

1 Timothy 1

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Tape # 8192
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First Timothy, a pastoral epistle.

Just exactly when 1 Timothy was written, we are not certain. But the occasion is that Paul has gone on from Ephesus. He has left Timothy in Ephesus for a short time to sort of keep the helm steady and to really establish a straight course for the teaching of doctrine. There are those in Ephesus that are getting into some weird ideas and concepts and are trying to sort of promote them within the church. And so Paul, realizing that the church needed to be sort of stabilized in a doctrinal way, left Timothy there for a while. Whether or not this is when Paul first left Ephesus or if Paul after his imprisonment in Rome—there are certain traditions in the early church that Paul, after his imprisonment in Rome, was released and he went back to Ephesus for a while, that we don't know for sure. But at any rate, Timothy is there in Ephesus. Paul had left him there in order to establish the saints.

So he begins, *Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God our Saviour*. Here Paul deviates just a little bit from his usual opening. It's usually, Paul, an apostle by the will of God. But this makes it a little more, a little stronger, actually—Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God. You may be, it may be that God wills that you be something, but you sort of hedge on it. Yes, I know it's God's will, but.... Paul is saying, this is the commandment of God. And the commandment seems to be a little more forceful, a little stronger, that just by the will of God.

An apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God our Saviour. Sometimes I think that people get a false concept of God. They think of Jesus as sort of pleading with the Father not to strike us dead, not to cast us out, that somehow God is very austere and just ready to bring down the gavel. And Jesus is there persuading God to love us. That's not a true picture. Our salvation was initiated by God. It was God who so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son. It was God's desire to save us. God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. He sent Jesus Christ so that He could have a righteous basis to forgive your sins. He allowed His Son to take your sin!

Paul said, I'm not ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is the power of God unto salvation. God loves you and provided the means whereby you could be saved from your sins in order that you might enjoy His presence forever, living with Him, abiding with Him, eternally! So God is the One that initiated your salvation. And Paul, here, declares God our Saviour.

and Lord Jesus Christ, which is our hope; So he is an apostle by the commandment of God our Saviour and the Lord Jesus Christ, Who is our hope.

Peter said, thank God we have a living Hope by the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. He is our hope!

I'll tell you what. I was listening to a tape even on the way to church tonight. It was James Dobson giving his assessment of the condition of our government. As he spoke about the conditions, of which he, of course, is very knowledgeable. The things that are going on in Washington D.C., I'll tell you what. It is depressing. I don't see much hope. He doesn't see much hope. I've never heard Jim so sort of, get in a mood that it's sort of over. It's gone.

But thank God, we have a hope in Jesus Christ! You know, and when the outlook gets dark and bleak, it's time for the uplook. Jesus said when you see these things begin to pass, look up! Lift up your head for your redemption draws nigh. The Lord Jesus Christ, which is our hope!

²*Unto Timothy, my own son in the faith*: Timothy was from Lystra. Paul probably met him on his first missionary journey. And Timothy, no doubt, was aware of Paul being stoned in Lystra and being dragged out of the city. Paul knew Timothy's family. He was acquainted with his mother and his grandmother. And Timothy became like a son to Paul. He was a spiritual son, his son in the faith. It could be that seeing Paul's courage in the face of the opposition in giving of himself for the gospel, it could be that it impressed this young man. Paul said that he didn't have anyone who was as likeminded as he was as far as the work of the ministry was concerned.

You know, when God calls you into the ministry, God often gives you just a special calling, a special burden. There are many times others, who sort of follow you in the ministry, but somehow, they don't catch the same vision, the same burden. And sometimes they sort of get lifted up and don't see the position of the servant. And they begin to get fancy cars and homes and so forth. This troubles me.

But then there are those who catch the vision. Those that seem to have a like-mindedness to you. Those that don't get caught up in the material things, but are more interested in just serving the people and seeing their Spiritual growth. So was Timothy. I have no one, Paul said, who is likeminded as I am, more than Timothy. He caught Paul's vision. My own son in the faith.

Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord. Now even as the opening, saying an apostle by the commandment of God, here again, Paul deviates from his general salutation. Generally, Paul just says grace and peace. But it is interesting and I really don't know if there is a reason for it, but in the pastoral epistles, both 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus, in the pastoral epistles, when he is writing to the pastors, he adds mercy! Maybe they need it more than others. So Paul also inserts in this, mercy, as he does in the second letter and in his letter to Titus. It's in only in those three letters. In all of the other letters, it's just grace and peace. But in these letters, he includes mercy from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord.

