

- (3) The greater the application of biblical truth the more real becomes the absolute reality of the plan of God and His management of it for our benefit.
11. Absent this perceptive ability, the unbeliever is handicapped in his evaluation of the gospel.
 12. Common grace is the work of the Holy Spirit acting as a human spirit to interpret for the unbeliever the supernatural concept of salvation by faith alone in Christ alone.
 13. This handicap is intensified for the prosperous unbeliever who is dependent upon his works for salvation while being distracted by his material possessions.
 14. Some additional passages amplify this principle:
1 Timothy 6:9 - But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction.
v. 10 - For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.
 15. In context, Paul is discussing the loss of thought among believers. Some that are prosperous are vulnerable to the cosmic distractions caused by their possession of worldly goods.
 16. Worse is allowing these distractions to degenerate into the various stages of reversionism. The four early stages of reversionism deal with apostasy:
(1) Reaction and Distraction: Wrong priorities, rejection of authority, lack of objectivity, hypersensitivity, retaliation due to perceived wrongs, bad decisions, self-fragmentation, addiction, preoccupation with self, no spiritual self-esteem.

- (2) **Frantic Search for Happiness:** Compensation for frustration, discouragement, and loneliness through use of power, pleasure, approbation, success, status symbols, sex, or materialism.
 - (3) **Operation Boomerang:** Failure to assuage the factors associated with the frantic search for happiness causes these factors to be intensified. Frustration becomes rage; discouragement becomes depression; loneliness becomes desolation.
 - (4) **Emotional Revolt of the Soul:** Reactor factors absent doctrinal thought, including irrationality, egocentricity, instability, and imbalance results in short-circuiting Operation Z. Doctrinal recall for application is neutralized.
17. The implication of verse 10 is that once the believer sinks to the fourth stage of reversionism he then enters into the advanced stages of his spiritual decline:
- (5) **Locked-in Negative Volition toward Doctrine:** Doctrinal intake is shut down due to apathy leading to wrong priorities that favor the details of life; antagonism and personality conflicts with members of the congregation; failure to use Operation Z; unresponsive to doctrine; disorientation to logistical grace; malfunction of faith-rest.
 - (6) **Blackout of the Soul:** A vacuum in the soul that causes human viewpoint, human good, and evil to be sucked into the soul which corrupts the thought process with doctrines of demons. Total disorientation due to the influence of evil.
 - (7) **Scar Tissue of the Soul:** The buildup of false doctrines in the soul which shuts down any recall of doctrine. The rate of forgetting exceeds the rate of recall. Vocabulary is diminished, norms and standards degenerate, momentum halts; and wisdom is lost; all spiritual functions shut down.

(8) **Reverse-Process Reversionism:** The total influence of evil and divorcement from reality occurs. What was previously considered right is now considered to be wrong and vice versa. This is the status quo of unrestrained and perpetual sinfulness, inversion of thought, fragmentation, and excessive cosmic involvement. The believer is brainwashed by satanic propaganda.¹

18. The next verse is designed to motivate the believer to avoid these pitfalls by continuing to execute the spiritual advance:

1 Timothy 6:11 - But keep avoiding these things, man of God, and instead keep pursuing [διώκω (*diókwō*): with the desire to obtain] righteousness [δικαιοσύνη (*dikaíosúnē*): integrity], godliness [εὐσέβεια (*eusébeia*): spirituality + accumulation of advanced doctrine], faith [πιστίς (*pistís*): wheel-tracks facilitated through consistent repetition], love [ἀγάπη (*agápē*): personal love for God & unconditional love for others], perseverance [ὑπομονή (*hupomonē*): the spiritual momentum to keep moving forward in the accumulation of doctrinal thought], and gentleness [πραῦπάθεια (*praüpátheia*): composure²; genuine humility & grace orientation].

¹ Adapted from: R. B. Thieme, Jr., “Stages of Reversionism,” in *Reversionism*, 2d ed. (Houston: R. B. Thieme, Jr., Bible Ministries, 2000), 22–39. © 2000 by R. B. Thieme, Jr., Bible Ministries. All rights reserved.

² “πραῦπάθεια. A late construct, related to the adjective πραῦπαθής (“gentle”), which occurs in Philo. The only instance in the New Testament is at 1 Timothy 6:11 at the end of a list of virtues. The meaning is not so much “meekness” but “composure” which can take wrongs calmly” (Wilhelm Michaelis, “πραῦπάθεια,” in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, eds. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley [Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1967], 5:939).