

**A PERSONAL  
VERSE BY VERSE COMMENTARY**

**1 TIMOTHY**

**BY  
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**1Timothy 1:1-2 ¶ Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God our Saviour, and Lord Jesus Christ, *which is our hope*; Unto Timothy, *my own son in the faith*: Grace, mercy, *and* peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord.**

Research indicates that the letters to Timothy and Titus were probably the last three letters written by the Apostle Paul. Paul started several of his letters by declaring himself an apostle according to the will or by the command of God (2Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Colossians and 2Timothy).

Paul identifies Timothy as “my own son in the faith,” which seems to be declaring that he had led Timothy to the Lord and/or had served as his spiritual father in supervising his spiritual growth. Many of Paul’s letters make reference to Timothy’s ministry alongside Paul and of his confidence in this young man’s capabilities and sincerity of heart in ministry.

Paul takes every opportunity to declare Jesus Christ as our “Savior” and “Lord.” I think this stems from an overwhelming heart of love and gratitude at being given the opportunity to serve the Lord so publicly after having so publicly and zealously denying Jesus as Lord and persecuting those that had accepted Him as such. It was interesting to me that Paul referenced “God” as Savior, a term usually connected more with Jesus. In doing a word search, I found that this seemed to be unique to Paul and Jude in the New Testament, but was used several times in the Old Testament in 2Samuel, Psalms, Isaiah and Hosea. It was probably a natural thought from a former Pharisee who was so well versed in the Old Testament scriptures.

“our hope” – The wording is clear that the hope being referenced is a confident expectation in God as declared in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. What is that hope? Deliverance from this world of sin to enjoy eternal life in the presence of God. The Greek also describes this “hope” as pleasurable anticipation. I often wonder how many in the church today actually look forward with pleasure to being in the presence of the Lord. I know most Christians would *say* that they are looking forward to it, but are we really anticipating that future with pleasure? How many of us would actually prefer that the Lord delay that time for a while due to unfulfilled desires associated with our current life—marriage, starting a family, having grandchildren, concerns about unsaved loved ones, etc.?

This greeting of grace, mercy and peace is unique to Paul’s letters to Timothy and Titus; his usual greeting is grace and peace. Grace is a reference to “the divine influence on one’s heart and its reflection in one’s life.” God’s grace is what brings about one’s salvation. The peace of God is reference to possessing a spirit of rest and contentment in the service to which God has called one. I tend to think that he added “mercy” to these letters because it is a reference to the need for compassion that is so necessary to one in the position of pastor. Every Christian should have a heart of mercy toward his fellow man, but pastors need an extra dose of this character trait toward their flock. I believe that Paul is reminding Timothy that just as God has blessed him, he should be willing to

bleed others with the same heart of compassion. Webster defines this compassion as “suffering with another; a sensation of sorrow excited by the distress or misfortunes of another; pity; commiseration.” Many times the most effective ministry is simply coming alongside another in his/her suffering.

Again, it stands out to me that the source of these blessings is “God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord.” Scripture everywhere describes them as one and the same, yet separate entities. No, I don’t understand it, but I believe it in faith.

**1Timothy 1:3-4 As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine, Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do.**

Paul left Ephesus to go and minister in Macedonia and left Timothy in Ephesus with the designated authority to refute false teachers who were trying to infiltrate the church. These false teachers were evidently disputing Paul’s instruction by using well-known myths and genealogical histories that would pose questions in the hearts of the believers. Timothy’s role was to strengthen their faith by continued instruction in the truth as revealed by God in scripture and through his chosen apostles.

Jamieson, Faucett and Brown identified these false teachers as those who claimed to be able to see deeper mysteries than others were able see in the scripture. David Guzik added the following insight: “Ancient Jewish writings have been discovered, which delve into the most complex genealogies, connecting them with wild speculations about spiritual mysteries.”

Whatever message these false teachers were presenting, it was obviously contrary to the word of God; it was teaching from the thoughts and ideas of men. I couldn’t help but make application to the false teachings that challenge God’s word today. The teaching of Islam is based on writings produced by a man name Mohammed that lived in Arabia from 570-632 AD. The Mormon religion is founded on the teachings introduced in America by a man named Joseph Smith in the late 1820’s. Even within the recognized “church” are those that seek to adulterate the word of God by adding to, taking away from, or manipulating its truth to proclaim a message that fits their own ideas and purposes. Scripture is very clear in its warnings against such actions.

*Proverbs 30:5-6 “Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him. Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.”*

*Revelation 22:18 “For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book:”*

**1Timothy 1:5-7 ¶ Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned: From which some**

**having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling; Desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm.**

Paul is emphasizing the importance of keeping one's focus on the word of God. Those who invest their time and energy in learning God's word and obeying its instruction will have their lives changed in the process. They will learn to love one another with a pure heart, with no ulterior motives. Submission and obedience to the word of God results in a good conscience and promotes a sincere faith. Those who turn their focus to the thoughts of men rather than the word of God are opening themselves up to deception and meaningless talk.

