

**The Attackers: Gangrene of the Soul Illustrates Life in the Cosmic Systems; Uncorrected by Recovery the Infection Illustrates the Advanced Stages of Reversionism, 2 Tim 2:16–17; Alexander as a Delator for Nero Offers Perjured Testimony against Paul in Rome; Church Discipline: Pastors & Deacons Must Have Two Witnesses or Testimony from the Injured Party, 1 Tim 5:19**

13. For the believer, *localized* death occurs in the soul when a false doctrine is accepted by his free will decision to believe it.
14. The “prolonged interruption of the blood supply” illustrates life in the cosmic system which allows the false idea to become facilitated.
15. The problem that results from failure to rebound and resume spiritual growth is elucidated by the statement, “If not treated (expunged by the intake of countering doctrine), the infection can spread beyond the wound and cause death.”
16. The death here would be the sin unto death. This is the danger in which Paul is about to place Hymenaeus and Alexander.
17. Removal of the dead tissue is accomplished by spiritual growth under a qualified pastor-teacher. These two men are not interested in this at the moment.
18. As a result the “spread of infection” illustrates the advanced stages of reversionism: (5) locked-in negative volition toward doctrine, (6) blackout of the soul, (7) scar tissue on the soul, and (8) reverse process reversionism.
19. Alexander’s problems are far, far worse. The following background on Alexander is provided by R. B. Thieme, Jr.:

**Alexander is a reversionistic believer, mentioned also in 2 Timothy 4:14. There he is called Alexander the coppersmith. Here he is called simply Alexander. He is the one who will eventually be responsible for the death of Paul. He is the one who betrayed him to Roman authorities so that he was apprehended, brought to trial a second time, and executed on that occasion. It was Alexander the coppersmith who brought in lying, perjured evidence against him.<sup>1</sup>**

20. Timothy is allowing these men to spread their false doctrines in his congregation and has done nothing to stop them. Paul admonishes Timothy by stepping in and dealing with the problem himself.
21. What he does is deliver them over to Satan for the administration of the sin unto death.
22. The primary responsibility of a pastor is to teach doctrine so that discipline will never have to be administered. However, occasionally a pastor will face this circumstance and when he avoids it then the sheep are not being protected.
23. Hymenaeus and Alexander were bullies and troublemakers and since Timothy has not addressed the issue, Paul uses his apostolic authority to address the issue.

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<sup>1</sup> R. B. Thieme, Jr., *First Timothy*, MP3 CD-467 (Houston: R. B. Thieme, Jr., Bible Ministries, 1975), 019.

24. No pastor wants to be required to administer discipline, but there comes a time when it is necessary. Once convinced that a member is spreading false doctrine, misusing his legitimate authority, arrogating to himself authority to bully others, involved in a conspiracy, or has organized a clique, then he must be discipline that individual.
25. However, according to the mandates of Scripture, neither the deacons nor the pastor is able to act without evidence as per Paul's instruction to Timothy in:

**1 Timothy 5:19 -** Do not receive an accusation against an elder except on the basis of two or three witnesses.

26. Anonymous complaints, hearsay, and communication with third parties do not fulfill the requirements of this verse. Investigations cannot objectively commence unless injured parties personally bring their issues to the authorities.
27. What is a far better solution is for each person in the congregation to prefer reconciliation over rancor, harmony over discord, and unconditional love over anger and bitterness.