

1st Timothy

Warning About False Teaching

- Warning Against False Teachers [1:3-11]
 - As I urged you upon my departure for Macedonia, remain on at Ephesus so that you may instruct certain men not to teach strange doctrines,
 - Paul had apparently given similar instructions to Timothy prior to leaving Ephesus for Macedonia.
 - The fact that Paul had urged Timothy (strongly) indicates that this is something vitally important for the spiritual health of a local church.
 - Paul reminded Timothy that he wanted him to remain at Ephesus.
 - Perhaps Timothy wanted to go with Paul to Macedonia, but whatever the situation was, Paul felt strongly that Timothy needed to be in Ephesus.
 - Paul once again explains his purpose for Timothy staying in Ephesus.
 - Apparently, there were some men in Ephesus who were teaching doctrines contrary to the sound teaching with which Timothy was familiar.
 - The phrase “certain men” tells us that there was a select group of men doing this.
 - Although it is not stated directly, it is implied that these men were part of the church at Ephesus, but most likely not members of the church leadership.
 - nor to pay attention to myths and endless genealogies, which give rise to mere speculation rather than *furthering* the plan of God which is by faith.
 - These men were being distracted by myths and long, elaborate genealogies.
 - What exactly these myths were is unclear, but they were quite possibly of Jewish origin [Titus 1:14].
 - Whatever these myths and genealogies were, they led to speculation.
 - Such speculation usually results in questioning, doubting, arguing, etc. [1 Tim 6:20-21].
 - The word “administration” is οἰκονομία (oikonomia) which means “arrangement”, “stewardship” or “administration”.
 - Here it is used of the plan of God both for our salvation and our earthly life thereafter.
 - The useless speculation, questioning, doubting, arguing, etc. do nothing to further God’s plan.
 - His plan, both in terms of salvation and earthly life thereafter, involves the faith of the individual.
 - But the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.
 - In contrast to the confusion created by those teaching strange doctrines, the goal of the apostles’ teaching is love.
 - The love Paul is emphasizing here is ἀγάπη (agapē) love which is a sacrificial, integrity-based love that is not based upon the merits of the object.
 - As God’s word works in our hearts we are purified, and our conscience is cleansed.

- This is what the teaching of God’s word should accomplish, but it must be received in genuine faith.
- This change within us is part of the process by which God teaches us to love one another [1 Thess 4:9].
- For some men, straying from these things, have turned aside to fruitless discussion,
 - The “some men” mentioned here are the “certain men” Paul spoke of in verse 3.
 - These men had strayed from focusing on the proper goal of instruction.
 - This tells us that these men had previously been effective teachers of God’s word.
 - These men had turned aside to fruitless discussions about myths and genealogies loosely related to the Mosaic Law.
 - These discussions did not edify, but rather distracted believers from focusing on grace and other doctrines of the faith.
- wanting to be teachers of the Law, even though they do not understand either what they are saying or the matters about which they make confident assertions.
 - These men aspired to be teachers of the Mosaic Law.
 - This was a position that often garnered a great deal of respect [Acts 5:34].
 - These men confidently spoke erroneously due to their ignorance of the Law.
 - Paul was a Pharisee [Phil 3:5] educated under Gamaliel [Acts 22:3] – an expert regarding the Law.
- But we know that the Law is good, if one uses it lawfully,
 - Paul wanted to be clear that he was not speaking despairingly about the Law.
 - Paul understood that the Law was given by God [Gal 3:21] and was holy [Rom 7:12-16].
 - The problem arises when the Law is used improperly – in a legalistic way.
- realizing the fact that law is not made for a righteous person, but for those who are lawless and rebellious, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane,
 - The Law is not for the one who has trusted in Christ and has His righteousness [Rom 3:21-24].
 - Born-again believers are not under Law, but under grace [Rom 6:14].
 - The Law is designed to show people how unholy and sinful they really are.
 - The Law is intended to be a tutor, leading unbelievers to Christ [Gal 3:24].
- for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers and immoral men and homosexuals and kidnappers and liars and perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound teaching,
 - Paul lists a handful of sins that the Law would expose for their sinfulness.
 - The phrase “immoral men” is πόρνος (pornos) which refers to sexual immorality.
 - The word “homosexuals” is ἀρσενοκοίτης (arsenokoitēs) which refers to male-male sex.
 - By extension, this refers to lesbian homosexual behavior as well [Rom 1:26-27].
 - As Paul was given to do, he finished his list with the catchall phrase “and whatever else is contrary to sound teaching” so that no one could argue that their particular favorite sin was not listed.