I can't help but think of the so-called bible scholars that the media spotlight that position themselves as experts in understanding what God really meant by what is said in scripture or posit that the scripture is not reliable. They want to be known as men of spiritual insight, but they have no real understanding of the truth. They speak with confidence and authority in the hopes that others will not recognize their lies and deceit. I think some do so knowingly in order to make a profit; others, I think, have been deceived into accepting the wisdom of man over the wisdom of God as declared in His word. I couldn't help but think of the words of Solomon.

*Proverbs 10:19 "In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his lips is wise."*

It seems as though I am hearing more and more about churches and small groups investing their time and energy in the studies of books by "Christian" authors. Personally, I am very grateful to have the writings of wonderful men and women of God to enhance my study of scripture; but we need to be careful to monitor the time invested in such reading against the time spent in scripture. The words of men are only of benefit when in support of the teaching of God's word. If you have not spent time familiarizing yourself with the scripture, then you have no standard from which to discern the truth or benefit of the writings of men. The Bereans were commended for testing what Paul taught against the truth of God's word.

*Acts 17:10-11 "And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: who coming thither went into the synagogue of the Jews. These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so."*

**1Timothy 1:8-11 But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully; Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine; According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust.**

I believe in context that the “law” being referenced is the law of God as revealed by Moses. It was God’s law that these false teachers were claiming to know and instruct. The implication was that these men were not using it legitimately (from the Greek for *lawfully*) as God intended for good. As a former Pharisee, Paul was well aware of the terrible results of teaching a corruption of scripture.

A righteous man, one who worships God and is innocent in character, doesn’t need the law because he does what is right. Problem is that there are no righteous men.

*Romans 3:10 “As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one....”*

The law was given to help sinners understand what is pleasing to God, to discern right from wrong and to understand that there are consequences for wrongdoing. The list begins with a reference to the lawless and disobedient and expands to include murderers, fornicators, homosexuals, kidnappers, liars and any other actions that might be practiced from a corrupted teaching of God’s law. The law was necessary for man to recognize his need for a Savior.

*Romans 3:20 “Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.”*

*Galatians 3:24 “Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.”*

This teaching is greatly needed in the “church” today. More and more so-called pastors are presenting a corrupted version of the word of God so as to be politically correct and increase their numbers and their financial coffers. What they are actually doing is paving the way to destruction for their followers who are made comfortable in their sin and aren’t taught to recognize their sin and their need for repentance.

Paul is exhorting Timothy to be careful to stick to the “glorious gospel of the blessed God” which Christ had commissioned him to preach. That good news includes the whole of God’s word, but Paul was very clear in declaring the heart of the gospel in his letter to the Corinthians.

*1 Corinthians 15:1-4 “Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved....For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures....”*

The beautiful truth is that once one accepts God’s gift of salvation by faith, he/she is clothed in the righteousness of Jesus.

*2 Corinthians 5:21 “For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”*

As I was reading through this section again, it stood out to me that Paul recognized that the gospel had been entrusted to him. He considered it a valuable possession that he was privileged to declare boldly and truthfully. It hit me that we have been entrusted with that privilege just as surely as Paul.

*Matthew 28:18-20 "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen."*

**1Timothy 1:12-13 ¶ And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry; Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.**

Paul takes every opportunity to praise God for the transformation He brought about in his life. He is so thankful that God recognized him as one who would be faithful to ministering the truth about the Savior and the word of God once he became aware of his need to repent and commit his life to the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul is quick to acknowledge his so very public sin. He understands that God doesn't hold the sin of the unbeliever against him when it comes to serving Him as a believer. Once we are saved the slate is clean, and the Lord expects His children to honor and obey Him.

*John 14:15, 21 "If ye love me, keep my commandments....He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him."*

Paul also recognized that he could not be successful in ministry in his own strength; he knew that he had been empowered by the Lord Jesus through the Holy Spirit to be able to serve Him successfully in spite of the troubles and persecution he encountered along the way. This empowerment is available to every believer.

*Ephesians 3:14-16 "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man...."*

*Colossians 1:9-11 "For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness...."*

**1Timothy 1:14 And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.**

I love the wording of the NLT for this verse: *Oh, how kind and gracious the Lord was! He filled me completely with faith and the love of Christ Jesus.*

The Greek entry for “exceeding abundant” stated to “superabound.” God’s provision for us always exceeds what we actually need. That is because He has provided for His children by giving them His Holy Spirit who possesses the fullness of His power and authority. We are only limited according to the limit of submission we give Him and trust we place in Him to provide for our need.

This is a truth I am learning slowly but surely. The more opportunities I give Him to show up in my life as I seek to trust Him in faith and obedience in spite of perceived limitations, the more my faith is built as He responds to that step of faith with His provision. I am always aware that His provision may not be in the time or manner that I expect, but it is sure; and I wouldn’t have it any other way. I know He knows what is needed in my life to make me the servant He would have me be, and I am committed to trusting Him in spite of my lack of understanding of His ways.

