

“FAITHFUL MAN WITH A FAITHFUL MESSAGE”

I Timothy 1:1-7

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INTRODUCTION

The job of building the church for Christ is the greatest challenge for which a believer could give his life. One of God’s primary requirements for this task is faithfulness! The book of first Timothy is about a young man who accepted God’s calling through the apostle Paul and determined to be faithful – regardless of the difficulty of the task. He was given some extremely tough assignments, but he faithfully carried them out despite his difficult family background and his own personal weaknesses – including physical issues (I Tim. 5:23) and personal timidity [See I Cor. 4:17.] Timothy had a deep love and concern for God’s people (**Phil. 2:20**). Do you?

Verse three tells us that Paul left Timothy in Ephesus with a serious responsibility to carry out. Following Paul’s three-year ministry in Ephesus would not be an easy thing for a young preacher. Ephesus was a very important city and had a significant church; yet this church had developed some significant problems that needed to be ironed out. Timothy was given that job and he gladly accepted it!

YOU MUST BE FAITHFUL IN THE TASK THAT GOD HAS GIVEN YOU!

But, Paul’s command in v. 3 may imply that Timothy had requested to be relieved from his job and find a new field of ministry! The problem was not:

- 1) Timothy’s inexperience—for by this time he had been in ministry for about 15 years.
- 2) Timothy’s unwillingness to sacrifice—we have already seen his willingness to serve and his faithfulness.
- 3) Timothy’s self-seeking spirit—we have already seen that was not the case.

But, this work was **hard**, and Timothy’s courage was waning, and his resolve was softening.

Paul shows Timothy Five Traits of Teaching that must be rejected (vv. 3-4, 6-7), and then Gives the Proper Goal of Teaching and The Means to that Goal.

But before we look at that instruction, we must see the **Greeting** with which Paul opens his epistle in order to prepare Timothy for what he is about to say to him (vv. 1-2)

- A. The Sender of the Epistle: Paul (1)
 1. Apostle of Christ Jesus—under Orders (commandment)
 2. Joint commission
 - God our Savior
 - Christ Jesus our Hope
 - Note that Jesus is God!
- B. The Receiver of the Epistle: Timothy (2)
 1. Legitimate child in faith—Really saved; legitimate despite Gentile father
 2. Receptor of Grace, mercy, and peace
 3. Source of such qualities
 - God the Father
 - Christ Jesus our Lord—Again, Jesus is God!

Now to the heart of Paul’s message in this epistle: Timothy must reject false teaching, and must promote the goal of proper teaching. Thus we see **how God’s servant is faithful to his God-given task**.

- I. YOU MUST REJECT UNBIBLICAL TEACHING (3-4; 6-7)

- A. Reject Other/strange Teachings (3)
 1. Notice the *urgency* from the apostle: “I exhorted you.”
 2. Notice the necessity of *remaining on* in order to finish the job.
 3. Notice the *authority* of the orders—a military term, to pass down the ranks—“Charge”.
 4. Notice the *nature* of the command—not to teach other, different, strange, unusual concepts not part of the solid truths passed down from the apostles.
 5. Notice that these teachings were not strictly heresies but were outside Biblical authority.
- B. Reject myths/fables
 1. We must not *pay attention to, or hold on to*, or adopt and practice such teachings.
 2. We must not promote speculations, questionings, confusion due to human authority—seeking outside the limits of God’s sovereign truth.
- C. Reject genealogies
 1. Such teaching is endless, monotonous, relentless, because not tied down to solid Biblical truth.
 2. Such teaching allegorizes on the lives and incidents recorded about Biblical characters, using human ingenuity and imagination to guide the interpreter/teacher rather than **sound principles of Biblical hermeneutics and exegesis**.
 3. When the text does not control the teaching, one’s creative imagination provides the only limits.
 4. The problems we face today may be different, but the method and approach toward Biblical authority and divine sovereignty in controlling teaching is the same.
 5. **It often involves giving people what they want or enjoy rather than what God knows we need.**
- D. Reject what does not promote God’s Administrative plan of Stewardship for His Church—which is **by faith**. (4) [His plan of Salvation or His Stewardship Plan for His church functioning]
- E. Reject **Fruitless discussion**—“vain jangling”: empty, idle words (6)
 1. They miss their aim—miss the mark, lose Biblical focus
 2. They then stray from the correct path—wandering astray blindly, having no sure compass or control.
They have lost their way and end up in the swamp!
 3. The word is used for bones out of joint—disjointed teaching not holding together.
We must focus on faithful proclaiming of divine truth, personal holiness, nurturing the family, faithfulness to the local church, evangelizing the lost, promoting world-wide missions.

II. YOU MUST PROMOTE THE GOAL OF PROPER TEACHING (5)

Our “authoritative instruction”—cf. the verb “command” in v. 3; same root word.

- A. The Goal of all Biblical teaching is **LOVE**
 - See Jn. 13:35—true mark of being a disciple
 - Description—I Cor. 13
 - It is the “Royal Law”: James 2:8
 - One who does not love does not know God (I Jn. 4:8)
- B. The Means to that goal involves three spiritual realities:
 1. A Pure Heart—see Ps. 51:10
 2. A Good Conscience—not *seared*, not *guilty*, *accurately guiding* according to God’s Word
 3. Sincere Faith—literally, “not hypocritical”

CONCLUSION

But you cannot do this if you don’t stay in your place, do your job, and remain faithful.

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