- in accordance with the glorious gospel of the blessed God, with which I have been entrusted.
 - The phrase “according to” should be translated “in accordance with” here.
 - Paul recognized that sound biblical teaching starts with a correct presentation of the gospel.
 - The gospel is “glorious” because it is the good news regarding the glory of Christ Himself [2 Cor 4:4-6].
 - Paul pointed out that he had been entrusted with the gospel message.
 - It is implied that God is the one who has entrusted Paul with the gospel.
 - The word “entrusted” carries with it the idea that the thing being bestowed requires the recipient to demonstrate appropriate responsibility.
- Principles of 1st Timothy 1:3-11
 - It is important to have spiritual authority overseeing the content of what is being taught within a local church [Acts 20:28-30].
 - One of the ways this is accomplished is by teaching the whole counsel of God [Acts 20:27] which leaves no area of Scripture uncovered and thereby subject to potential distortion.
 - It is also important to have a proper shepherd present, exercising oversight and proving to be an example to the flock [1 Pet 5:1-3].
 - The overseer must be able to recognize things (even things which seem to be “spiritual”) which are non-edifying distractions from the faith [1 Cor 10:23].
 - The teaching of the overseer should emphasize a walk of faith [2 Cor 5:7], avoiding those who would attempt to deceive [Col 2:6-8].
 - While sound teaching will certainly impart knowledge of the Scriptures, the ultimate goal of all instruction should be love from a pure heart [Psalm 24:3-5; 1 Cor 8:1-3; 13:1-3].
 - Believers in the Church function under grace, not the Law [Rom 6:14], so systems of legalism are a distraction from the principles of the faith.
 - Legalism has the appearance of being knowledge but is actually a form of ignorance.
 - However, the Law should be taught to show us that we fall short of God’s righteousness [Rom 3:21-23].
 - The Law has never been able to save anyone, but its very purpose is to be a tutor which leads people to Christ [Gal 3:21-25].
 - All sin is exceedingly sinful, so whatever particular form your personal sins may take, they can only be addressed through the sacrifice of Christ on the Cross [Heb 10:1-4; 11-14].
 - Paul and the other apostles were entrusted with the gospel message [Gal 2:2-8; 1 Thess 2:1-4].
 - That message was taught to faithful men who entrusted this to others also [2 Tim 2:2].
 - Today, all believers serve as ambassadors for Christ [2 Cor 5:18-21] and should be prepared to share the gospel at any time [1 Pet 3:15].

