

THE FIVE FAITHFUL SAYINGS.

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THESE occur in the Pastoral Epistles to Timothy and Titus. They are the translation of precisely the same Greek words. The passages are (1) 1 Tim. i. 15, (2) iii. 1, (3) iv. 9, (4) 2 Tim. ii. 11, (5) Titus iii. 8. The exact translation is "Faithful is the Word." But the A.V. translates *logos* by "saying" and varies *pistos* in No. 2 to "true" and adds the pronoun "this" in four places, and "it" in one. The R.V. consistently translates "Faithful is the saying." The different versions also differ.

Jerome's Latin Vulgate is quite consistent throughout and translates each passage "Fidelis sermo," whereas Beza's Latin uses "certus" for *πυρος* and adds the pronoun "hic." Calvin follows Jerome except in 1 Tim. iii. 1, where he has "certus." Wycliffe has "A True Word" except in 1 Tim. iii. 1, where he has "A Faithful Word." Tyndale, Cranmer, Coverdale, and Geneva, all have "True saying" except in 1 Tim. iv. 9, where they all have "sure saying," adding, as in Beza, the pronoun "this" except in 2 Tim. ii. 11, where they substitute "it." The Syrian version follows more closely the Vulgate by translating "Faithful" in all places, but having "declaration" in 1 Tim. i. 15 and 2 Tim. ii. 11, "saying" in 1 Tim. iii. 1 and iv. 9, and "word" in Titus iii. 8.

Weymouth translates "Faithful is the saying" in all places, but adds the pronoun "this" in the last. The Twentieth Century N.T. translates 1 Tim. i. 15 and 2 Tim. ii. 11 "How true are the words" and in the others "This teaching is reliable."

Taking all these translations together we have much vacillation except in the Vulgate, whereas the Greek words are the same in all the passages. Why then all these variations? We know that the context may demand that the same word should be translated by different words in another language in order to give the precise sense and meaning. But does the context of these passages warrant such variations? The answer to this question demands an examination of the context, purpose and occasion of the Epistles.

Neither translators nor commentators are agreed as to what the word "saying" refers to. Neither the A.V. nor R.V. gives any cue to what is the "saying" except in 1 Tim. i. 15 by use of the word "that" introducing the sentence following. Weymouth, whilst giving quotation marks to the words following in 1 Tim. iii. 1 and 2 Tim. ii. 11, gives none in the other three places. The Twentieth Century N.T. gives quotation marks in 1 Tim. i. 15 and 2 Tim. ii. 11 to the words following; and translating *logos* by teaching refers 1 Tim. iii. 1, 1 Tim. iv. 9, Titus iii. 8 to the subject of the previous verses. Conybere and Howson give the succeeding words, printing them in italics with quotation marks.

When we turn to commentators we find a like difference and uncertainty as to what the "saying" is. Some say the previous words,

some the following words except in 1 Tim. i. 15 and 2 Tim. ii. 11. Some think they are quotations from hymns or well-known sayings. Biblical Museum speaks of them as "a peculiarity," appropriate to the time when the Apostle would leave "Faithful sayings" to the Church.

Hastings, *Great Texts of the Bible*, remarks on 1 Tim. i. 15: "A series of five 'faithful sayings' or current Christian commonplaces, refers to little more than half a century. Yet able to remind them of the blessed contents of the Gospel Message in words that are the product of Christian experience in the heart of the community had been crystallised by those who have tasted and seen its preciousness . . . have had time to frame its precious truths into formulas, not merely that have passed from mouth to mouth and been enshrined in memory after memory until they have become proverbs in the community."

Bishop Ellicott, on 1 Tim. i. 15, takes much the same view as the preceding. He says: "These were no doubt rehearsed constantly in the assemblies till they became well-known watchwords in the various churches." On 1 Tim. iii. 1, he says: "The Faithful saying here refers to the wish for high and arduous work of the Church of Christ." And on 1 Tim. iv. 9 he remarks: "In this instance was that godliness, i.e. active living was profitable for all things."

Lightfoot allows that 1 Tim. i. 15 and iii. 1 may be quotations, but argues that in the other three passages the "saying" refers to what precedes, because the particle *gar* precludes any reference to what follows.

But Lock is very doubtful in all cases, for he uses the words "probably," "perhaps," "if." 1 Tim. i. 15: "probably a quotation"; Tim. iii. 1: "If these words apply to the following paragraph the variant *anthropos* would seem appropriate"; 1 Tim. iv. 9: "probably the preceding verse."

