

I TIMOTHY 1:3-11
PAUL'S CHARGE TO TIMOTHY!

Please turn in your Bibles this morning to I Timothy chapter 1 as we continue our in-depth study of this letter that Paul wrote to Timothy.

As we have seen, the church in Ephesus had some problems, there was some false teaching, some were getting back to the Law of God for salvation. In other words, things were not in order and that is why Paul is writing this letter to Timothy, who was overseeing the church in Ephesus now.

Keep in mind that Paul had been released from prison in Rome and he then headed to Ephesus with Timothy to see how things were going. And, like I have said, things were not going well.

We saw the warning that Paul gave to the Ephesian elders back in Acts chapter 20 and they did not heed the warning and they allowed savage wolves to come into the church and also false teachers from within the church to destroy their faith, even though they did not see it that way. These false teachers, these wolves thought they were serving God, but they were not because what they were teaching went against what God has said in His Word, the Bible!

And to sum up this letter, listen to what Paul said in I Timothy 3:14-15, **“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 really is the focus of this letter or what we might say, ***“Getting back to the basics of Christianity!”***

I have called our study this morning – ***PAUL’S CHARGE TO TIMOTHY!***

And, as you will see, it was a difficult charge, but it was also a needed charge to Timothy.

I have broken down the verses we will be looking at this morning into the following main points. They are,

COMPLETE THE WORK – I TIMOTHY 1:3a

THE REASON TO STAY – I TIMOTHY 1:3b-4

THE REASON TO CORRECT – I TIMOTHY 1:5-7

LAW OR GRACE – I TIMOTHY 1:8-11

So with that as our introduction, let’s begin reading in I Timothy chapter 1, beginning in verse 3 and let’s see what the Lord has for us this morning as we study His Word and look at this topic – ***PAUL’S CHARGE TO TIMOTHY!***

I TIMOTHY 1

VERSE 3a

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.

Here's something that I don't think we understand. We are individuals, part of the body of Christ, but still individuals.

Make no mistake about it, Paul and Timothy were different people with different personalities.

Paul was tough, he didn't let things stop him. He forged ahead and that was Paul.

Timothy was different. He was not so strong. It seems that he was more of a timid person. And here we see that he does not want to stay in Ephesus.

Does that mean Timothy was a person that God could not use?

Not at all, but Timothy just needed the encouragement of Paul to remain there and –

COMPLETE THE WORK!

For us, we are all different as well. The one thing we do have in common is our Savior Jesus Christ and He will never call us to do something on our own. When He calls us, He is there with us, and He will use people like Paul to encourage us in the work.

Let me give you some examples of how Paul encouraged Timothy to – ***COMPLETE THE WORK!***

In I Timothy 1:18 Paul wrote, “***This charge I commit to you, son Timothy, according to the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you may wage the good warfare.***”

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 I Timothy 4:12-16 we are told, **“Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership. Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all. Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.”**

Yes, Timothy was a young man in ministry, but Paul wants Timothy not to let that discourage him. God has called him, and God will equip him for the work that he is to do! Let others see your life as an example to them to encourage them in Christ!

And in I Timothy 6:20-21 we are told, **“O Timothy! Guard what was committed to your trust, avoiding the profane and idle babblings and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge - by professing it some have strayed concerning the faith. Grace be with you. Amen.”**

Yes, it is a battle, and we have to guard what has been entrusted to us. But don't let that stop you from the work that God has called you to do.

And that is just in I Timothy!

Paul was an encourager with his son in the faith, Timothy, and he is not only going to encourage him to go forward in the work, to remain in Ephesus, but the things Timothy needs to teach the people there as well as the warnings of those who are bringing in false teaching!

I think we all know this, but without a doubt 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!

