

I TIMOTHY 1

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to I Timothy chapter 1 as we continue our study through the Word of God and we begin this book, that I believe, as you will see, is vitally important for us to learn from and apply to our lives.

Tonight, we are beginning a group of three letters that Paul wrote that have been called, *“The Pastoral Epistles.”*

These three letters are: I Timothy, II Timothy and Titus and they were among the last letters that Paul wrote and thus, all that was important, all that was on his heart, the burden of his heart, he shares with Timothy and Titus who were leaders in the churches in Ephesus and on the Island of Crete respectively.

As the book of Acts closes, we are told, **“Then Paul dwelt two whole years in his own rented house, and received all who came to him, preaching the kingdom of God and teaching the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence, no one forbidding him.”** Acts 28:30-31.

Remember that Paul was in prison in Rome, but that is not the end of the story for Paul. Paul was released from prison for a time since there were no real charges against him.

And during this time Paul revisited some of the churches he ministered to, including Ephesus and maybe traveling as far as Spain.

While in Ephesus though, he sees that savage wolves came into the church and savage wolves rose up from within the church trying to bring in destructive heresy’s just as Paul warned them when he met with the Ephesian elders in Acts chapter 20.

Paul said this to them, he gave to them this warning, **“Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves.”** Acts 20:28-30.

So they should have been on guard for this, but they were not even though they were warned. It sounds so familiar because we were warned by many and by God about the deceptions in the last days, and how many churches, leaders and people did not heed that warning!

Now, because of this false teaching by these false teachers, Paul tries to correct these errors that had come into the church and as he leaves the area he leaves Timothy in Ephesus to deal with the problems, to lead the people in the right direction. In a sense, he was their pastor.

As Paul left Timothy in Ephesus, he continued on to Macedonia where he wrote this first letter to Timothy and Titus in around 63-64 A. D. Titus being written shortly after this first letter.

Then, in 64 A. D. Nero burned Rome and blamed the Christians for this devastation and by 66 A. D., as the persecution against Christians grew, Nero had Paul arrested again and while in prison this time he wrote his final letter, II Timothy as he was preparing for his execution.

The exact date of Paul being put to death for his faith we don't know, but, according to tradition, Paul was beheaded just west of Rome on the Ostian Way in 67 A. D.

Today I think many have lost the concept of what a church is all about, who we are, what we are to do, because of all these false teachers with their false doctrines that they have brought into the church.

One author put it like this as he gives to us some examples of what people think a church is all about. He wrote,

- *Some feel that the church is an organization led by a hierarchy of leaders - like the army.*
- *Others think that the church is a social relief agency whose sole purpose for existing is to distribute to the community those things that will meet the needs of the people in that community - kind of like the Red Cross.*
- *There are those who think of the local church in a very utilitarian [practical] way - they see it as a place that provides valuable services at important points in life - a useful place to go if a person dies, gets married, has a baby or wants to get baptized.*
- *Many today have come to think of the church as nothing more than a social club, where a group of people who share the same religious views get together and talk, drink coffee and have a good time.*
- *And then, of course, there are a great majority of people who think of the church purely in terms of steeples and stained-glass windows - in other words the church is the building on a particular street in a particular neighborhood - that's it!*

- Source Unknown

Because we have lost the concept of what a church is, we have also lost what our mission is.

You see, the church is not some organization, it is a living organism, we are the body of Christ and Jesus is the head of this body, guiding us and directing us.

The church is not a social agency that is just around to help the needs of others. Yes, it is part of what the church is about, but if that is all you are doing, handing out things to people to help them, you have only helped them for a short period of time and apart from Christ, they are still lost!

And, of course, the church is not just to be married and die in.

The church is not a social club to gather and fellowship.

And the church is not a building, like I have said, it is a living organism made up of people from all over the world who have come to saving faith in Christ!

The Greek word translated “*church*” in the New Testament is the word, EKKLESIA.” It is a word that literally means, “*An assembly of called out ones.*”

And the point being made is that this speaks of those who have come to Christ and have been called out of the world to a life of separation and service to God. We are God’s own special people.

And thus, our responsibility, as ambassadors for Christ, is to bring the Good News, the Gospel message to a lost and dying world. We are to shine for Jesus and let people see Jesus in us. We are here to worship God. We are here to make disciples.