2 Tim. ii. 11: "Almost certainly a quotation. It may refer to the preceding verse, if so, probably verse 8, *gar*, verse 11, confirming the writer's appeal to the saying about the risen Lord."

Titus iii. 8: "Some refer to personal Word of God as Johannian, but it does not suit Chap. i. 3. Chap. i. 9 could scarcely be faithful according to teaching. It would be appropriate to 2 Tim. ii. 11."

The Cambridge Greek Testament indicates this want of unanimity among commentators. On 1 Tim. iii. 1 it remarks: "This formula (see on i. 15) has been referred (e.g. Chrysostom) to the words which precede, but it seems better to take it with the terse sentence which follows." And on 1 Tim. iv. 9: "It is not certain what the reference is. This formula refers without doubt to what precedes in Titus iii. 8." On 2 Tim. ii. 11: "Commentators are not agreed as to the reference of this formula here; some following Chrysostom, hold that it refers to what precedes . . . but, on the other hand, there is nothing in the preceding verses of the nature of a formula or aphorism or quotation as in such stereotyped phrases that *pistos ho logos* has reference in the other instances of its occurrences."

Whilst the words "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" do suggest a "crystallised formula" commonly spoken among the early Christians, and "rehearsed constantly in the assemblies till they became well-known watch words in the various churches" (Bishop Ellicott, 1 Tim. i. 15), and whilst 1 Tim. iv. 9 may refer to the following words, "If we be risen with Christ, etc.," as a truth handed on from mouth to mouth, it is very difficult to understand the words, "If a man desire the office of a bishop he desires a good work" (1 Tim. iii. 1), should be equally current and commonplace "saying" handed on from mouth to mouth, in the early Church, much in the same way as we speak of a man "entering the Church" who desires to be one of her ministers. Because it is only on the first missionary journey of St. Paul about A.D. 47 that we first hear of ministerial appointments (Acts xiv. 23). This leaves a period of twenty years for the office of a bishop to be so spoken of. For the pastoral Epistles date about A.D. 67. Besides, if this were the reference of the "saying," "faithful" is hardly an appropriate word to use. It might be "common," or "true," but "faithful" conveys something much more than the idea of being "true."

The translators and commentators seem to have been misled by the first occurrence of the phrase in 1 Tim. i. 15. Where the first impulse leads one to fix on the words "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" introduced by the Greek particle "that," as indicating the very words spoken. And having found one case appropriate they seem to have assumed that the formula in other places had similar local words, although they have varied as to what are the exact words. And for this reason too they have added the pronouns "this" and "it" so as to include either the preceding or succeeding words. Whereas the Greek words are uniform and demand a uniform translation, and if this be strictly adhered to, the words will be found to have a very appropriate meaning and setting in the context. The translation in each case should be "Faithful is the word" or "The Word is faithful." The article indicates that "word" is the subject, and there being no article to "faithful" indicates that it is the adjective after the verb "*to be*" understood. But the order of the words, "faithful" being first, shows that "faithful" has the emphasis which is retained by being translated in the same order.

Our next duty is to consider the translation and meaning of *logos*. Should it be translated "saying" or "word"? And secondly whether *pistos* should be translated "faithful," "true," "sure."

Logos is rendered by twenty-five or more different English words, according to the context. But for these passages the choice lays between "saying" and "word." In some fifty cases the A.V. has "saying," but in a great number of these the R.V. has "word." In many occurrences the pronoun indicates to what the "word" or "saying" refers, so that there is no difficulty in identifying them in the immediate context. If we translate by "saying" we imply that there is some definite statement, something proverbial, as is

clearly seen in other passages, e.g. in John iv. 37 introduced by the particle *hoti* "For herein is the saying true *that* One soweth and another reapeth." R.V. John vi. 60. The words are specified by the pronoun. "This is a hard saying." Rev. xxii. 6 is the nearest approach to these passages. "These words are faithful and true," but here the pronoun clearly points to the preceding verses. But in "the Five Sayings" there is the greatest difficulty in identifying the reference inasmuch as translators and commentators disagree. To arrive at a more precise meaning of the word *logos* we must compare it with two other words, *lalia* and *rhēma*, both translated "word."