³*As I besought(begged) thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia,* Now we do know that when Paul was in Ephesus, he was there for a period of time. Then he went to Macedonia and to Corinth to collect an offering for the church in Jerusalem that was suffering real hardship, real financial hardship, and so it could be that it was at that time that Paul was referring to. Timothy is in Ephesus and Paul is writing back to him, and saying, I begged you to abide there in Ephesus when I went into Macedonia,

that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine, Now when Paul was returning from Macedonia and Achaia, going back to Jerusalem, he stopped near Ephesus at Miletus, which was the coastal city right near Ephesus, and he called the elders to come over to the coast to meet him because he wasn't able to spend the time to come into Ephesus and go back out to the coast to get the ship to continue. So when the elders met Paul, Paul was warning them that there would come teachers, false teachers, who would not spare the flock. There will even rise up from among you those who would turn you away from the truth whose god is their bellies.

So Paul warned them. And so there was, no doubt, this undercurrent in Ephesus, this penchant toward false doctrine. Those that were trying to promote and draw people away to themselves by giving some weird kind of an angle on doctrinal issues. So Paul is saying, I left you there to steer a clear course for them, that you might charge some of them that they don't teach other doctrines.

⁴*Neither give heed to fables* Stories that people begin to make up. Stories of marvelous, miraculous, things that are happening.

There was a fellow twenty years back from Indonesia, who was making all kinds of exciting claims of what God doing in Indonesia, turning water into wine at communion, people being raised from the dead. And he was going all across the United States. People were all excited over these great stories of what God was doing. But they were fables! But it got him an audience. But there are those that will, you know, give you fables. They are exciting to hear, oh my, isn't that glorious? But they are only fables. So don't give heed to fables.

and endless genealogies, which minister questions, Now, you know there are a lot of things that people are teaching that create more questions than they do answers. I thought I knew it until he spoke on it. Now I don't know what I know, you know. You end up with more questions than answers.

So Paul is warning them away from those issues, that only raise questions, rather than provide real answers.

They raise questions *rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do.* Building up people in their faith. And the word, edify, means to build up and to encourage people in their faith.

⁵*Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned:* Now the end of the commandment or the bottom line is this! This is the most important thing. This is the bottom line. It's love out of a pure heart and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned--pure

faith, not some homey faith, pure faith. That's the bottom line! It's having love out of a pure heart, loving one another.

And Paul said, ⁶*From which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling;* It is interesting the mail that I get, where people are asking questions on certain kinds of nit-picking issues. Just a while back, I received a letter from some fellow, who wanted to know if Jesus was a Jew. And I could tell by the letter that the fellow had a position that he was wanting to get into an argument over. And so I didn't answer the letter. So, he sent a second letter. You know, people are manipulators, you know, I thought at least my pastor would answer. Manipulation. And after the third letter, I did answer him and gave him passages of Scriptures. Oh, that's all he needed! I got then a book, almost, an epistle from him. The door has been opened for him to now, you know, to dump his theory.

Vain jangling, there is no profit or value to it. And Paul is telling Timothy to avoid these kinds of things.

I can almost smell the paper and tell that the question that they are asking is not an honest question. There are honest questions and there are dishonest questions. With an honest question, the person is really, honestly, seeking an answer. A dishonest question is asked to open an argument. They don't want an answer. They want an argument. So I'm very leery of getting into these disputes over these things, which have no real issue as far as the bottom line—love out of a pure heart and faith unfeigned! It's so easy to get caught up. I mean I could be writing this guy still. I didn't answer the last letter. You know, when I answered, I said, you know, I'm not wanting to argue. This is it. You're not going to hear from me again. This is my position. Boy, and he sent back, now, what about I said. I don't care what you said—vain jangling. And that happens all the time.

So, Paul encourages Timothy to not give heed to it, not to get involved in it. It doesn't really edify and draw you close to God.

⁷*Desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm.* For they desire to be teachers of the law; but they don't even understand what they say, nor the things that they affirm to be true. They don't understand the law. They want to teach the law. They want to put people under the law.

⁸*But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully;* Now, the purpose of the law was not to make you righteous! It wasn't to give you a set of rules that if you will keep these, then you will be righteous before God. That's not the purpose of the law, although that's the way many people teach the law. God's standard for righteousness. If you want to be righteous before God, these are the things that you must do and you must not do.