Now as you read through these three Pastoral Epistles you will see a theme emerge and Paul tells us what that theme is here in I Timothy 3:14-15 where Paul wrote, “**These things I write to you, though I hope to come to you shortly; but if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.**”

That is what the church is to be about, ***THE PILLAR AND GROUND OF THE TRUTH!***

You see, things must have been out of order and Paul wants Timothy to get things back to the way they were. The truth must be spoken to dispel the lies that were being spoken!

Thus, Paul will share regarding “public worship, the selection and qualifications of church leaders, the pastor’s personal life and public ministry, how to confront sin in the church, the role of women, the care of widows, and how to handle money . . .” (John MacArthur).

Besides that, there are many other practical points that Paul shares with Timothy and Titus as we will see over the next few months as we go through these three letters.

And I think these letters are so important for us today, as I have said. The reason being is that as you read these letters you will see that the focus is on teaching the Word of God, sound doctrine, healthy teaching, which is lacking so much in the church today. We need to get back to the basics and do what we were called to do!

And, hopefully we will understand these things as we go through these Pastoral Epistles.

Now, who was Timothy?

Timothy was the son of an unbelieving Greek father and a believing Jewish mother named Eunice and a believing Jewish grandmother named Lois, (Acts 16:1, II Timothy 1:5).

This family lived in Lystra where Paul met them on his first missionary journey, (Acts 16:1), and it is possible that as Paul shared the Gospel message, Timothy received Jesus as his Lord and Savior.

The reason I say that is Paul often speaks of being a spiritual father to Timothy.

Keep in mind that Timothy was a young man and he had his work cut out for him there in Ephesus. And when I say young man, he was probably in his mid-thirties at this time!

And with all he had to deal with there in Ephesus, Paul writes Timothy this letter to encourage him, to equip him for the work that was before him.

And Timothy needed this encouragement, I don't think he was as bold as Paul was. And that is what Paul is doing, encouraging him in the work and by the time we get to II Timothy, he is admonishing Timothy to continue on in the work because Paul was going home to be with the Lord!

Who wrote this letter and the other Pastoral Epistles?

Up until the nineteenth century and the rise of higher criticism, Paul was considered the author of these Pastoral Epistles.

But no matter what these so-called higher critics say, the evidence is overwhelming that Paul wrote these letters.

We see second-century church Fathers, like Polycarp, Clement of Rome and Ignatius speak of Paul writing these letters.

In the third century we see Origen, Clement of Alexandria, and Tertullian quote passages from these epistles and stating that Paul wrote them.

In trying to discredit the Bible people are discrediting their own work! The Bible will stand no matter the opposition, and men will come and go, but God's Word will remain!

So with that as our background, let's begin reading in I Timothy chapter 1, beginning in verse 1 and let's see what the Lord has for us as we study through His Word.

I TIMOTHY 1

VERSES 1-2

As Paul opens up this letter to Timothy, he says that he is “**an apostle of Jesus Christ.**”

Keep in mind that the word “*apostle*” means “one who has been sent forth with a commission.”

Think of it like an ambassador or someone who goes on a mission representing a king or head of state, and here Paul is representing Jesus Christ.

So in the broadest sense of the word, we are all apostles or ambassadors for Christ as we go out into the world representing Him. We are not part of the group of twelve apostles, that office has passed off the scene!

Not only that, but Paul did not obtain this title, you might say, by his own will or efforts, it is God who had given him this position.

Now why is this so important? I mean, Timothy already knows who Paul is, so why state the obvious?

First of all, this letter was not just for Timothy, but it was to be read in the churches. And, because Timothy is dealing with heresy in the church there in Ephesus and maybe some did not want to listen to Timothy, maybe they didn't believe what he was saying, Paul is coming with the authority of God and thus, this letter will or should settle the matter.

Then Paul speaks of “**our hope**” and let's look at this for a minute.

Keep in mind that Paul links God the Father and Jesus together in giving this command and once again, as the Scriptures teach, the deity of Jesus Christ.

Thus, this plan of salvation by God the Father and carried out by God the Son, Jesus; the second person of the Holy Trinity, gives us hope for the future because of what Jesus has done in the past, saving us from our sins by paying in full the penalty for our sins.

In other words, the hope of getting into heaven is only found in the Person and work of Jesus Christ, He is our hope of glory!