- God's Grace and Mercy Toward Paul [1:12-17]
 - I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because He considered me faithful, putting me into ministry,
 - The first person (I or me) is used 8X in vv. 12-17 indicating the personal nature of this discussion.
 - The word “thank” is χάρις (charis) which is a grace word which tells us that Paul was responding with appropriate gratitude to God's grace.
 - Paul typically thanked God in his letters, but here he specifically thanked Jesus Christ because He, as the head of the Church, put Paul into service.
 - He referred to Jesus as “our Lord” making sure to include Timothy.
 - Paul wisely recognized that Jesus Christ had been his source of strength all along.
 - This began shortly after the Damascus Road experience and continued throughout his ministry [Acts 9:1-22; Phil 4:13; 2 Tim 4:17].
 - The word “service” is διακονία (diakonia) which is describing “ministry” here.
 - Paul recognized that his ministry assignments were assigned based upon faithfulness, but always as a function of God's grace [1 Cor 3:10; Eph 3:8].
 - even though I was formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor. Yet I was shown mercy because I acted ignorantly in unbelief;
 - Paul pointed out his bad behavior toward Christians prior to the Damascus Road [Acts 8:3; 26:9-11].
 - Even though Paul had been a blatant enemy of the Church, Jesus convinced Paul that He is the Christ and opened doors to him for ministry.
 - Paul knew that he had been shown mercy because he knew he deserved punishment for his actions.
 - The principle of acting in ignorance that Paul cites is based upon the Mosaic Law distinction between purposeful and accidental sins [Num 15:22-31].
 - and the grace of our Lord was more than abundant, along with the faithfulness and love which are *found* in Christ Jesus.
 - In addition to mercy, Paul knew he was the recipient of the grace of God [Gal 1:13-17].
 - God's abundant grace had provided Paul with an abundance for all the good works He prepared beforehand for him to do [2 Cor 9:8; Eph 2:10].
 - The word “faith” is πίστις (pistis) which is describing “faithfulness” here.
 - The grace, mercy, faithfulness and love of our Lord Jesus Christ all factored into Paul's conversion and placement into ministry.
 - It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost *of all*.
 - Paul stated that he was about to make a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance.
 - All of God's word is trustworthy, but some verses record false statements or the rantings of carnal believers [Acts 5:1-11; Job 19:7-12; Ecc 1:12-18].

- Paul wanted anyone who read this letter to be sure that what he was about to say is a fundamental truth that should be fully accepted.
- Paul then states the gospel truth that Jesus was sent into the world to save sinners [John 3:16-17; 12:47; 1 John 4:14].
- In His life Jesus set an example for all of us, but He came to be the sacrifice for our sins [Heb 10:11-13].
- Paul acknowledged that he was indeed a sinner that needed to be saved.
- He also humbly recognized the severe nature of his personal sins [1 Cor 15:9].
- Yet for this reason I found mercy, so that in me as the foremost, Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life.
 - As the foremost of sinners, Paul serves as an extreme example for everyone else.
 - If Christ could be patient (and gracious) enough for Paul to be saved, then anyone can be saved.
 - Notice that for Paul, as with everyone else, volition is involved in believing in Jesus Christ.
 - Also notice that eternal life (salvation) is contingent upon faith alone in Christ alone.
- Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, *be* honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.
 - This discussion of God's grace and mercy prompted Paul to praise Him with this doxology.
 - King – God is sovereign
 - Eternal, Immortal – God has no beginning or end
 - Invisible – God is spirit
 - The only God – Father, Son and Spirit are one in essence
 - God's perfect essence makes Him worthy of our praise for all eternity.

- Principles of 1st Timothy 1:12-17
 - Every opportunity to serve the Lord is given by His grace, but God opens doors for ministry based on present faithfulness.
 - Past failures are overcome by present faithfulness [2 Sam 21:11-14].
 - If present faithfulness is abandoned, one can be disqualified from ministry [1 Cor 9:26-27].
 - When God does bless us with opportunities to serve, we do so by His strength [2 Cor 12:9; Eph 3:14-21; Phil 4:13; Col 1:9-12; 2 Tim: 2:1; 4:17].
 - Jesus came so that we may have life and have it abundantly [John 10:10].
 - God's grace in our life of service is more than abundant [2 Cor 9:8].
 - The gospel message – that Christ came into the world to save sinners – is a powerful message for unbelievers [John 3:16-17; Luke 19:10].
 - The gospel message is also a powerful message for believers to remind them that they do not deserve their salvation [Eph 2:8-9; Titus 3:5-8].
 - Paul, who was a zealous persecutor of Christians, was shown mercy by God [Acts 26:9-18].
 - In doing so, Christ showed us the most amazing example of His perfect patience.
 - The worst of sinners [1 Cor 15:9; Eph 3:8] was saved by grace through faith and became arguably the most significant author of N.T Scripture.
 - If God is gracious enough to save Paul, then He is gracious enough to save anyone.
 - When we contemplate God's grace and mercy in our own salvation, it should prompt us to praise and worship.
 - Proper praise and worship involves acknowledging various aspects of God's essence [Rom 11:33-36].