

1st Timothy Ch 1 Vs 1-11

“Dealing With Doctrine”

From dealing with some of Paul’s earliest writings in 1st and 2nd Thessalonians, we now come to some of Paul’s latter writings in what’s become typically known as the Pastoral Epistles 1st, 2nd Timothy and Titus, and in fact his last letter when we get to 2nd Timothy. But don’t be deceived by the fact that they’re generally referred to as the Pastoral epistles, these letters contain untold riches of information that we need to be aware of as the body of Christ in general. As a matter of fact the central theme of 1st Timothy seems to lie in Christian conduct as it relates to church order. We read in Ch 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.”* I thank God that Paul was worried about being delayed so that we have this essential information given to us by the Holy Spirit through the apostle Paul to the church, and church leaders.

Written around 63-64 A.D. 1st Tim was written sometime after Paul’s release from his 1st imprisonment. After he was released he apparently revisited some of the key churches in which he’d ministered, including the church that he’d established there in Ephesus. and When he got there he found some issues that were in need of being dealt with. Some men had crept in as he’d predicted and were seeking to draw away the disciples after themselves. You recall that when Paul had been speaking to the elders in the Ephesian church in Acts ch 20 he told them, *“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 20:29-30 That’s exactly what had happened, and so it seems as though he began to deal with these wolves who had become leaders in the body there (teaching false doctrines and persuading people unto themselves) personally. (Vs 20 of this 1st ch alluding to that, those 2 men probably being the ring leaders of the deception that was being propagated) and Then when he left for Macedonia, he left Timothy behind as his personal representative to sort of finish up what he’d began and tend to the flock properly, giving them the pastoral care that they were in need of.

But Timothy had a tough job to carry out, dealing with dissensions, and doctrinal issues, deceptions, and disgruntled people, and so Paul wrote to Timothy so as to further equip, and encourage him in the task at hand.

As many of you know Timothy was Paul’s protégé, the primary person it seems that Paul invested his personal life into so that when Paul was gone Timothy could carry out the work that God had begun through the apostles life.

I can't tell you how important it is that we all have Timothys that we can invest our lives into, disciple them, teach them the precepts and the principals of God's word so that the work continues throughout generations long after you and I are gone. You and I should be seeking out opportunity to invest the things that God has entrusted to you (the wisdom and insight and knowledge of His word) into faithful people who will in turn commit those things to others. Not only should we be praying for a Timothy to train up or to disciple, but we should also be seeking to be a Timothy, always being teachable, and humbling ourselves, being able to sit (as it were) at the feet of someone who's maybe been there and done that, whom God has shown Himself approved unto so that we might learn and grow ourselves.

Well, as Paul begins his letter the focus as I mentioned in the title of these 1st 11 vs seems to be dealing primarily with doctrine. and Is a consistent concern throughout this letter, the word doctrine is mentioned no less than 9 times in these 6 ch and is a critical concern that we would do well to consider. We'll develop that more as we progress.

Vs1

Now Paul is a name that we as NT believers are all too familiar with. Originally named Saul, no doubt after the 1st king of Israel, the name "Saul" means, "Desired." But after his conversion we find that he changed his name no longer to be "desired" as one who was high and lofty, a Pharisee of Israel, but now "Paul" which means "small" or "little". In other words an encounter with the risen Lord revealed to him exactly who he wasn't and exactly who Jesus was, and Saul was no one to be desired, he was nothing, small, just a little man with nothing to offer. King Saul was just the opposite, he started off humble, little in his own eyes and then when God began to use him, he got puffed up, and the Lord removed him.

But whenever anyone comes face-to-face with holiness, humility is always the result, Isaiah upon seeing the Lord said, "*Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, The LORD of hosts.*" Isa 6:5

Daniel fell on his face, and we read where he says, "*I was left alone when I saw this great vision, and no strength remained in me; for my vigor was turned to frailty in me, and I retained no strength.*" Dan 10:8

You remember when Peter realized who the Lord was he said, "*Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!*" Luke 5:8 and with Paul he knew that a name change was in order, because there was nothing to be desired about a sinful man in whom no good thing dwelt, he was but a little man who humbled himself before the Living God. and Such is always the case with those whom have genuine encounter with the Lord, they're not proud and puffed up, they're humble and lowly realizing exactly who they're not.