Paul was basically saying, *"Timothy, you know that God has called you to be the pastor there in Ephesus. And yes, it is not an easy city to work in. The city is not only filled with immorality, and they worshiped false gods like Diana, but in the church, there is a lot of false teaching that needs to be dealt with! But Timothy, you are a soldier in the Lord's army and you are under the command of Jesus. He has given you orders, now you need to obey. You need to stay in Ephesus and teach the Word of God to the people of God to get them back on track in the ways of God!"*

And I think the problem many times is we look at a situation, what God has called us to do, and we are overwhelmed by it. We can't imagine how we can accomplish what He has called us to do.

The problem here is that we let the situation fog our view of God and thus, we stop, and we don't complete the work.

Let me explain it like this,

According to the Bureau of Standards in Washington, a dense fog covering seven city blocks to a depth of 100 feet is composed of less than one glass of water.

That amount of water is divided into about 60 billion tiny droplets. Yet when those minute particles settle over a city or the countryside, they can almost blot out everything from your sight.

Many Christians today live their lives in a fog. They allow a cupful of troubles to cloud their vision and dampen their spirit. Anxiety, turmoil and defeat strangle their thoughts. Their lives are being “choked by the cares of this world” (Luke 8:14). But “God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline” (II Tim. 1:7). Let’s not let the fog get us down!

Let’s live in the Sunshine!

- The Paper Pulpit

In other words, don’t let a glass of water fog your view in seeing what God wants you to do. And yes, God will use people in our lives to encourage us.

My biggest encourager is my wife!

And we need those people in our lives who will encourage us to move forward and to – ***COMPLETE THE WORK*** that God has called us to do!

As Moses was passing off the scene, he was going to die, he passed the ministry on to Joshua. Now that sounds great but think about it, put yourself in Joshua’s sandals!

Moses was leading the children of Israel for forty years, wandering in the wilderness because of their unbelief.

And Moses was not going to be able to enter the Promise Land because he misrepresented the Lord before the people.

And Joshua saw how the people were as he was with them those forty years as well.

And now he is taking over. I am sure that there was some fear, some anxiety over this.

And this is what Moses told Joshua in Deuteronomy 31:7-8, **“Then Moses called Joshua and said to him in the sight of all Israel, ‘Be strong and of good courage, for you must go with this people to the land which the Lord has sworn to their fathers to give them, and you shall cause them to inherit it. And the Lord, He is the One who goes before you. He will be with you, He will not leave you nor forsake you; do not fear nor be dismayed.’”**

Again, these are words of encouragement for Joshua to – ***COMPLETE THE WORK***, to bring the children of Israel into the Promise Land!

And to make sure Joshua understands that he is not going to be alone in this, he tells Joshua that it is the Lord who will go before them, He is the One who will be with them in their journey, and He will not leave Joshua or the children of Israel alone!

In knowing that, Moses tells Joshua not to be afraid, don’t be discouraged, God will see you through!

When David’s life was coming to an end he encouraged his son, Solomon, as he was to be the new King. And Solomon was young and inexperienced, and David is going to give him wise words to be successful as King.

In I Kings 2:1-4 we are told, **“Now the days of David drew near that he should die, and he charged Solomon his son, saying: ‘I go the way of all the earth; be strong, therefore, and prove yourself a man. And keep the charge of the Lord your God: to walk in His ways, to keep His statutes, His commandments, His judgments, and His testimonies, as it is written in the Law of Moses, that you may prosper in all that you do and wherever you turn; that the Lord may fulfill His word which He spoke concerning me, saying, “If your sons take heed to their way, to walk before Me in truth with all their heart and with all their soul,” He said, “you shall not lack a man on the throne of Israel.””**”

In this encouragement David tells his son, Solomon, that he wants him to be strong, to be a man, to follow the ways of the Lord and not depart from them.

Think about the advice that could have been given to Solomon.

“Invest your money wisely!”

“Invest in a house, you will get a good return from it!”

“Make sure you are getting paid for what you are worth!”

And the list can go on but the focus here is the Lord and obeying Him. Not to let the things of this world overpower him.

Why is that?