But that isn't using the law, lawfully. The purpose of the law was to make the whole world guilty before God, not righteous before God! But guilty before God, causing all of us to realize that I am guilty. I have broken the law of God. I'm guilty, so that I do not try to exonerate myself by righteous deeds or by now keeping the law. But realizing that I am guilty. All I can plead is, God, I'm guilty! Please forgive me!

The law, Paul said to the Galatians, was a schoolmaster. It was intended by God to drive you to Jesus Christ, realizing that you can't keep it. Realizing that you are a sinner! You are guilty before God. It drives you to the provision that God has made for guilty people and that's the death of His Son on the cross for our sin.

So the law is good if you use it lawfully, but if you use it as a measure by which I can become accepted by God, if I will do these things and not do these other things. By the works of the law, shall no flesh be justified, Paul said. And he also declared if you are seeking to be righteous by the law, then Christ died in vain!

So the law is good if people use it lawfully, but they weren't using it lawfully. They were trying to put the people under the law. They said you've got to keep this in order to be righteous before God! And Paul was coming out against that teaching, that was actually developed there in Ephesus. And so Paul in talking about the law as those that were, you know, saying, we are under the law. We need to be under the law and all.

But Paul really sort of lays them low. He said, ⁹*Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous*

man, God didn't give the law for the righteous man. Who are the righteous men? Those who have come to a faith in Jesus Christ. And those who have come to a faith in Jesus Christ, God accounts them righteous. I am not righteous because of what I do, I am righteous because of what Jesus has done for me! And I am trusting and relying in Him! And God accounts my faith in Jesus for righteousness. Thus my righteousness is complete! It is the righteousness of Christ that God has imputed to me as a result of my faith in Jesus Christ.

Paul, the apostle, testified of his former experiences, prior to coming to Jesus Christ. He was a Hebrew, of the tribe of Benjamin, circumcised the eighth day, a Pharisee, concerning zeal, persecuting the church. Concerning the righteousness, which is of the law, he said, I was blameless! But those things which were once important to me and gain to me, I counted these as, these are on the plus side, he said, I counted loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ, for whom I suffered the loss of all things. But I count them as refuse because I want to know Him and be found in Him. Not having my own righteousness, which is of the law, but the righteousness, which is of Christ through faith!

You see, God made it that way so that none of us would boast. Nor none of us could boast in the things that we had done or were doing for God. There is no place for boasting because Jesus is our righteousness. And it is by faith in Him. So all I can do is glory in Jesus Christ for what He has done for me! For what I could not do for myself, that is have a righteous standing before God, He has done for me! And as I am in Him and as I put my trust and faith in Him, God accounts me righteous!

So the law isn't for righteous people, *but for the lawless* Here these guys want to be under the law all the time. Okay.

Well here is what the law is for! *and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers,* (murderers, period)

¹⁰*For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind (sexual perverts), for menstealers (kidnappers), for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine;* So these guys, you know, say well, we are under the law. We want to be under the law. Well, these are kind of people they are. I mean Paul really puts them down.

¹¹*According to the glorious gospel* (this is in contrast), *the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust.* It wouldn't be good news to say that you have to keep these things in order to be righteous before God, because you can't keep them. The good news is that God forgives us and that by our faith and trust in Jesus Christ, God accounts us righteous! That's the glorious gospel to which God committed unto Paul!

¹²*And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful (or worthy), putting me into the ministry;* I thank the Lord that he counted me faithful, putting me in the ministry. And He has enabled me! Now this is something that you find is always true! Whatever God calls you to do, He never calls you to do anything but what He will not enable you also to do it! God's commands are God's enablings! And many times the Lord asks us to do things that are impossible. And at that point I have to make a decision, do I try to obey or do I just beg off, declaring my weakness and my inability?

When Jesus came into the synagogue of Capernaum on the Sabbath day, there was a man there with a withered hand. They were all looking to Jesus to see what He would do. He said to the man, stand up! And the man stood up. And then He is said, is it lawful on the Sabbath day to do good or to do evil? To heal or to kill? Turning to the man with the withered hand, He said, stretch forth your hand.

Now the man could have said, oh, I would love to! Oh, you don't know how, oh, how I would love to be able to use that hand again. But after my stroke, I just, you know, I can't do it! You know, you don't know how—I just can't do it. And he could have argued out of his weakness and his inability or he could will to obey the commandment of Jesus, though it's impossible. Jesus gave him an impossible command, stretch forth your hand. Impossible. But yet, he willed to obey. And in as much as he willed to obey, the Lord enabled him to do that which was impossible!