As Paul moves on in verse 2, we see him mention Timothy, “**my true son in the faith.**” And I think the idea here is that Timothy was saved through the ministry of Paul and thus, he was a spiritual son in the faith, as I have said!

In most of Paul’s letters we see the greeting of “**grace and peace**” spoken of. But here in I Timothy, also in II Timothy and Titus, the Pastoral Epistles, we see mercy added!

First of all, grace speaks of getting what we don’t deserve, God’s unmerited favor, unmerited love upon us. It speaks of all the divine resources needed for Christian life and service that God freely gives to us.

And peace speaks of a peace with God that is only obtained as we receive grace into our lives through Jesus Christ. This peace is that inner tranquility that comes from leaning on the Lord.

It is as Paul said in Romans 5:1-2, “**Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.**”

Also, mercy speaks of not getting what we do deserve, death. And with mercy we also see that this is received by His grace, we don’t deserve it, but He freely gives it to us. Think of mercy also like this. It speaks of God’s compassionate care and protection for one who is needy and prone to fail.

Let's face it, both Timothy and Titus needed to hear this and I am sure every pastor needs to hear this, as well as each and everyone one of us. We need all three in our lives to encourage us to go forward.

Let me share this with you.

Why did Paul alter his traditional greeting to include the word "mercy" when he wrote these personal letters? Well, in all three of these letters, Paul was writing to someone in the ministry who felt overwhelmed by the affairs of life. For instance, when he wrote his first letter to Timothy (the book of First Timothy), Timothy was feeling overwhelmed by the phenomenal growth in the church under his care.

Such growth is every pastor's dream; however, Timothy was young, and he was pastoring what had become the world's largest church. This was therefore a very challenging time in Timothy's life.

Timothy was feeling so challenged that he apparently wrote a letter to Paul, asking him for advice on how to choose leaders for his fast-growing congregation. As the young minister faced this daunting task, he needed to be reminded that there was special "mercy" available to help him in his time of need.

Thus, when Paul wrote to Timothy, he inserted the word "mercy" between the traditional greeting of "grace" and "peace." He said, "Unto Timothy, my own son in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace . . ." (1 Timothy 1:2).

- <http://bit.ly/2S07sfM>

I think the main problem for Timothy was that he was overwhelmed with the problems that had come into the church and then how to deal with them, even with elders!

VERSES 3-4

Remember what I said as we opened up this study. Paul was released from his first imprisonment in Rome. From there Paul and Timothy were together in Ephesus and after Paul dealt with the false prophets in Ephesus, he wanted Timothy to remain behind to finish the work, to teach the Word of God, straighten out a few problems and to warn the believers against false teachers.

But Timothy is uncertain, he doesn't want to stay but Paul "**urged**" him, which speaks of Paul begging Timothy to stay and complete the work.

There will be times when God will stretch us and we will want to stay where we are, not get uncomfortable.

It is in that stretching we grow, and we learn to lean more upon Him, just as Timothy needed to do.

As I have said, Timothy's work in Ephesus was to get people back to the truths of God instead of fables and genealogies, foolish things that don't mean anything in God's economy.

You see, these things don't build up the body of Christ, but they tear it down, they divide it, and I have seen that over the years.

The word that Paul uses for "**charge**" is a military word that means, "to give strict orders from a commanding officer."

Paul wasn't telling Timothy to do this if he wanted to, if he felt like it, Paul was commanding Timothy to teach sound doctrine!

In fact, Paul tells Timothy, "**Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.**" I Timothy 4:13.

The church today is moving away from sound doctrine and into being an entertainment center, teaching on social issues, a feel-good gospel and-so-on. That is not how the church is to function!

Make no mistake about it, sound doctrine is the **life blood** of the local church. It is absolutely critical to the health of the body of Christ.

Now many today don't see it that way, but keep in mind we are beginning to look at the three Pastoral Epistles, and if sound doctrine, healthy doctrine was not important, if it was not critical to the health of the local church, then why in the original text is there thirty-two references to "*doctrine*," "*teachers*," and "*teaching*" in the three Pastoral Epistles?

Because it is that important! Remember what we are told in Jeremiah 3:15, "**And I will give you shepherds according to My heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding.**"

You see, that is what we need in the church today. Pastors who are willing to feed the sheep, nourish them, give them the knowledge of God according to His Word and opened up by His Spirit to our lives!