**1Timothy 1:15 This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.**

At this point Paul emphasizes the gospel in a nutshell. Christ Jesus came into the world to provide salvation for sinners-----and that includes every person on planet earth.

*Ecclesiastes 7:20 “For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.”*

*Romans 3:10 “As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:”*

*Romans 3:23 “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God....”*

*Romans 5:12 “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned....”*

Paul truly felt that he must be the worst sinner to have ever lived since he had been such a blasphemer of the Lord Jesus Christ and had violently persecuted those that had placed their faith in Jesus Christ before his Damascus Road experience. His point being—If He can save me, He can save anyone.

It breaks my heart to see so many so-called preachers of the word try to avoid identifying sin. If they don’t help people to understand that they are sinners in need of a Savior, they are basically sending them on their way to hell; and they will have to answer to God as to why they didn’t give them the truth.

**1Timothy 1:16 Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.**

This verse is an exclamation to my comment on the previous verse—If God could save Paul, no one is beyond His forgiveness. If God didn't give up on Paul, He is not going to give up on any sinner that is foreknown as His since before the foundation of the world. Paul considered himself as a very obvious example of the change that God's amazing love and grace can work in the life of the worst of sinners.

To believe on Christ Jesus is to be persuaded of the truth of Who He Is—God in flesh, Son of God, Savior, and Creator. To believe on Christ as Savior is to possess eternal life, life in the presence of God that will never end.

**1Timothy 1:17 Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.**

As Paul thinks about God's amazing love and mercy toward him, he can't help but break out in praise. He identifies Him as the eternal King—past, present and future—the completely sovereign Supreme God. He recognizes God as immortal, or never subject to corruption or decay. He declares Him as invisible to us currently. Identifying Him as the only wise God is a statement of direct contrast to all the false gods of the heathen; He alone is the God that is a being of intelligence, power and authority. Because of who He Is, He deserves to be honored and glorified or worshipped forever. "Amen" is the verbal exclamation point to the truth he has just expressed.

**1Timothy 1:18-20 ¶ 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; Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck: Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.**

Paul is giving Timothy his marching orders so to speak as his spiritual overseer. It's interesting that he makes mention of prophecies that were spoken concerning Timothy's faithfulness and lack of guile as part of God's army of believers. I think this is speaking of a time of being commissioned for ministry with the expectation that he would be a faithful and dependable servant to the Lord as referenced in chapter 4.

*1 Timothy 4:14 "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery."*

This would be similar to the type of the commission that Paul and Barnabas had received. The Holy Spirit would have had to have spoken or prophesied through an individual.

*Acts 13:1-3 "Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they*

*ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away."*

As I read through these verses several times, it seems to me that Hymenaeus and Alexander had received similar commissions of service, but had not lived up to the expectation of that commission. Paul is warning Timothy of the consequences of allowing his faith to falter to the point that he could no longer said to be serving God with good conscience. Paul doesn't beat around the bush; he publicly identifies those who were not serving according to the faith with which they were entrusted. Their lack of faithfulness and commitment to the truth had resulted in "shipwreck" or great destruction to the ministry. Paul indicates that he is going to let them suffer the consequences of their actions through the attack of Satan, the accuser of the brethren, so that they can learn from their experience. This would seem to be a statement of some type of church discipline. It seems as though their ministry had resulted in blasphemy before the Lord since he wants them to learn not to blaspheme. It in no way sounds like he has written them off forever.

I think this is a very instructive passage that is needful to be heard today. It seems that there are many in the ministry today that are not holding fast in faith to the truth of God's word and serving with a good conscience or moral discernment. Many are perverting the truth of God's word to the point that it can rightfully be called blasphemy. It is important to note that Paul was not hesitant to identify this type of person by name, but it is obvious that his heart in doing so was to guard against their heresy being allowed to spread in the body of believers and to put them in a position that would result in their repentance and restoration. I must admit that I respect those who are willing to identify those who are corrupting the truth of God's word; if they aren't identified, then the unsuspecting are more likely to fall victim to their blasphemous teaching. If those who are respected in ministry refuse to identify those who can no longer be trusted as to their ministry, their teaching is assumed to be OK. When ministers of the gospel have become shipwrecks in the ministry, they need to be called out, but with a heart of wanting to produce repentance and restoration.

Because I know that our salvation is a work of God that He will complete...

*Philippians 1:6 "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:"*

...I know that you can't "lose" your salvation. Paul seems to be speaking from the position that these two men are believers that need to repent. In the end, only God knows their hearts. If they never showed repentance, it is clear that they never possessed true saving faith. John states it this way:

*1 John 2:18-19 "Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would*

*no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us."*

I think Paul's words to Titus also provide clarification.

*Titus 1:15-16 "Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled. **They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him,** being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate."*

There are those that profess to know God but prove that they don't by their actions. Christ also declared this truth.

*Matthew 7:21-23 "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."*