He refers to himself here as *an apostle of Jesus Christ* Meaning an ambassador or representative of Jesus Christ one sent out *by* the Lord, with the authority *of* the Lord for the accomplishing of His agenda, and he says that he's an apostle "*by the commandment of God our savior and the Lord Jesus Christ our hope.*"

Now this is an interesting term because generally Paul would address himself as an apostle by "the will of God" and no doubt that was the case, but here we're reading where he declares he's an apostle by the "commandment" of God. The Greek word literally means a "royal command that's non-negotiable" In other words he'd been commissioned by the King of kings to carry the gospel to the gentile nations and was responsible to make sure that the message that was being spread was sound in its nature. Jesus had said concerning Paul, "He is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel." Acts 9:15 and Again in Acts 26:17-18 "*I will deliver you from the Jewish people, as well as from the Gentiles, to whom I now send you, to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.*" Paul was under a royal decree as an apostle of (notice) "God our Savior."

I like that phrase because so often people just naturally (and rightly so) but they associate salvation with Jesus Christ and As I said, that's absolutely accurate, but we have this tendency to think of God as our Judge and not our Savior. But it's important that we remember that it was God Who, "*so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.*" John 3:16-17

We read in Isa 43:3 "*For I am the LORD your God, The Holy One of Israel, your Savior.*" Hos 13:4 says, "*I am the LORD your God Ever since the land of Egypt, And you shall know no God but Me; For there is no savior besides Me.*" So God's not up there just waiting for you to mess up so that He can squash you like a bug, He loves you and He provided a sacrifice for your sin in the person of His Son Jesus Christ You see it wasn't the death of Jesus Christ upon the cross that "enabled" God to love you; the cross was the "expression" not the "enablement" of God's love towards you. Jesus said, "*Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends.*" John 15:13 and Jesus laid down His life for you, and for me demonstrating His love towards us. and "*In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.*" 1 John 4:10 "God our Savior" and the "Lord Jesus Christ our hope."

Now we've talked quite a bit about this little word "hope" as of late, knowing that it doesn't mean "wish" like "I wish this would happen" but it speaks of a guaranteed certainty, and an assured expectation, the message of Jesus Christ, the message of the gospel is a message of hope. As you and I look around today there's plenty of things going on in this world that could render a person hopeless, child abductions and murders, the West Nile virus on the up rise, terrorist activity always looming over us, not to mention the day to day struggles and oppressions of life that are always seeking to pull you down.

But this world's not my home, I'm just passing through, declaring the good news of Jesus Christ on the way, because in Christ there's hope, Jesus Christ *is our hope*. We read in Titus 2:11-13 *"For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ."* Col 1:27 *"To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory."* and Again in 1 Peter 1:3 *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."* How often the word of God associates hope with Jesus Christ, why? Because He is our hope, we're guaranteed of His return, we have the assurance that He's going to transform our lowly bodies and make us like Himself; we're promised that when we see we will be like Him for we will see Him as He is. What a blessed hope that He's called us to, now if you don't know Jesus, you have no hope, you are (as the bible says) having no hope and without God in the world. But to know Jesus is to know hope, He is our hope.

Vs2

The reason that Paul calls Timothy a true son is because it's believed that Paul personally led Timothy to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ (his mom and grandma having taught him the word from infancy). But then when Paul came to Lystra in Acts ch 14 you may recall that the Holy Spirit used him to heal a man who'd never walked. Well, the people responded like he and Barnabas were gods, and so barely being able to restrain them from sacrificing to them, some Jews from Antioch persuaded the people, had them dragged outside the city and they stoned Paul and left him for dead. Well, as you know the disciples gathered around him prayed for him, he was raised up and he went right back into the city and preached the gospel. Now Timothy lived there in that city and many people believe this was a key event that led Timothy to the Lord, Paul sharing with him and possibly even staying with his mom and grandma while he was in town. But due to these things Paul became a sort of a hero to Timothy, who was at the time very young. and On Paul's 2nd Missionary journey when Paul came through Lystra, the disciples recommended Timothy to Paul and as you know Paul took him with him on his journey and the rest is as they say, "history".