Lalia, from *lalein*, means to talk, chat, babble, the mere utterance of words, without reference to thought, the employment of the organs of speech; it is therefore utterance, talk, discourse, prattle.

Rhēma is that which is spoken, a word, a saying as uttered by the living voice.

Logos is the word spoken, and as connected with the inward thought it expresses the speaker's thoughts.

Abp. Trench in his synonyms says *lalein* expresses the opening of the mouth to speak, while *legein* proceeds to declare what the speaker actually said.

Logos emphasises the thought rather than the word which expresses the thought. It differs from *rhēma*, which emphasises the words which express the thought, so *rhēma* would require particular words, but *logos* would allow for the thought to be expressed in many different words, so that in these five passages St. Paul has in mind some inner thought rather than particular words. In the use of *logos* we do not expect the express words, but the subject of the matter in whatever words it may be conveyed, so that the meaning converges on the idea of a message conveyed in the speaker's own words and not the precise words of the one who sends it.

Trench refers to the difference between *lalia* and *logos* in John viii. 43. Wherefore do ye not understand my speech, *lalia*? even because ye cannot hear my word *logos*. "It is clear (he says) that, as the inability to understand his 'speech' is traced up as a consequence to a refusing to hear his 'word,' this last, as the root and ground of the mischief, must be the deeper and anterior thing. To hear his 'word' can be nothing else than to give room to his truth in the heart. They who will not do this must fail to understand his 'speech,' the outward form and utterance which his 'word' assumes. They that are of God hear God's Word, his *rhēmata* as elsewhere (John iii. 34, viii. 47), his *lalia* as here, it is called; which they that are not of God do not and cannot hear." (Page 289.)

The term has therefore a wider meaning than the application to the actual words spoken which may be varied so long as they convey the thought underlying them. *Logos* often refers to the O.T., but the preaching of that word does not necessarily mean that the actual words are used, but only that it forms the basis; the thought is God's, but the actual words used are the speaker's own in which he clothes the thoughts.

We will trace the use of the word *logos* in the N.T. First of

our Lord, second by our Lord, third by the Apostles, fourth by St. Paul.

First, our mind naturally turns to St. John, 1st chapter. Where Our Lord is spoken of as the Word. It was a "common term in Ancient Philosophy and Theology. It expresses the idea of an immanent reason in the world." But the application by St. John is to an historical person who nevertheless as He comes into this world is the "expression of God's will and power, the outgoing of the Divine energy, life, love and light" (*Encycl. Brit.*). Philosophers to-day are trying to base Reality on thought, whereas St. John at once, as also the whole of Divine Revelation, points to a person who being Eternal is the source of all that is created, and transcends all else, and is the source of all life in men and therefore is immanent and also is the light to all men and sustains all things and therefore comprehends all within His sovereign power. He, being "the Word of the Father" and assuming human flesh dwelling among men, expresses the message of grace and truth from God to men. He came not to speak His own words, but the words of Him that sent Him. The Lord Jesus comes as the expression of the innermost thoughts of the Father and is therefore pre-eminently the Word.

Secondly, we will trace how our Lord uses the word, as embodying His thoughts in a message to the world. In Matt. vii. He speaks of the result of hearing "my words" which refer to His discourse in the previous part of the sermon as well as at other times. In another place He identifies His words with those of the Father. To His disciples He said: "If a man love me he will keep my words" (John xiv. 23-24). It is said that the people pressed upon Him to "hear the Word of God." He explains the parable of the Sower as hearing the Word of the Kingdom. "The seed is the Word of God." "The sower soweth the word." He spoke "gracious words" in the synagogue at Nazareth, and "His word" was with power. In all these occasions the word *logos* refers to the whole discourse, and not necessarily to the written word, but yet it is God's message to men based upon the written Word of God.

Thirdly, we may trace a similar use by the Apostles. The Lord gave them a commission to "teach all nations . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." "Then opened He their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures . . . thus it is written and thus it behoved Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations." St. Mark adds that they went forth preaching everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the *Word* (*logos*) with signs following. In their commission as recorded by the Evangelists, no definite words are given, but a general message based upon the Written Word and so comprehended in the word *logos* by St. Mark. It is quite evident that here *logos* refers to the whole Gospel message as does also St. Luke in Acts i. 1 when he