Because, it is as Jesus said in Matthew 6:33, **“But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.”**

If he would put God first, then God will take care of the rest. That is an important lesson for us to learn. Don't put other things ahead of your relationship with the Lord or you will never be satisfied.

If you doubt that, then read Ecclesiastes, written by Solomon and he did everything you could think of under the sun and it was empty, it never satisfied.

You see, only when you do things in the Son of God will you be full, will you be satisfied!

These words that David spoke were to be words of encouragement to Solomon and they should also be encouragement to us in the work that God has called us to do.

Make no mistake about it, God will allow us to be in difficult situations. That really is not the issue. The main thing we must remember is that we need to set our minds to meet the challenge, or we will surely give up.

Remember this ad that was placed in a newspaper many, many years ago needing people to go on an arctic expedition. It read,

“Men wanted for hazardous journey, small wages, bitter cold, long months of complete darkness, constant danger, safe return doubtful. Honor and recognition in case of success.”

That advertisement appeared in a London newspaper and thousands of men responded!

It was signed by the noted Arctic explorer, Sir Ernest Shackleton, and that was what made the difference.

We too have words written to us by Jesus that is calling for us to go forward and –

COMPLETE THE WORK!

May we obey His call in our lives!

Now, as we read on, we will see – ***THE REASON TO STAY!***

VERSES 3b-4

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.

What are these "**endless genealogies**"?

It can be speaking of the Gnostic-type theories of "*emanations*" from God. In other words, Jesus is not Almighty God but an emanation or reproduction of God down the road.

Some think it had to do with Jewish legalism and how they sought a righteousness by one's ancestry. Keep in mind that many Jews felt that because they were of the seed of Abraham, they were saved no matter what!

One author gives us this insight as he wrote, "*As we learn the Word and share with others, there is a danger of trying to find something in Scripture no one else has ever seen before. That's what some in Ephesus were doing as they looked into Old Testament genealogies, discussed the stories endlessly, and veered off into all sorts of vain speculations. In so doing, they missed out on solid teaching. To those who desire to be Bible teachers, I give this piece of advice: Give up trying to be creative and innovative. Instead, stick with the simple, powerful truth of the gospel - and you'll never go wrong.*"

And I have talked with those who try to find things in Scripture that are really not there, and they will spend all kinds of time and energy promoting this and, in the end, how has it helped anyone grow in the Lord? That really is the bottom line. The Scriptures are here for our learning so that we may grow in the Lord!

And it does not just affect the person who is doing this, it affects those around them. Make no mistake about it, 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.

On the other end of the spectrum are those that say doctrine divides, so they stay away from the controversial issues, like Jesus is the only way or they stay away from teaching that we are sinners, and the like.

Let me ask you this. What is the Word of God likened to?

It is likened to a sword.

In fact, Paul calls it the *Sword of the Spirit* in Ephesians 6:17.

And in Hebrews 4:12 he says, **“For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”**

You see, the Word of God is the *Sword of the Spirit*, and the purpose of a sword is to cut or to divide!

What I mean by that is that the Word of God will divide the true from the false and it will also separate the fleshly from the spiritual.

No wonder the devil loves it when churches stop teaching the Word and give their people nothing but *positive feel-good messages* that never offend anyone and are tolerant of everyone and practically any teaching.

As I have said, here in I Timothy 1:3 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.

And what Paul told Timothy I believe he is speaking to every pastor today – ***TEACH THE WORD OF GOD!***

The problem today is that the church is moving away from sound doctrine and they have moved 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.

Again, many today don't see it that way. But keep in mind that as you read through these three Pastoral Epistles; I Timothy, II Timothy and Titus, if sound doctrine, healthy doctrine was not important, if it was not critical to the health of the local church, then why are there thirty-two references to ***“doctrine,” “teachers,”*** and ***“teaching”*** in these three Pastoral Epistles?

Because it is vital to the function of the church!