But Paul having led young Timothy to Christ calls him here “A true son” not biologically, but “in the faith.” Then we have this typical Pauline greeting with the exception of this one word. Generally when Paul would write he would say “Grace and peace”, but here there’s the addition of “mercy.” Now Grace is the unmerited favor of God, getting what we don’t deserve, we don’t deserve salvation, but by grace God gives it to us. Any good thing that comes into our lives, a car that runs, a job that pays the bills, air that we can breathe, all these things are given to us by the grace of God. *Mercy* on the other hand is not getting what we do deserve, we deserve hell, we deserve everlasting separation from God, but in God’s Mercy, through Jesus Christ He doesn’t give us what we deserve. We deserve justice, but we desire mercy, and in His grace He gives us mercy, which is not getting what we deserve. Lam 3:22 Tells us that, “*Through the LORD's mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not.*” It’s through the Lord’s mercies that we’re not consumed, not getting what we deserve, “*For as the heavens are high above the earth, So great is His mercy toward those who fear Him.*” Ps 103:11 I’m so glad we serve a God who delights in mercy, Who’s mercies are new every morning.

Vs3

So for whatever reason Paul was called to go to Macedonia and he urged Timothy to stay at take care of business, now due to the fact that Paul is encouraging him further, that may be an indication that he’s wanting to leave. and You can understand his timidity, he’s a young guy and people are giving him a hard time about that (4:12), he’s trying to take care of church matters on an overseeing scale. He probably felt inadequate when it came to handling the arguments of these false teachers and the fact that they were influential leaders in the church made it all the more difficult. But Paul’s plea here is that he would remain faithful to the task that was committed to his trust. How often we’re faithful as long as it’s convenient, but when things get difficult we want to quit. But Paul is saying here, stick it out, don’t give up, it’s an important task to which you’ve been called, to defend the faith, and command these guys (who were supposedly elders) that they quit teaching strange doctrines.

John MacArthur sites 4 reasons for the idea that these guys who were teaching false doctrines were elders. “First, they presumed to be teachers (1:7), a role reserved for elders (3:2; 5:17). Second, Paul, not the church, excommunicated Hymenaeus and Alexander. That implies they were in positions of power and the congregation couldn’t deal with them. Third, the qualifications of an elder are given in great detail in chapter 3. Giving those implies that unqualified men were serving in that office, and Timothy needed to see them replaced. Finally, Paul stresses that sinning elders are to be publicly disciplined (5:19–22).”

So Paul encourages Timothy to stay and make sure that the doctrine that’s being divulged, is the same doctrine that he taught them while he was there. This is the point that I’m getting at today, so many people want to overlook doctrinal differences for the sake of unity.

On grey areas we can do that, but there are essential doctrines of the Word of God of which we cannot compromise. and Creed leads to conduct, what I believe determines my behavior; my doctrine effects my doing, the point being if I have right doctrine, my life will correspond with right living. If I have a wrong doctrine then my life will be lived in a manner that's wrong, and in no small manner wrong doctrine can have an eternal repercussion that takes people straight to hell. Such was the severity of the circumstance of which Timothy was dealing with. People mixing and mingling mysticism and Judaism coming up with a works based righteousness that's parasitical in nature that would lead people straight to hell. and To Paul it was important that Timothy stay and fight the good fight of faith because doctrine is just that important.

It can be a matter of spiritual life and death, I'm not one for quoting poetry, as a matter of fact this is the 1st time I've ever done it, but I thought this one was worth reading to you. "You're just out of date," said young pastor Bate To one of our faithful old preachers, Who had carried for years in travail and tears The gospel to poor sinful creatures. "You still preach on Hades, and shock cultured ladies "With your barbarous doctrine of blood! "You're so far behind you will never catch up— "You're a flat tire stuck in the mud!" For some little while, a bit of a smile Enlightened the old preacher's face. Being made the butt of ridicule's cut Did not ruffle his sweetness and grace. Then he returned to young Bate, so suave and sedate. "Catch up, did my ears hear you say? "Why, I couldn't succeed if I doubled my speed, "My friend, *I'm not going your way!*"

There are always those who are looking to be on the cutting edge, looking for some new twist of doctrine that no one else has seen, and yet the bible says, "*That which has been is what will be, That which is done is what will be done, And there is nothing new under the sun.*" Eccl 1:9 In other words when it comes to doctrine, if it's new, it's not true, and if it's true, it's not new. I've literally had people tell me that the things they were telling me were new truth, something that God revealed to them that no one else has known, and all that did was send off a red flag in my mind and in my heart telling me that this man was a heretic. Because we're not to be teaching any other doctrine than that which was established through Jesus Christ and His apostles.