says, "the former treatise (*logos*) have I made." Here he uses the word to include the whole of his gospel, so Luke i. 2 "minister of the word." In Acts ii. 22 we have it stated that St. Peter said "Hear these words," and this is followed by a long address of seventeen verses referring to Jesus Christ, His life, death, resurrection, confirmed by references to the O.T. and exhorting His hearers to repent and be baptised. Then in verse 29 we are told that "with many other words did he testify and exhort." But in the next verse the whole is comprehended as one word. "They that gladly received His 'word' were baptised." Here again a long address of which only part is given is first described as of many words and then summarised as a "word." So that *logos* is a comprehensive term. In the same sense is the expression "Word of God" (Acts vi. 2, 4). It is not specifically the O.T. This generally comes under the term "Scriptures," but the Message of the Gospel contained in the Scriptures and confirmed by the life, death, resurrection and ascension of Christ. So also Acts viii. 4. Those "scattered abroad went everywhere preaching *the Word*." In verse 14 this is stated to be "*the Word of God*" and verse 25 "the Word of the Lord."

St. Peter said to Cornelius: "The Word which God sent unto the children of Israel preaching peace by Jesus Christ." In Acts xv. 7 he refers to this incident and says "that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear *the word* of the gospel."

In the same comprehensive sense it is used of St. Paul's preaching (Acts xiii. 5), "They preached the word of God." The Deputy "desired to hear the word of God" (verse 7). At Antioch He calls his message "the word of this Salvation" (verse 26).

We have various expressions all of which refer to the Gospel message as based upon the O.T. Scriptures and brought to light by the Lord Jesus manifested in the flesh. Thus we have: The Word of God, Acts xiii. 5, 44; The Word of the Lord, Acts xiii. 48; The Word of Salvation, Acts xiii. 26; The Word of His grace, Acts xiv. 3; The Word of truth, Eph. i. 13; The Word of life, Phil. ii. 16; The Word of Christ, Col. iii. 16; The Word of faith, 1 Tim. iv. 6; or more simply "The Word," Acts xiv. 23, xvi. 6, xvii. 11. This is contrasted in its source as from God and not man, 1 Thes. ii. 13, "when ye received the Word of God, which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but (as it is in truth) the Word of God."

The same meaning is attached to the word in the Epistles to Timothy and Titus. 1 Tim. iv. 6, "words of faith"; v. 17, who "labour in word"; 2 Tim. ii. 9, "The Word of God is not bound"; ii. 15, "word of truth"; iv. 2, "Preach the word"; Titus i. 3, "manifested His word through preaching"; v. 9, "holding fast the faithful word"; ii. 5, that "the word of God be not blasphemed."

We conclude then that *logos* is a term that comprehends the gospel message as brought in by the Lord Jesus Christ and based upon the O.T., as when St. Paul at Thessalonica "reasoned with

them out of the Scriptures, opening and alleging that Christ must needs have suffered and risen again from the dead, and that this Jesus whom I preach unto you is the Christ" (Acts xvii. 3), and therefore does not exclude the term as used of our Lord in John i. 1 and 14; "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . . The Word was made flesh."

The A.V., by inserting the pronouns "this" and "it" as limiting the meaning to a local phrase, is entirely misleading. Where it is so limited in the context the pronoun occurs in the Greek text as in Rom. ix. 9, *This* is the word of promise; xiii. 9, "Comprehended in *this* saying," see also Rev. xix. 9, xxi. 5, xxii. 6, and so in Matt. vii. 24, 28, etc. Whereas in those five passages the pronoun is absent. We therefore conclude that "the word" has a wider meaning than a local oft-repeated trite saying among the Christians.

We must now consider the meaning of *pistos*, Faithful. Beza's Latin "certus" is scarcely adequate. "Certus" is the past participle of the verb "cerno," the root meaning to separate, akin to the root of *crino*, hence to perceive, discern by a process of sifting and then to decide, decree, determine. *Certus* comes to mean something fixed, decided, settled, then sure, unerring, to be depended upon, all this carries with it the emphasis on a fact established. The idea of faithfulness is only accessory and depends upon its relation to the future as to its being faithful.

Fidelis is from the verb *fido* which is akin to the root *pith*, *peithō*, to trust, confide, put confidence in a person or promise. *Fidelis* therefore signifies the quality of trust or faithfulness, that which may be trusted, relied upon; it applies to a person and words rather than to a thing, whereas "certus" applies to things, some ascertained fact rather than persons. Hence *Fidelis* is the more suitable word.