Now many times the Lord calls us to do things and we end up telling Him why we can't. We give Him all the excuses and reasons why that's an impossibility. I've tried, you know. I just can't. And there's just no way. We, you know, are arguing with the Lord, rather than willing to obey the command. He enabled me,

Paul said, counting me faithful. He put me in the ministry that I be an enabling of the Lord.

13 Who was before a blasphemer, For before I was a blasphemer. He was blaspheming Jesus Christ. and a persecutor, I was a persecutor. He was persecuting the church of Jesus Christ. and injurious He inflicted injury on those who were Christians:

but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. I was ignorant of what I was doing. That to me is an interesting statement, because you remember, and no doubt Paul, was somehow associated even with the death of Christ, because he was on the counsel. It would be hard to imagine that Paul was not there when the counsel was called to deal with Jesus.

He was on the counsel just a few months later when they were dealing with Stephen, as he voted to put Stephen to death and actually held the coats of those who were stoning Stephen. But with both the death of Jesus and the death of Stephen, but especially with the death of Jesus, when they were nailing Him to the cross, what was His prayer? Father, forgive them for they know not what they do. They are ignorant of what they are doing.

Now here Paul declares that he was opposed to Christ, but he said, I did it in ignorance. He was one of those that Jesus was praying for, when they were nailing Jesus to the cross, He was praying for Paul, guilty of ignorance in putting to death the Son of God.

And as they were stoning Stephen, he said Father, don't lay this sin to their account. Again, the idea is, they don't understand what they are doing, Lord. So, Paul said, I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.

14 And the grace (notice the mercy in the previous verse, and now the grace) of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. The exceeding, abundant, of the grace of God, the love of God, abundant, of the grace of God, the love of God, that was in Christ Jesus!

15 This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; This is a faithful saying. It's worthy of everyone accepting it. Christ Jesus or the Messiah, Jesus, came into the world to save sinners. He declared that. The Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost. The Messiah, Jesus, came into the world to save sinners.

To Nicodemus, Jesus said, God did not send Me into this world to condemn the world, but that through Me the world might be saved. And He that believeth in Me is not condemned! But He that believes not in Me is condemned already, seeing he doesn't believe in the only begotten Son of God. Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.

of whom I am chief. And Paul adds, of whom I am chief, referring back to the things that he did in his endeavor to destroy the church, forcing people to blaspheme Jesus, persecuting them, breathing out murders, murderous words and thoughts against the church. So the chiefest of sinners, of whom I am chief.

16 Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, God showed mercy to the chiefest of sinners so that no one would feel that they were out of the reach of God's love and grace, no matter how much you have fought against Jesus Christ, no matter how much you may have sought to destroy people's faith in Jesus Christ, you're not outside of God's grace and love. God saved Paul in order that others might have hope.

I obtained mercy *that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern* (that there might be a pattern, an example) *to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.* We had a fellow that was here at the church for a time, who became upset. He left the church. He became a part of a group that is known as the Fundamentals Anonymous. He deliberately and actively began to destroy or seek to destroy people's faith in Jesus Christ. Now I've written this fellow off. You know, I would say that's impardonable, a man who once professed the faith in Jesus, sought to be in the ministry and now doing his best to destroy people's faith in Jesus.

But Paul said, the Lord saved me! He showed His longsuffering. I was a persecutor. I was a blasphemer. Paul was endeavoring to destroy people's faith in Jesus. Yet the Lord reached out. He wasn't beyond the Lord's reach. Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom Paul said, I am the chief, in order—I received the mercy—in order that in me first, Jesus might show, just how longsuffering He is! Just how far out He is willing to reach, that it might be a pattern to them that should hereafter believe in Him to life

everlasting.

And Paul is now thinking of what the Lord has done. Oh, the mercy of God and the grace of God to me! I mean this just then, sort of leads him into sort of a rhapsody of ¹⁷*Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, And who is the King, eternal, immortal, invisible? It's Jesus Christ! He is the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords!*

But Paul calls Him the only wise God, *be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.* It's just a glorious sort of doxology that just springs forth as Paul thinks of what God has done for him! The chief of sinners, but God in His love reached out and drew him in and forgave him. He cleansed him. He put him in the ministry! Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory both now and forever! Oh, yes!