As one writer put it,

The greatest need of the church today is not less doctrine but *more* doctrine – about God, about salvation, about ourselves, about character, about church, about family. Our greatest need is to know God better – and we can learn more only from his Word.

- R. Kent Hughes and Bryan Chapell, 1-2 Timothy and Titus, To Guard the Deposit, p. 29

VERSES 5-7

As you read this it seems like some of the leaders were teaching a Jewish type of legalistic doctrine, which goes contrary to the Scriptures.

You see, God is interested in our heart, inward, and as He gets a hold of our heart it is then reflected in our outward actions.

A legalistic view is to work on the outside, to clean up the actions, while on the inside we are filled with dead men's bones, we are like whitewashed tombs as Jesus said!

Look at how this is played out for us.

When Paul speaks of this "**love from a pure heart**" he is saying that this kind of love, this *AGAPE* love comes from God.

But, on the other end of the spectrum, in a legalistic view we twist God's Word and become harsh and judgmental, not loving towards people!

Then Paul speaks of having a "**good conscience**" and this speaks of living as God desires knowing we are not perfect.

But in a legalistic view, we end up condemned knowing we will never measure up to the standard of God – perfection.

In having a "**sincere faith**" not hypocritical faith, we learn to trust in the Lord to help us.

But in a legalistic view we tend to trust in our own ability to please God.

And here was the problem in Ephesus. Some had moved away from the truth and they were just speaking forth empty words, not even understanding the implications of what they were teaching, what the Law was all about!

Let me show you that the Law will never save you, never.

In James 2:10 we are told, **“For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.”**

Also, in Romans 3:28 Paul wrote, **“Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law.”**

And, of course, Paul wrote this in Galatians 2:16, **“knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.”**

And there are many more, but just one more here and that is what Paul said in Romans 3:20, **“Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.”**

Please understand that the Law of God is not bad or evil, we are. That is the problem and the work of the Law in our lives is to bring us to the Savior, to bring us to Jesus so we can be saved by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone. I hope that is clear!

As we read on we will see Paul speak of the Law being good and how it is to be used correctly in our lives, and yet, so many take it the wrong way and end up trying to mix Law and Grace together and they don't mix! Not at all!

VERSES 8-11

There is much confusion today about the Law of God and let me give you some background on this and I think you will see what the Law was all about.

Keep in mind that the Law of God was divided into three parts or divisions:

The Civil or Judicial Law

The Ceremonial Law

The Moral Law

The *Judicial Law* was intended for Israel to govern their national life and was set aside when God set the nation aside after she rejected her Messiah. Remember what happened back in 70 A. D. as the Romans came in and destroyed the city of Jerusalem and the nation of Israel ceased, and the Jews were scattered!

Then there is the *Ceremonial Law* that was given to Israel to govern their worship of God and was contained in ordinances, ceremonies, feast days and sacrifices. Now we again need to understand that all this ended with the destruction of the Temple in 70 A. D. Also, all these things pointed to and foreshadowed Jesus Christ and His sacrifice for us!

What I want you to understand is that when Jesus died all the Ceremonial Laws were fulfilled in Christ and they are over, they have passed away!

This should just make sense to us as we no longer need animal sacrifices, the blood of animals which only temporarily covered sin. You see, the sacrifice of Jesus as the Lamb of God paid for those sins completely and removed their stain from our lives forever.

Not only that, but we no longer need a priesthood who would be our mediators between us and God. Jesus is now our Mediator who tore the veil that separated God and man allowing us to have bold access into God's presence whenever we wanted.

So if the Judicial and Ceremonial Laws have passed away, what about the Moral Law or the Ten Commandments?

I think author William MacDonald brings clarity to this issue, which many are confused with today, when he said,

A common question in a discussion of the believer's relation to the law is, "Should I obey the Ten Commandments?"

The answer is that certain principles contained in the law are of lasting relevance. It is always wrong to steal, to covet, or to murder.

Nine of the Ten Commandments are repeated in the NT, with an important distinction - they are not given as law (with penalty attached), but as training in righteousness for the people of God (2 Tim. 3:16b).

The one commandment not repeated is the Sabbath law: Christians are never taught to keep the Sabbath (i.e., the seventh day of the week, Saturday).