Vs4

So whatever it was that these false teachers were teaching, it was a mixture of mysticism, and Judaism, looking to some form of righteousness and acceptance before God by the keeping of the law. Anytime you run across a legalist you're almost with out exception going to get caught up in some form of dispute over this and over that, them trying to shackle you in their chains of legalism trying to convince you that you're not right with God until you do what they do. But the bible is very clear, the Law is not the way to God, good works aren't the way to God, Jesus said, "*I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.*" John 14:6

Any teaching, or doctrine that contrives another way to God other than through Jesus Christ, be it through baptism, or good works, or asceticism or anything else isn't the gospel at all. Paul said, *"But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed."* Gal 1:8 Now salvation will bring good works to fruition in your life. But good works won't bring salvation to fruition in your life and it's important that you distinguish the difference, one is the ramifications of salvation, the other is reaching to obtain salvation, and there's a big difference.

Vs5-7

In other words the purpose of the Law is that of the inward working upon the heart, not the outward conforming of some set of legal code that would cause God to accept me. The end of the commandment, or the culmination of the work of the Law in our hearts if used properly is Love. How, because the shows me my utter destitution and inability to meet the righteous requirements that it contains thereby driving me to look outside of myself to another who will save me from my wretched condition. It's to lead me to Christ, and when I come to Christ, that's the end of the Law, it's served it's purpose because now I'm covered by the righteousness of Christ, being filled with His Holy Spirit and the fruit of the Spirit is what? Love, Jesus said, *"By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."* John 13:35 He also said that all of the Law and the prophets, the sum total of all that they are hang on even these two, *"You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'" Matt 22:37-39*

So the purpose of the commandment is Love, from these 3 #1 a pure heart, #2 a good conscience and #3 a sincere faith. Which to keep it brief, a pure heart is one that's been washed in the blood of Christ, a good conscience is one that affirms you rather than accuses you in the light of God's Word and God's Will for your life, and A sincere faith is one with out pretense, there's nothing hypocritical, or deceitful about it, no hidden agendas.

But some people turn away from these things the things they teach don't produce love in people, they don't come from a pure heart or sincere faith, but rather they turn aside after idle talk, or worthless words. and They try and impress you with their deep insights and understanding when in reality they don't have a clue what they're talking about. Peter put it like this, *"For when they speak great swelling words of emptiness, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through lewdness, the ones who have actually escaped from those who live in error. While they promise them liberty, they themselves are slaves of corruption."* 2 Peter 2:18-19 That's why James said, *"let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment."* James 3:1 Why, because if you don't know what you're talking about you lead people astray, and when we do that we're held accountable for that.

Vs8

The law isn't a bad thing, "don't miss understand me" Paul is saying. But you have to use it right, Ps 19:7 Tells us "*The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul;*" Rom 7:12 "*the law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good.*" How does the Law convert the soul, by showing us our need for Jesus, it's given to drive sinners to their Savior. That's what Paul said when he wrote in Gal 3 "*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.*" Gal 3:24-25 and Romans tells us "*For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.*" Rom 10:4 So the Law wasn't meant to be added to the saved so as to make one more righteous, you can't be more righteous than that which is provided for you in Christ. The Law is to govern the sinner, to lead him to Christ, notice vs 9.

Vs9-10

You see the law wasn't given for the righteous, but for the rebellious, not for the saved, but for the sinner, and the law is spiritual not carnal. So you don't have to physically murder to be guilty of murder, you just have to be angry unjustly at someone. You don't have to have physical relations to be guilty of fornication or sodomy, you just have to lust after someone in your heart. The law says, you shall not bear false witness, but when you lie, you break the law, it's to show you your need for a savior, and to bring judgment upon those who refuse to repent. and Just in case he overlooked anything Paul adds, "*and If there's any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine.* That word sound is the Greek word "hugiaino" from which we get our English word "Hygiene", it refers to that which is healthy and wholesome. In other words the doctrine of the church should always promote spiritual health, and life, and growth.

Vs11

The glorious gospel, the fact that Christ Jesus came into the world, born of a virgin to save sinners, was in all ways tempted as we are and yet with out sin. Willingly laid His life upon the cross, shedding His blood for the remission of our sin. Crucified for our transgressions and raised again on the 3rd day for our justification. The glorious good news of our blessed God is that "*whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved.*" Rom 10:13 and The Law when used properly, brings us to that point driving us to our knees to call upon the name of the Lord, confessing we're sinners, and we need a Savior.