So Paul goes on to say, ¹⁸*This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare;* Now in the fourth chapter of this letter, verse fourteen, if you're turning there, Paul said, stir up the gift that is in thee, that was given unto thee by the laying on of the hands of the presbytery and the word of prophecy.

In Paul's second letter to Timothy, he makes reference also to the prophecy that went before thee. Wherefore in verse six of chapter one in second Timothy, I put thee in remembrance that you stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands.

The elders laid hands on Timothy. Paul laid hands on Timothy and prayed for his ministry. And as they prayed, the word of prophecy came forth, sort of setting out the ministry that the Lord would have for Timothy. God gave him gifts in order to fulfill that ministry. But it seemed like Timothy was maybe just sort of cruising. So Paul said, stir up the gifts that are in thee! Start using them again, those that were given unto you when the elders laid hands on you and there was prophecy over you.

In the early days of Calvary Chapel, when there were just a few of us, we oftentimes had sessions, where we prayed one for another in our church there. Actually, after the Sunday evening study we could take questions from people. We would spend an hour or so answering questions after the Sunday evening service. When you are real small, you can do those kinds of things. And we would have a person sit in a chair and we would pray for them and quite often prophecy was given. Many times with the prophecy there were things that the Lord was guiding and directing and this kind of ministry was being exercised there in the early days of Calvary Chapel. And so it was with Timothy. The elders laid hands on him. He received the gifts of the Spirit. There was prophecy that accompanied it.

And so now Paul is saying, I charge you, my son Timothy, according to the prophecies that went before you, that you by them, might war a good warfare, ¹⁹*Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck:* Hold on to the faith! Some have turned away. They've become shipwrecked. And that's tragic! Paul will later talk about demons, having forsaken him, become sort of shipwrecked. It's always sad.

And you of course, you should never name people because that's not Scriptural. That's not right to name the false prophets or those guys that are doing all these weird things. You should be kind and you don't want to create division. But Paul didn't know that! So Paul said, ²⁰*Of whom is Hymenaeus* (Just by his name, you know the guy has got to be bad.) *and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.* I've turned them over to Satan. Now, Paul was no doubt, exercising a position as an apostle of Jesus Christ. And as an apostle, I suppose he had that power to turn a person over to Satan. Hymenaeus, in the second letter to Timothy, we will discover that Hymenaeus was teaching that the resurrection had already taken place.

Now the Jehovah's Witnesses teach that—that the resurrection has already place. That Jesus has come and established the millennial reign and the resurrection has taken place. That's the teaching that Hymenaeus was guilty of.

With Alexander, he had stood up against Paul and had given Paul a lot of trouble. Paul will mention Alexander also in the second letter and mention the trouble that Alexander gave him.

Now in the Book of Acts, when Paul was there in Ephesus ministering, and Demetrius, the silversmith

gathered together the men of his trade. He said, we've got a bad situation. We've got to do something about it. Our business is being threatened, because you know, we make these little silver necklaces and silver idols of Diana, our goddess. And Paul is telling the people that Diana isn't a goddess. And business is down. We've got to do something about this fellow. So they began to create a stir, yelling and sort of mob-kind of rioting. They went into the great amphitheater there in Ephesus, which will hold about fifteen to twenty thousand people. And the people didn't know what they were yelling about or doing, but they all followed as they gathered into the great amphitheater. And we read that Alexander was grabbed because the people recognized him as a Jew. They dragged him into the amphitheater. So Alexander beckoned and he was wanting to speak to the people. But they just began to chant, "great is Diana the Ephesian". This chant went on for two hours. Whether or not this is the same Alexander, we don't know.

But it was in Ephesus and this Alexander that he speaks of here was in Ephesus and Paul identifies him as Alexander the goldsmith in his second letter to Timothy and just speaks of the heartache and the problems that Alexander gave him. It could be the same Alexander.

There are those that are in the church that can get upset and begin to sew dissension within the church and become a real burden to the pastor.

Now, thank God, and I don't know how, we've pretty much escaped this here. It's glorious! God has been good! We rejoice in what God has done and in what God is doing. And we look forward to what God is going to do as we continue to study the Word, to show ourselves approved unto God, rightly dividing the Word of truth.

Father, we thank You for Your Word and the privilege that we have of going through and studying. Lord, may the Holy Spirit continue to instruct our hearts in the truth. Keep us on the straight course. Keep us in solid doctrine. May we not deviate from the truth. Lord, our hearts are hungry to know You, to know Your Word. Teach us, Lord. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.