Pistos is from the same root, it is a verbal adjective and used in both an active and passive sense. In the active sense, of persons who believe, as in John xx. 27, "Be thou not faithless, but believing"; Acts x. 45, "They of the circumcision which believed"; and xvi. 1, "a certain woman which was a Jewess and believed." Compare Gal. iii. 9, Col. i. 2. Faithful here refers to believing; 2 Cor. vi. 15. In a passive sense of persons who being persuaded are to be relied upon; such as have a clear perception of their duty and responsibility, as stewards who strictly carry out their duties and responsibilities both in respect of their masters and of his subjects committed to the steward's care. As Matt. xxiv. 45, "Who then is a faithful and wise servant whom his lord hath made ruler over his household"; xxv. 21, "faithful servant—faithful over a few things"; 1 Cor. iv. 2, "moreover it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful." With this idea we may compare the title *hoi pistoi* given in Persia to a sort of Privy-Councillors, and the expression used by us "Our Right *Trusty* and well beloved," as applied to persons, it indicates that they are to be trusted, relied upon to do their duty and fulfil their promises. It is used of God with this sense and meaning. "The Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you and keep

you from evil," 2 Thes. iii. 3, where it stands in contrast with "unreasonable and wicked men" who have not faith. "Faithful is He that calleth you who will also do it" (1 Thes. v. 24). For this reason it is said that Sarah "judged Him faithful that promised" (Heb. xi. 11), "God is faithful by Whom ye were called" (1 Cor. i. 2). It is also used of Christ, who is a "Faithful High Priest" (Heb. ii. 17, Rev. i. 5, iii. 14). Of others to whom Timothy is desired to pass on the authority to teach "to faithful men" (2 Tim. ii. 2).

Of words it means that whatever they import can be relied upon, trusted, believed, as in Titus i. 9 we have "holding fast the faithful word." The only other passages where it is applied to words are those of the Five Sayings, and in two of these their reliability is emphasised by the expression "worthy of all acceptation." They have a value in themselves to be received heartily (1 Tim. i. 15, iv. 9).

In three passages the word is joined with *alēthinos*, "faithful and true." *Alēthinos* signifies that which is superior, or of a higher order, as in John vi. 32, "He is the true bread," i.e. sustains spiritual life, as ordinary bread sustains bodily life. He is the "true Vine" (John xv. 1). That is, He is the source of all spiritual vitality to those who believe in Him as the ordinary vine supplies supports to the branches. Heaven is the "true tabernacle" in contrast with the earthly which was symbolical. In Rev. xix. 11 it is applied to our Lord who is the absolute heavenly monarch over all forces of evil and will one day destroy them. Being faithful He can be relied upon and His governmental power trusted. In the same way the passages in Rev. xxi. 5, xxii. 6, "These words are faithful and true," indicate that they are words superior to all others inasmuch as they have a Divine origin. They reveal the mind and purpose of God, and being faithful they are to be trusted, and relied upon being fulfilled.

Thus we conclude that the word *logos* refers to the whole gospel message broad based upon Holy Scriptures and that this gospel message is entirely trustworthy, to be relied upon and trusted.

We need to consider some reason for the recurring phrase in these Epistles and not in the earlier Epistles. It will throw light on the subject if we visualise the condition of the Churches and the dangers to which the Christian doctrine of the gospel was exposed. Our Lord foreshadowed this state by two parables, in which Satan makes the attack from two different points. In the parable of the tares the Kingdom of God is corrupted by the introduction of false brethren; they are the tares among the wheat so visibly alike in growth and appearance that it would be impossible to remove them with safety to the others, so both must grow together to the end, when God by His angels will make a distinction. It was not long before there was evidence of Satan's activity in this direction. We have Ananias and Sapphira his wife. Then Simon of Samaria, who became a baptised member. Later St. Paul, writing to the Galatians (ii. 4), speaks of false brethren

introduced by some secret side issue to spy out their liberty in Christ. In Corinthians he says he was often in danger of these men (2 Cor. xi. 26). St. Peter also speaks of false prophets and false teachers who bring in damnable heresies (2 Peter ii. 1), St. John of "false prophets that have gone out into the world" (1 John iv. 1).

St. Paul speaks of false Apostles, deceitful workers transforming themselves into the Apostles of Christ (2 Cor. xi. 13), at which he does not marvel, seeing that Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light (verse 15). Thus as our Lord in the parable traces the source of these to Satan and their end is destruction, so St. Paul here shows that Satan is the source of false brethren and their end is according to their works.