The ministry of the law to unsaved people has not ended: "But we know that the law is good if one uses it lawfully" (1 Tim. 1:8). Its lawful use is to produce the knowledge of sin and thus lead to repentance. But the law is not for those who are already saved: "The law is not made for a righteous person" (1 Tim. 1:9).

The righteousness demanded by the law is fulfilled in those "who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit" (Rom. 8:4).

Therefore, the person who trusts in Jesus is no longer under the law; he is under grace (Rom. 6:14). He is dead to the law through the work of Christ. The penalty of the law must be paid only once; since Christ paid the penalty, the believer does not have to. It is in this sense that the law has faded away for the Christian (2 Cor. 3:7-11). The law was a tutor until Christ came, but after salvation, this tutor is no longer needed (Gal. 3:24, 25).

Yet, while the Christian is not under the law, that doesn't mean he is lawless. He is bound by a stronger chain than law because he is under the law of Christ (1 Cor. 9:21). His behavior is molded, not by fear of punishment, but by a loving desire to please his Savior. Christ has become his rule of life (John 13:15; 15:12; Eph. 5:1, 2; 1 Jn. 2:6; 3:16).

- William MacDonald

I think that is very clear regarding the Law.

And, as I have said, the Law is not evil or bad, it is good!

Paul said in Romans 7:12, "**Therefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good.**"

The problem comes when we try to use the Law to make us right before God, being legalistic, and that will never happen.

Paul tells us that we need to use the Law in a lawful manner.

First of all, let's deal with the unrighteous person, the lawless person, because Paul says the Law is made for him.

And Paul lists all kinds of sins that come from the 10 Commandments, 4 dealing with our relationship with God and 6 dealing with our relationship with our fellow man.

So is Paul saying that the unrighteous person must become righteous by keeping the Law?

Not at all!

Why is that?

Because, as Paul said in Romans 3:10, "**. . . 'There is none righteous, no, not one.'**"

And in Romans 3:23 Paul said, **“for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”**

And in Galatians 3:11 we are told, **“But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for ‘the just shall live by faith.’”**

Then what is the point if we can't obtain salvation through the Law, why is it there in the first place?

Like I have said, and Paul reminds us in Galatians 3:24-25, **“Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.”**

You see, the Law has no power to save us only to show us that we have broken the Law and our sins have separated us from God. It was our tutor or schoolmaster that brought us to Jesus, the One who can take away our sins so they are remembered no more, cast away as far as the east is from the west!

Paul tells us in Galatians 3:19, **“What purpose then does the law serve? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was appointed through angels by the hand of a mediator.”**

Now for the righteous person, we are only righteous by faith in Christ as Paul tells us in II Corinthians 5:21, **“For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”**

Thus, the Law did its work; it brought us to Jesus for our salvation.

In saying that we are still to keep the commands of God, not for righteousness, but out of love!

That is the glorious Gospel – salvation by Grace through Faith and not by the Law through Works!

Now that doesn't mean that the Law has been abolished or done away with. It's still in operation and doing its job in the lives of unbelievers (Rom.3:20) but it has no further purpose in the life of a believer in Christ anymore.

Martin Luther put it this way,

We are not to think that the Law is wiped out. It stays. It continues to operate in the wicked.

But a Christian is dead to the Law. For example, Christ by His resurrection became free from the grave, and yet the grave remains. Peter was delivered from prison, yet the prison remains.

The Law is abolished as far as I am concerned, when it is has driven me into the arms of Christ.

Yet the Law continues to exist and to function [in the lives of unbelievers]. But it no longer exists for me.

- Martin Luther

The Law for the Christian, as I have said, is obeyed out of love for the Lord. We obey God because we love Him, and I think that is the key.

And then, in I Timothy 1:10 Paul speaks of “**sound doctrine**” or healthy teaching.

And let's not make this complicated, but what is sound doctrine?

It is measured by what is being taught – the Gospel of Jesus Christ – the Word of God!
From Genesis through the book of Revelation, verse by verse!

It is our source of truth and to confuse people in what they believe, you discredit the truth, and many are falling prey to this.

God's Word is truth and it will not lead you astray, but it will set you free from the lies that are out there!

VERSES 12-14

This flows from what Paul was just speaking about, our salvation by Grace through Faith in Jesus Christ. Here, to show the grace of God in service, Paul shares his former life outside of Christ. He was chief of sinners according to what he tells us, a blasphemer, a persecutor of God's people, violently arrogant.

