

2 Timothy 2:17 and their **talk** [λόγος (lógos): word for human rationales] will spread like **gangrene** [γάγγραινα (gángraina)²].

- (14) Paul is signing off with this epistle and in doing so includes a warning to Timothy as a pastor-teacher and to congregations at large that destruction awaits those doctrinally ignorant who speak words void of biblical guidance.
- (15) Such talk, rich with human viewpoint, is likened to decaying bodily tissue that untreated ultimately results in physical death. Such was the ultimate result in the Ephesian churches if not stopped by the city's pastors.
- (16) Verse 17 concludes by calling out Hymenaíos: **Ἵμέναιος (Huménaios)** and Philétus: **Φιλιτὸς (Philētós)** as examples to reference.
- (17) Both of these men were pastors in the Anatolian city of Ephesus. Hymenaíos is also mentioned by Paul in 1 Timothy 1:20 along with Alexander both of whom the apostle turns over to Satan so they might be taught not to blaspheme.
- (18) The doctrinal error that Paul addresses in 2 Timothy 2:17 is denunciation of the resurrection of believers at the Rapture.
- (19) The unguarded tongue that spreads the lie can cause those so influenced to acquire gangrene of the soul.
- (20) When the lie spreads collectively throughout the church body, then that sheepfold of the Lord's flock is defeated by the Dark Side resulting in divine discipline for those responsible.
- (21) Since the sins of the tongue can cause gangrene within congregations, pastors are to warn their flocks to learn doctrine so they can avoid such error.

² “Gangrene or mortification which, unless properly treated, spreads from the place affected and eats away or consumes the neighboring parts of the body and at length destroys the whole body” (Ibid., 352).

11. We now return to our verse; here is the expanded translation for as far as we have progressed;

James 1:26 If any fearful person holds the subjective opinion that he is religiously devout, and yet does not bridle his own tongue with application of resident doctrine ... (EXT)

1. What proceeds is the conjunction of contrast, **ἀλλά (allá)**: “but,” followed by the present active participle of **ἀπατάω (apatáō)**: to deceive or seduce into error.
2. This is in direct contrast to the “hearer-and-doer” believer of verse 25:

James 1:25 But the one who looks with an earnest desire to absorb in detail the perfect law of freedom, and continues to live in close proximity to it, not having become a forgetful hearer only, but a doer, this man shall acquire unalloyed happiness by the production of divine good. (EXT)
3. This believer was positive to doctrine that was taught. He then applied what he learned to life and circumstances. The believer in the next verse is religious.
4. His subjectivity is the result of works, indicated by the word “devout.” He functions on human good as a substitute for hearing and applying the Word of God.
5. The King James Version translates the adjective **θρησκός (thrēskos)** with the word “religious.” It refers to devout compliance with overt acts that are assumed to produce good works.
6. This person is ignorant of the spiritual way of life. The production of divine good is only possible when the believer is in fellowship.
7. Such production is never accomplished unless it is executed from an inventory of biblically supported principles through which the good work is to be performed.
8. Because of his ignorance of the process by which good works are accomplished he becomes legalistic. His sophomoric understanding of the Christian way of life causes him to become judgmental.

9. He performs his assumed good deeds and criticizes others who do not do the same. He appoints himself spiritual king of the mountain, but functions from a deep valley.
10. He ignorantly resides in that valley because he has deceived his own *kardía*. His biblical inventory of ideas is flawed. His application is the result of human viewpoint based on ill-conceived standards.
11. The final analysis of all his deeds of the flesh is the adjective **μάταιος** (*mátaios*): idle, empty, fruitless, useless, powerless, lacking truth.
12. The verse reads like this in its expanded translation:

James 1:26 If any fearful person holds the subjective opinion that he is religiously devout, and yet does not bridle his own tongue with application of resident doctrine but deceives his own *kardía*, this man's devout production is worthless. (EXT)

Summary:

1. This believer has not organized his spiritual life so that he can learn the Word of God through the process of GAP: (1) Objectivity toward the communication of the Word, (2) concentration on the content of doctrine taught under academic understanding, (3) positive response for inculcation in the *kardía*, and (4) application to life and circumstances.
2. This advanced analysis of the spiritual-growth process is simplified through alliteration by Gary Watson for those new to doctrine: (1) Communicate (by the teacher), (2) Capture (under academic understanding), (3) Comprehend (positive response to what is taught), and (4) comply (what is learned and applied toward life and circumstances).
3. Further development of this teaching aid has led to an updated sequence that better describes the process volition uses to make the advance from academic understanding to application of doctrine to life and circumstances.
4. The amended analysis of the spiritual-growth process is simplified through alliteration for those new to doctrine:

- (1) **Communicate** (by the evangelist or pastor-teacher and the Holy Spirit),
- (2) **Comprehend** (by academic understanding in the *noús*, or common grace),
- (3) **Consider** (to determine one's volitional response, whether to believe or disbelieve),
- (4) **Concur** (positive response to what is taught),
- (5) **Cognition** (*epígnōsis* understanding of divine thought in the *kardía*), and
- (6) **Comply** (by application of doctrine to life and circumstances).

- 5. Failure to learn the Word of God from a qualified pastor-teacher results in scar tissue on the soul and the buildup of erroneous ideas and principles that dominate recall.
- 6. This opens a vacuum in the soul so that truth is ignored in favor of the lie contained in doctrines from demons:

1 Timothy 4:1 The Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons.

- 7. When a believer's soul is the victim of deceit it inevitably leads him into the throes of reversionism manifested by emotional revolt of the soul.

2 Peter 2:17 These [false teachers] are springs without water [teaching with no reference to Scripture or the teaching of the Holy Spirit] and mists [human viewpoint and evil] driven by a storm [itinerants move around like a squall line and bring a storm of false doctrine to the benighted], for whom the black darkness [darkness of the soul due to negative volition to truth] has been reserved [the soul's environment of darkness as opposed to the light provided by truth].