The second method of attack is foreshadowed in the parable of the leaven. This illustrates the inner secret working of corruption of doctrine. (We know that Lightfoot and others interpret this parable of the secret working of the gospel in the heart and in the world, but if so then it is the only place where leaven is used figuratively in a good sense. Our Lord used it in a bad sense when He spoke of the leaven of the Pharisees and of Herod.) St. Paul refers to this when writing to the Galatians. He warns them of being entangled again in the yoke of bondage of Judaism, that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump (Gal. v. 9), that is, if they admit even the necessity of circumcision for salvation they become indebted to the whole law. Nor is this leaven confined to Jewish sources. There is the false teaching of Greek Philosophy which would corrupt Christian doctrine whilst it professed to be true wisdom and made appeal to men's intellect, not in support of Christian doctrine, but in confusing the one with the other.

We have then two sources from whence Christianity was to be side-tracked: the Jewish ceremonial and the Greek Philosophy. These two are combated in the Epistle to the Colossians, where they appear to have assumed strong positions in opposition to sound doctrine. St. Paul says that in Christ "are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. And this I say, lest any man beguile you with enticing words. . . . Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ" (Col. ii. 3-4, 8). It is interesting to note the characteristics of this "opposition of science falsely so called."

The word beguile, *paralogizētai*, signifies, in keeping accounts to reckon wrongly, then to cheat, in reasoning to reason wrongly and so arrive at false conclusions and fallacies and so mislead; see also James i. 22, "deceiving yourselves," if we are not doers of the word as well as hearers. "Enticing words," *pithanologia*, means persuasive words or plausible arguments. This is characteristic of the incipient gnosticism. The word "spoil," *sulagōgōn*, signifies to spoil one of one's armour and then lead away. "Vain deceits," *kenēs apatēs*, means an empty trick, fraud, deceit, cheat. The origin of this philosophy is the tradition of men, "rudiments of the world," "rudiments" signifies the simplest elements of know-

ledge, just as the letters are the simplest elements of words so is this philosophy of knowledge. This philosophy was neither Divine nor deep in learning, but a simple unexamined trick, as the gnostic philosophy was deceitful and is met by the true wisdom of God in Christ who has thereby met all the needs of men, so also perfect salvation and restoration of men is met by Christ's death and resurrection. "Ye are made full in Him" (Col. ii. 10 R.V.). He has blotted out all the Jewish law of ordinances, and all who believe have the benefits in Christ (verses 11-14).

St. Paul meets all the gnostic teaching and Greek Philosophy by setting forth Christ as the true æon, the Head of all creation, the Firstborn of every creature, who was the instrument of the creation of all things, visible and invisible, thrones, dominions, principalities, powers. All these are held together by Him (i. 15 ff.).

It is not surprising that a few years later when St. Paul writes the Pastoral Epistles he should have to meet developments of this false philosophy and apostasy. By this time the Jewish trend of thought had been to accommodate itself to the Greek philosophical thought. This Jewish character is expressed in such phrases as these: "Desirous to be teachers of the law," 1 Tim. i. 7; "They of the circumcision," Titus i. 10; "Jewish fables," i. 14; "Fightings about the law," iii. 9. The gnostic character is expressed in these phrases: "Fables and endless genealogies," 1 Tim. i. 4; "Vain jangling," i. 6; "Doting about questions and strife of words," vi. 4; "profane and vain babblings, science falsely so called," vi. 20. St. Paul therefore urges Timothy not to give heed to them, to refuse profane and old wives' fables, to take heed unto doctrine, to withdraw from perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, to hold fast the form of sound words to "study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth," 2 Tim. ii. 15. To "Preach the word." To Titus he says: "Hold fast the faithful word as thou hast been taught," i. 9; "speak thou the things that become sound doctrine," ii. 1.

By this reiterated phrase, "Faithful is the word," St. Paul fastens it as a nail in a sure place upon which to hang all the truths of the gospel. It is by it that all error can be combated.

Let us consider each passage in its context.

1 Tim. i. 15: "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." Here we suggest the following translation as being more in keeping with the mind of the Apostle: "Faithful is the word and worthy of all acceptation, *because* Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." The particle *hoti* suggests a quotation and is then translated "that," but it also means "*because*" as giving a reason for a statement (though this is not indispensable to the argument). In this case the coming of Christ to save sinners is the reason why the word is faithful and worthy of all acceptation. God had fulfilled His word of promise concerning Christ in sending His Son to save sinners. Therefore it was to be relied upon and accepted.