In other words, what Solomon wrote in Proverbs 14:12, Paul was living. This verse says, **"There is a way that seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death."**

Paul, in Acts 22:4-5 explains his behavior before he was saved by saying, **"I persecuted this Way to the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women, as also the high priest bears me witness, and all the council of the elders, from whom I also received letters to the brethren, and went to Damascus to bring in chains even those who were there to Jerusalem to be punished."**

Again, in Acts 26:9-11 we are told by Paul, **"Indeed, I myself thought I must do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. This I also did in Jerusalem, and many of the saints I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I cast my vote against them. And I punished them often in every synagogue and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly enraged against them, I persecuted them even to foreign cities."**

Paul's point is this, it is God's grace, his unmerited favor that not only saved Paul but also allowed him to serve the Lord.

He didn't deserve it, but God graciously used Paul mightily.

And that same grace that was extended to Paul and has been extended to millions of other Christians, is extended to us and that is the only reason we can serve the Lord, out of His grace and not because we are so special or talented.

It is as Paul said in Romans 5:20-21, **“Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more, so that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”**

Exceedingly abundant grace that God extends to each of us not only for salvation but also for service!

Remember what we are told in II Chronicles 16:9, **“For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him . . .”**

God is looking for faithful people to serve Him, available people, not talented people.

Be faithful in the small things and see what doors God will open for you.

Too often we look at the big things and they won't happen until we first do the small things, be faithful in them and as you are faithful in the small things, God will open other doors for you to step through.

And when I speak of small things, please don't think they are not important. Of course they are. In fact, if you took away all the so-called small things that Christians do, nothing would get done. Everything we do for the Lord is important or He would not have us do it in the first place. Please don't forget that!

I am sure you heard people say this before, ***"We are looking for volunteers to help us out in this ministry!"***

That is not true, we are not volunteers but bondslaves of Christ and we are duty bound to serve Jesus, not just when we want, but every day. It is what is expected of servants.

Some of you might not agree with that but listen to what Jesus said in Luke 17:7-10, **"And which of you, having a servant plowing or tending sheep, will say to him when he has come in from the field, 'Come at once and sit down to eat'? But will he not rather say to him, 'Prepare something for my supper, and gird yourself and serve me till I have eaten and drunk, and afterward you will eat and drink'? Does he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I think not. So likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, 'We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do.'"**

That is how Jesus views servanthood and it is what is required of us!

VERSE 15

This may seem shocking to some, but it is just the reality.

Jesus did not come to help us be better people but to save us from our sins which will then help us to be better people!

You see, it is an outflow of what has taken place in our heart!

In many churches today, especially in the Seeker Friendly churches, Emerging Churches and the like, the word “*sin*” has been removed from their vocabulary because it is offensive.

But if Jesus came to save us from our sins, then we have negated what Christ has come to do so we can be more politically correct or less offensive to people.

You see, God (Christ) became man (Jesus) to pay in full the penalty for our sins.

Don't lose sight of that message!

We are all sick in sin in need of the Great Physician Jesus Christ to cleanse us from our sins, even though some may negate the fact that they are sick in sin, that is the reality!

Thus, if you remove sin you remove the need for a Savior, for Jesus and that is exactly what the Devil wants people to believe! Be warned and obey God's Word and not the foolishness of man!

VERSE 16

Paul is basically saying, “*Hey guys, if God can forgive a person as bad as me, he can forgive you too!*”

What encouraging words and words that Paul wants Timothy to guard, to speak forth so that others, sinners, can receive the Savior!

I know that there are some who feel that they have done so much wrong that God can never forgive them.

Paul wants them to understand that there is no sin you can ever imagine that is stronger than His love for you and yes, He can save even the chief of sinners, like Paul!

VERSE 17

As Paul finishes up speaking on God's grace, His longsuffering towards him and us, he breaks out in this doxology or praise unto God, he just can't stop!

He understood that the King is eternal, immortal, invisible, wise and He alone gets the honor and glory forever, **AMEN!**

This was also an encouragement for Timothy to continue on in the work there in Ephesus, or as David Guzik wrote, "This description of God gave Timothy still another reason to remain in Ephesus. He could and should stay there when he considered the greatness of the God who he served. This great God was worthy of Timothy's sacrifice and could empower his service in Ephesus."

