus and Codex Vaticanus to the Western text represented by Codex Bezae, but now finding early support from the Old Latin and Syriac, as well as from quotations in the 2nd and 3rd Fathers. The Western text is discounted by Westcott and Hort, The New Testament in Greek for its para-phrastic character, and “astonishing freedom” in changing, inserting and omitting (Westcott-Hort, 122ff); yet, on internal grounds, certain important omissions in this text of the last three chapters of Luke are accepted by these authorities as representing the purer text, the rejected readings being termed “non-Western interpolations.” A newer school, however, is disposed to accept the Western readings, as, to a much larger extent than was formerly supposed, the more original; while some writers, as Blass, Nestle, in part Zahn (compare Nestle, op. cit., 324ff), seek a solution of the difference of texts in theory of two editions (Blass, Luke and Acts; Zahn, Acts alone). This theory has not met with much acceptance, and the problems of the Western text must still be regarded as unsolved. The question is not, indeed, vital, as no important doctrine of the New Testament is affected; but it touches the genuineness of several passages to which high value is attached. E.g. the words at the Supper, “which is given for you,” etc. (Lk 22:19, 20, not in D), are excluded by Westcott and Hort, *The New Testament in Greek* as a *non-Western* interpolation; while the passage on the angel and the bloody sweat (Lk 22:43, 14 in both Codex Sinaiticus and Codex Bezae), and the first word on the cross, “Father, forgive them,” etc. (Lk 23:34, in Codex Sinaiticus, omitted by Codex Bezae (D) and the Sinaitic Syriac), are rejected as *Western* interpolations. The Revised Version (British and American) retains these passages with marginal note.

As respects results, it may be said generally that the labors of a long line of scholars have given us a New Testament text on which, in nearly all essential respects, we can safely rely. Others, it is to be owned, take a less sanguine view (compare Nestle, op. cit., 227ff). The correct reading seems undeniably settled in a large majority of cases. The Revised Version (British and American) embodies most of the assured results; doubtful cases are noted in the margin. Among passages long known to be interpolations, now altogether removed, is that on the three witnesses in 1 Jn 5:8. The two longest passages noted as not belonging to the original text are the last 12 verses of Mk (16:9-20), and the story of the woman taken in adultery (Jn 7:53 through 8:11).

As for me, and my house, we are not willing to settle for such conservative, fundamentalist scholarly sleight of mouth—borrowed from the liberals—as

“The question is not, indeed, vital, as no *important [just the unimportant]* doctrine of the New Testament is affected; but it touches [does not effect, just touches] the genuineness [they ought not be there] of several [not one, but many] passages to which high value [not

importance, just high value is attached.” “As respects results, it may be said generally that the labors of a long line of scholars have given us a New Testament text on which, in nearly all essential *[not all—just nearly all, and there is no reason to worry about the “non-essential” parts that God just threw in without having a purpose]* respects, [respects, not words] we can safely rely.” “The correct reading seems undeniably settled in a large majority *[large? 60% or 90% ? and what about the unidentified minority?]* of cases.”
[bracketed comments, italics and underlining are mine];

the question is, “Are you?” It is time to choose sides.

—Dr. Jerald Manley