Let me give you some examples of what Paul said to both Titus and Timothy about sound doctrine and how it must be taught.

In Titus 1:9 we are told, **“holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict.”**

Paul wrote in Titus 2:1, **“But as for you, speak the things which are proper for sound doctrine.”**

In II Timothy 2:2 we are told, **“And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.”**

Then in I Timothy 4:11 we are told, **“These things command and teach.”**

Also, I Timothy 4:13 Paul said, **“Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.”**

And in I Timothy 4:16, just to name a few, we are told, “**Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.**”

You see how clear that is, and those are just a few examples. And yet today, we don't think the Word of God is important to us.

In fact, in a recent report from Gallup, from 2022, we are told,

A record-low 20% of Americans now say the Bible is the literal word of God, down from 24% the last time the question was asked in 2017, and half of what it was at its high points in 1980 and 1984.

Meanwhile, a new high of 29% say the Bible is a collection of “*fables, legends, history and moral precepts recorded by man.*”

- <https://bit.ly/3D7XO2E>

Sounds just like what Paul was warning Timothy about and it is going on today! I guess we did not listen to what the Holy Spirit was saying through Paul.

You doubt that, then listen to what one writer had to say about what is going on in churches today. He wrote,

Once the regular teaching of the Word of God, of doctrine, of theology, and its application in the Christian life was a mainstay of any evangelical church. It was pretty much the core activity. Yet there seems to be such a dearth [absence] of good, solid teaching in so many churches today.

Instead of proper instruction in which believers are fed with the solid meat of the Word, with emphasis on biblical doctrine and proper exposition of key biblical themes and teachings, all we seem to get in so many churches today are topical sermons.

These are often little more than pep talks with one or two verses thrown in along the way. Most of our Sunday morning sermons tend to be feel-good, how-to chats, emphasizing how the Christian can be successful, happy, confident, and have a good time.

We promise folks their “best life now” and give them motivational speeches, upbeat homilies, and the like. The systematic instruction and teaching of the Word of God, its core doctrinal truths, and basic Christian doctrines are almost never heard any more in so many churches today.

Perhaps I am spoiled, because I think of my home church in the US and what was offered there, after I was first saved, way back in the early 1970s. What we had on offer there was typical of most Bible-believing churches back then. There was non-stop teaching, doctrinal instruction, and biblical exposition. . . .

Teaching was the very foundation of disciple making for Jesus and the early disciples. Yet it is all but lost in so many of our churches today. No wonder the church has lost its way. No wonder believers are falling into theological and behavioral error so often. They simply have never been taught properly. . . .

Let me conclude with a few quotes on the importance of all this:

“The visible church in our generation has become astonishingly tolerant of aberrant teaching and outlandish ideas – and frighteningly intolerant of sound teaching.”

- John MacArthur

Here's the thing. "If we go astray in our doctrine, eventually our life will go astray as well. You cannot separate what a man believes from what he is. For this reason doctrine is vitally important. Certain people say ignorantly, 'I do not believe in doctrine; I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ; I am saved, I am a Christian, and nothing else matters.' To speak in that way is to court disaster, and for this reason, the New Testament itself warns us against this very danger. We are to guard ourselves against being 'tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine', for if your doctrine goes astray your life will soon suffer as well. So it behoves us to study the doctrines in order that we may safeguard ourselves against certain erroneous and heretical teachings that are as rife and as common in the world today as they were in the days of the early Church."

- Martyn Lloyd-Jones

Also, "I am convinced that there is an urgent need in the church today for much greater understanding of Christian doctrine, or systematic theology. Not only pastors and teachers need to understand theology in greater depth – the *WHOLE CHURCH* does as well. One day by God's grace we may have churches full of Christians who can discuss, apply and LIVE the doctrinal teachings of the Bible as readily as they can discuss the details of their own jobs or hobbies – or the fortunes of their favorite sports team or television program."