VERSES 18-20

Here again we see this word "**charge**" and it is a military word that was used way back in I Timothy 1:3 and it means, "***to give strict orders from a commanding officer***" as I have said.

Paul wants Timothy not to give up but to forge ahead in the work that God has called him to do as he was prayed for and prophecies were given regarding the work God has for him.

It is easy to become discouraged but if you are doing what God has called you to do, press on, don't lose sight of the Lord.

In the almost twenty-five years that I have been up here in Manitowoc, I have been discouraged at times, and my wife reminds me of how God called me up to Wisconsin.

It was some ten years or so before God brought me up from the northwest suburbs of Chicago; God spoke to my heart telling me that one-day He was going to bring me to Wisconsin to be a senior pastor of a church and He did!

Thus, as Paul told Timothy, “**wage the good warfare,**” don’t give up, he is admonishing Timothy to continue on in the battle for truth!

Make no mistake about it, we are in a battle for the truth and it seems like in the days we are living in, many times the battle is coming from the so-called church itself! But we need to move forward and not give up!

In Acts chapter 20, starting in verse 22 Paul tells us, “**And see, now I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that will happen to me there, except that the Holy Spirit testifies in every city, saying that chains and tribulations await me. But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.**” Acts 20:22-24.

Don’t let situations move you from the course that God has set for you! It may get difficult or it may be difficult right now. Don’t give up, forge ahead in the power of the Lord and see the salvation that He will bring to the situations you are facing!

Now here in I Timothy 1:19 we see that we need to have faith and a good conscience to wage the good warfare, to fight these battles! Why is that?

Because they protect us against the spiritual attacks of the enemy that bring doubt and discouragement and condemnation into our lives!

Having faith in God keeps us focused upon Him so we will not be moved.

Have a good conscience or doing what is right will not give the enemy a foothold in our lives to discourage us from the work, showing us that we are not worthy to do the work. We are not but don’t give him the ammunition to attack you with!

These are some of the tools we need to do battle against the enemy, Paul lists our spiritual armor in Ephesians chapter 6 that is also needed for we are all in the Lord's army, we are soldiers waging the good warfare!

But if you reject the faith then your life will be like a shipwreck upon the rocks and Paul gives the examples of two men who fell into this category in I Timothy 1:20.

Now some may be offended by what Paul did.

Paul named names – how rude! Why did he do that?

He wanted to protect others from their heresy and to warn believers to stay away from them.

Paul tried to discipline these men and they rejected what Paul said so Paul kicked them out of the church, out of the protection of the church so Satan could buffet their flesh.

Why did he do that? So they may be broken, repent and return to the faith!

And I understand that there are some pastors out there who refuse to name names, to call out false teachers with their false doctrine.

Paul was not afraid, and he did it and so must we.

Think about it. What if you were scheduled for surgery and I told you that there was a really bad surgeon in town and if you go to him, you will have many problems.

But then I say, "But I don't want to tell you his name. I will let God handle that. Good luck!"

That would be crazy. Of course I would mention his name and warn people who he is if I really care for people. And that is what Paul did and that is what we should do as well.

But there is this problem. And you know what people say. They go to what Jesus said in Matthew 7:1, "**Judge not, that you be not judged.**"

“Hey brother, don’t judge lest you be judged also!”

First of all, many twist this Scripture so they can continue in their sin, with their heresy.

What are we not to judge?

We are not to judge a person’s heart, their motives or ministry but we are to judge a person’s conduct, their teaching!

Jesus went on to say in Matthew 7:15-20, **“Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles? Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Therefore by their fruits you will know them.”**

You see, we are to be fruit inspectors; we are to judge what a person is teaching by the Word of God, judge their behavior by the Word of God!

How do you deal with false teachers with their false doctrine?

You destroy the false teaching with the truth of God found in the Word of God and if the person who is promoting the false teaching and refuses to repent, you remove them from the church or they will infect the church with their false teaching.

Paul put it like this in Romans 16:17, **“Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them.”** I think that is pretty clear.

As I close this evening let me leave you with these words from II Timothy 4:1-5 where Paul said, **“I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables. But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.”**

May we earnestly contend for the faith that has been entrusted to us and hold everything in the light of God’s Word and you will not go wrong as you do so in love!