Such a faithful word stands opposed to the unreliability of fables and endless genealogies which minister questions. It leads to a moral conduct never attained by the law. It takes the sinner and cleanses his conscience and gives him the true motive power for holy conduct. It gives the message of the way of salvation by grace and ensures the salvation of the greatest sinner. To sever from this is to make shipwreck of the faith.

1 *Tim. iii. 1*: "This is a true saying: If a man desire the office of a bishop he desireth a good work." The first sentence should stand by itself disconnected from the rest by a full stop, then beginning a new sentence. It will then read, "Faithful is the word. If a man desire the office of a bishop," etc. As already intimated, it is difficult to believe that to "desire the office of a bishop" had in twenty years become a trite saying in churches so widely apart and for the most part despised and in the midst of opposition as well as being corrupted by false teachers and false doctrine. But considering that "Faithful is the word," as a nail in a sure place, a fixed truth and kernel of the gospel, we see a close connection, because a person who desires the office of a bishop, an office that involves preaching so clear and effective message of salvation, does desire a good work in preaching that gospel. For St. Paul said to the bishops of Ephesus: "Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost has made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. . . . And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all them that are sanctified" (Acts xx. 28, 32). This is indeed a good work and having for its basis the faithful word, consequently such men must be of a character in moral conduct and mental fitness as is in keeping with such a position that will not give the outsiders any cause to point the finger of scorn.

1 *Tim. iv. 9*: "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation." Here again we should translate, "Faithful is the word and worthy of all acceptation." This verse stands rightly by itself, *gar* of verse 10 connecting verse 8. It is difficult to connect the preceding or the following verse as the "saying." But there is no difficulty if we take it by itself as combating some error and uncertainty in the context. In iv. 1 ff. we are informed that some would depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils speaking lies in hypocrisy, forbidding to marry and abstain from meats, making bodily exercises the all-important thing for salvation. Timothy is to meet these by shunning these things which are no better or surer than profane and old wives' fables, and because "the word is faithful" the Apostle says that they labour and suffer reproach, because also they trust in the living God who has given such a message. So Timothy must

maintain his ministry of the word to which he had been appointed, taking heed to himself and the doctrine, verse 16.

2 *Tim. ii. 11*: "It is a faithful saying: for if we be dead, we shall also live." We again translate: "Faithful is the word," and disconnect from what follows by a full stop, *gar* of verse 12 connecting verse 10, and again we look to the context for the application. Timothy is reminded from whom and whence he received the knowledge of the Scriptures and salvation, and he is exhorted not to be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord nor of suffering if needs be in witnessing for Christ. He is to hold fast the form of sound words, and to be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. Endure hardness, to remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead. The word is faithful which involves our being bound up in the death, life, suffering and reigning with Christ. Let him rightly divide the word of truth and shun profane and vain babblings, for they increase to ungodliness.

Titus iii. 8: "This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly." We translate "Faithful is the word," and disconnect from the following sentence by a full stop, and *Kai* connects with verse 7. The context shows the same existence of erroneous teaching. There are those who tend to rebel against lawful authority, but the gospel as brought in by the grace of God, that regenerates by the Holy Spirit, that justifies by grace and makes us heirs of eternal life, all this is by the faithful word and must be affirmed constantly, so that those who believe should be careful to maintain good works. But foolish questions and genealogies and contentions and strivings about the law are to be avoided. These do not lead to good works. It is the gospel of God's grace alone that will lead to this, and the Gospel is the word that is faithful, always to be relied upon to effect the conversion of sinners and create a people zealous of good works. Thus these Five Sayings are not some trite common saying to be found in the same verse or immediate context, but are designed to be the centre of the great truth of the gospel message against all erroneous and false teaching and the uncertainties of Jewish and Greek gnostic Philosophy which was subverting the people and leading to rebellious evil conduct and damnation of souls. The Apostle would have Timothy and Titus rest their teaching and preaching upon the faithfulness of God's message which he sums up and reiterates in this phrase, "Faithful is the Word," and interjects into the middle of the sentence without affecting the construction, but at the same time it is the bulwark against all other teaching which differs from it. There is need to-day as always to adhere to the Gospel message as the Faithful Word.