- Wayne Grudem

- <https://bit.ly/3NJ3s00>

Let me say this. A shepherd of God, a pastor is faithful as he teaches and expounds on the Word of God. We see that in Jeremiah 3:15, “**And I will give you shepherds according to My heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding.**”

Why is that such a big deal, what is this so important?

Not only because the Lord said it, but it is what we need in the church today! The teaching of God’s Word. We need 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

The truth will set you free from the lies that are out there. But also keep in mind this one thing about false teachers. As they slip into churches with their false doctrine it always raises questions, creates confusion and leads to arguing and division instead of building up believers in the faith.

So – ***THE REASON TO STAY*** for Timothy was to deal with these false teachers, to give the truths of God found in the Word of God to the people of God that had been entrusted to him.

Or as Paul wrote in II Timothy 4:2-5, **“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.”**

As we read on here in I Timothy we will be looking at – ***THE REASON TO CORRECT!***

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 all that Paul is saying here. He starts out very simple, **“love from a pure heart.”**

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! We look down upon them, thinking we are better than they are!

As I have said, the teaching of sound doctrine promotes unity and love, not disunity and disputes as did the teachings of the false teachers.

Interestingly enough, the word “**pure**” in the Greek is *KATHAROS* and it speaks of *clean* and also *unmixed!*

We get our English word – *CATHARTIC* from this Greek word. And a cathartic is an agent used by a doctor to cleanse the body.

On an emotional level a catharsis can speak of a person who is cleansed from anger, bitterness, all kinds of other destructive emotions.

But there is also a spiritual catharsis, and this is speaking of the cleansing of the inner man or the heart of man!

And it all starts with a pure heart or having our heart cleansed of sin by the blood of Jesus Christ! We are – *CLEAN!*

But also, this word speaks of being unmixed or undiluted.

Think about having a drink that is diluted with water, you lose the flavor of that drink, it is horrible! You want the real thing; you don't want it diluted!

Or gold that has all kinds of impurities mixed in with it. When you remove those impurities, it is undiluted or unmixed with the dross. It is pure!

And the spiritual principle here is that we have a heart that is totally given over to God, it is not diluted with the things of this world, a love for this world. In fact, the Bible calls this kind of relationship with God that is diluted with the things of this world, as having a “*divided heart!*”

But an undivided heart, one that is given to the Lord, this love for God is then manifested in our love for the brethren in the local church as well as in the body of Christ. But here the focus for Paul is the local church and the love they have for each other in that body!

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.

And the Devil loves to condemn us.

In saying that, let me help you in this area.

When God brings conviction in your life it is to draw you closer to Him. He shows you your sin not to condemn you but to change you, to get you back on track because He loves you and that love will never change! There is no condemnation in Jesus! Keep that in mind.

On the other end is the Devil. And when he condemns us, it pushes us away from God. He makes us feel that we are not worthy for God to love us and to forgive us.

The reality is that we are not worthy of His love, and we are not worthy for Him to forgive us. But He loves us unconditionally and His forgiveness is found in the shed blood of Christ that casts our sins as far as the east is from the west to be remembered no more. It is all about grace!

Please understand that and don't let the Devil push you away from God. Let the love of Christ draw you close to Him!

Also, the Bible says that God has written His laws in our hearts and has given us a warning system that sounds the alarm when we break God's law. That is a good thing, and that warning system is our conscience, and we feel guilt, which is the alarm that sounds when we sin!

What the world tries to do is block that guilt, silence that warning system and that again will not help you but hurt you. The world's way of helping to turn off that warning system is by telling you, ***"You did nothing wrong. Everybody is doing it and if you feel you are doing what is right, don't worry about it."***

Again, very dangerous to go down that path because then there is nothing you do that is wrong. And we see the world buying into this lie of the Devil! And look at the death and destruction his lies have brought into people's lives.

Please understand that feeling uncomfortable about sin is the start and the only way to switch off that guilt, you might say, is to repent before the Lord and draw close to Him.

