

1 Timothy 1

READ - 1 Timothy 1

- Discussion questions:
 - What do you think are some of the big themes that Paul is dealing with in this chapter?
 - Remember the overall theme of this letter:
Christian behavior grounded in the true Gospel (3.14-15)
How do some of the things in this chapter relate to that overall theme?

1.1-2 – Greeting

- What is “apostleship?”
 - a representative with a message and authority, someone who had seen the resurrected Lord
- Who is Timothy?
 - Acts 16.1-5
 - With Paul when he wrote at least some of his letters – Romans 16.21, 2 Corinthians 1.1, Philippians 1.1, 1 Thessalonians 1.1, 2 Thessalonians 1.1, Philemon 1 (A pretty constant companion to Paul)
 - Timothy was trusted enough to be sent on several missions on Paul’s behalf – 1 Corinthians 4.17, 16.10; Philippians 2.19; 1 Thessalonians 3.2
 - Timothy (along with Titus) wasn’t exactly a pastor nor an apostle. He was an “apostolic representative”.
- What are the theological themes of the greeting?

1.3-7 – Charge to Timothy to warn false teachers

- Paul does not describe the false teaching directly.
- Characteristics of the false teachers and their teaching:
 - They teach a doctrine that is contrary to Paul’s gospel (vs. 3b).
 - They devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies (vs. 4a).
 - They involve themselves in speculative teaching (vs. 4b).
 - They wander away into vain discussions (vs. 6b).
 - They desire to be teachers of the law (vs. 7a).
 - They don’t understand what they are talking about (vs. 7b).
- Because Paul does not describe the false teaching directly, it isn’t possible to be certain what they were teaching. Here are some important possibilities:
 - legalistic requirements for Christian behavior (1.7, 4.3)
 - promoted controversy, seemed “picky” about words (6.4b)
 - appeals to pride (6.4a) – performance based righteousness always does...
 - appealed to human greed (6.5)
 - similar to the “Colossian Heresy” (Colossians 2.16-19)
 - It doesn’t seem to be like the Galatian Judaizers.
 - Bottom line, it contradicted the true Gospel in some way (see vs. 11), as all false teaching does!

1.8-11 – The proper use of the Law

- The “law” here refers to the Mosaic Law.
- It is not meant for those who through the Lord Jesus Christ are living righteously.
- It is meant for those who are law-breakers and need to be warned against sin.

1.12-17 – In contrast to the false teachers, Paul is a faithful minister, saved by grace through faith.

- How was Paul considered faithful before his conversion? - see 1 Corinthians 7.25
God considered Paul as one who would be faithful, so God entrusted him with apostolic ministry.
- As a former, blasphemer, persecutor, and insolent opponent (vs. 13a), Paul is an example of God's mercy (vs. 13b) and overflowing grace (vs. 14a) so that God could display his patience to all who believe (vs. 16).
- This all brings Paul to a grand doxology of praise – vs. 17.

1.18-20 – The charge to Timothy renewed

- This charge to rebuke false teachers is “entrusted” to Timothy – vs. 18a
- This charge is to be fulfilled in accordance with prophecies made about Timothy in the past – vs. 18b
- Fulfilling this charge will be spiritual warfare – vs. 18c
- Waging this spiritual warfare and fulfilling this charge will require faith and a good conscience – vs. 19a
- Those who reject “faith and a good conscience” make a shipwreck of their faith – vs. 19b
 - In this context “faith” = trust in God, belief in His Son, NOT “the faith.” (Legalistic false teaching rejects faith in God for trust in human performance.)
 - “Good conscience” is an honest assessment that one’s life is pleasing to God.
- Finally, the local false teachers are named and handed over to Satan.
 - “handed over to Satan” = put out of the church
 - handing over to Satan / being put out of the church is for the purpose of rebuke and education (that they may learn not to blaspheme).
 - Paul is hoping that they will see the serious, spiritual, even demonic nature of their teaching and repent.

What are some practical lessons that we can learn from this chapter?

- _____
- _____
- _____
- False teaching is serious business and must be dealt with in the church.
 - False teaching can take many forms.
 - But it always contradicts the Gospel of Christ.
 - And it generally promotes human performance as the way of salvation.
- There are multiple “uses” of the Law of God, but here there is an emphasis on warning.
- Church discipline is sometimes necessary for what people teach, not just what they do.
- Salvation from sin in Christ Jesus is beautiful and rich and deep (vss. 12-17)! In fact, these verses of testimony are just as rich as any didactic passage on justification.
- Hold on to faith and a good conscience!