Next, Paul says that we are to have a **"sincere faith"** and not a 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.

Interestingly enough the Greek word for **"sincere"** speaks of being ***"unhypocritical - faith that doesn't wear a mask."*** Don't pretend to be something you are not.

On the other end of the spectrum are the false teachers and Paul says that they have **"...strayed, have turned aside to fables"** or they have moved away from the true faith!

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!

From this verse we believe that Paul was talking about the Judaizers who had infiltrated the church in Ephesus.

The Judaizers believed that salvation was based upon your faith in Christ, which is correct. Where they strayed is simple. They moved away from the truth by adding the keeping of the Law to be saved. They mixed Christianity and Judaism or Grace and Law together and they do not mix.

And we saw that with the Hebrew Roots movement, the same idea. And it was wrong then and it is wrong now.

And we see this teaching practiced by many others. They try to tell you that faith in Christ alone isn't enough to save a person.

What must you do then?

You must be baptized, join the church, keep the Law, do penance, say the rosary, light a candle, tithe, or perform some other type of *“good works.”*

And listen to what Paul says of those who feel this way. He said, **“They want to become famous as teachers of the laws of Moses when they haven't the slightest idea what those laws really show us.”** I Timothy 1:7.

The Living Bible puts this verse like this, **“Paul says that these ‘self-appointed’ teachers of the law don't know what they're talking about and therefore their lofty rhetoric was meaningless.”**

In other words, Paul is saying, *“They may sound like they know what they are talking about but don't listen to them because they don't have a clue. Their teaching is meaningless and in reality, it will send you to Hell and not to Heaven!”*

You see, the reason they were so clueless was because they didn't understand the purpose for which God gave the Law or the relationship of the believer to the Law.

Thus – ***THE REASON TO CORRECT!***

And Paul is going to deal with this issue as he focuses on – *LAW OR GRACE!*

VERSES 8-11

So there is a debate today about the Law and Grace and I think that this is pretty simple. Let me show you that the Law will never save you, never. And as you will see, there really is no debate here, it is pretty straight forward as you will see.

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!

In these verses Paul speaks 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!

We need to remember that the Law of God was divided into three parts or divisions. They are,

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! The Substance or Jesus has come and thus, the picture is put away, you might say.

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. Keep in mind that the first four commandments deal with our relationship with God and the last six commandments deal 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! Thus, we no longer need a tutor any longer because we have come to Christ!

Think of the Law as a mirror and the mirror can’t make you look better; it can only show you how you look. Sorry.

And that is the Law. It can’t save you; it can’t make you look better. All it can do is show you how bad you are! And thus, the Law brings the unsaved to Jesus for their salvation, for their forgiveness of sin!

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. It has done its work!

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 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 healthy teaching!

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!

So what we have seen here is that the sinful environment of Ephesus shows us another reason why it was important for Timothy to remain in Ephesus. He should remain there because it was a difficult place to serve God and further the kingdom. He had to break up the fallow ground there, instead of running to an easier place to plow.

Let me close with this for you to think about. I shared this with you already but listen carefully to this story once again. We are told,

Early in [the last] century a London newspaper carried an advertisement that read: ***“Men wanted for hazardous darkness, and constant danger. Safe return doubtful. Honor and recognition in case of success.”***

The ad, signed by famous Arctic explorer Sir Ernest Shackleton, brought Inquiries from thousands of men.

Commenting on this in his book *Be Faithful*, Warren W. Wiersbe said, *“If Jesus Christ had advertised for workers, the announcement might have read something like this: ‘Men and women wanted for difficult task of helping to build My church. You will often be misunderstood, even by those working with you. You will face constant attack from an invisible enemy. You may not see the results of your labor, and your full reward will not come till after all your work is completed. It may cost you your home, your ambitions, even your life.’”*

- Our Daily Bread, June 18

May we complete the work that God has called us to do or as Paul said at the end of his life, **“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.”**

II Timothy 4:7-8