

1 Timothy Pastor Lou DeVizia

1 Timothy 1:12-20 Fellowship Bible Church; Woodbridge, NJ

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Introduction. In the first half of Chapter 1, we read Paul's warning to Timothy about people who had drifted from love to idle talk and legalizing (1:5-7). Teaching rooted in New Covenant grace, leading to living by faith and practicing love, had been corrupted by false teachers who emphasized story-telling, genealogies (laying claim to some sort of spiritual heritage, likely) and the Law of Moses. After a section concerning the right use of the law (to bring conviction to the unrepentant sinner, 1:8-11), Paul contrasts his own appointment to ministry with that of such false teachers: whereas the false teachers had risen up in pride, Paul had been mercifully put into ministry by the Lord Jesus Christ. False teachers seek a spiritual pedigree and preach law, Paul saw himself as the chief of sinners and taught love. False teachers seek their own glory; Paul gave all glory to God (1:17). And so Chapter 1 is the great charge to Timothy to command anyone thinking of going the way of Hymenaeus and Alexander (1:20) to not do so. The influence of anything that corrupts New Covenant teaching leads to the "shipwrecking" of many. It is scripture versus stories, grace versus law, God's sovereignty versus man's rights, humility versus pride. Timothy's job was to wage good warfare and order church life accordingly. The ensuing chapters follow up the charge with many specific instructions.

1. Verses 12-17 - The example of the call of the Apostle Paul to ministry: grace and mercy on display.

- vv.12-13a - **Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me** (Gr., *endunamosanti*; "who empowered"). In contrast to the false teachers, Paul's ability in the ministry was completely from the Lord. **He counted me faithful...** God, in His sovereignty, saw in Paul one who would be faithful and called him, **putting him into ministry**. Paul was clearly not motivated by personal ambition. He was in the position by the Lord's own hand.

- v.13b - The great contrast: what Paul did (*before* his conversion) he did not fully knowing or believing the truth. What false teachers in Ephesus were doing they were doing *after* being taught the truth and affirming that they believed it. *Big difference!*

- v.14 - **the grace of our Lord...** Paul saw his own ability to teach and minister as a gift from God. Ministry is according to giftedness, not necessarily desires or ambition (though sometimes God can use those things to lead someone, 3:1).

- v.15 - Here we see Paul's humility (**chief of sinners**), and we also see a great contrast between the heart of his doctrine and those of false teachers. Paul's message was about the salvation of sinners by God's grace through faith. The false teachers strayed from that and wanted to teach law (1:6-7).

- v.16 - Paul saw his whole life - even his prior life as a blasphemer and persecutor (v.13) - as part of a great example the Lord was making of him for others. He **obtained mercy** so others would be encouraged to know that they could obtain mercy too. If a violent enemy of

the faith like Paul (then Saul) could obtain mercy for *everlasting life*, so can you and so can I.

- v.17 - Paul was writing this as a death row inmate. By the time he writes his second letter to Timothy, almost all had forsaken him. Yet even at this point, Paul is praising **God** for his ministry, even though it is that ministry that has led to his earthly demise.

2. Verses 18-20 - Timothy's charge revisited: wage the good warfare against corrupt teaching.

- vv.18-19a - ***This charge...*** hearkens back to v.3 - stay in Ephesus and prevent false teaching. ***son Timothy...*** Paul had mentored Timothy for many years, and now he speaks to him as a spiritual father to a son. ***prophecies made concerning you...*** Apparently prophetic words had been spoken concerning Timothy's ministry and gifting. Those words now served as a reminder and an encouragement to stay firm and ***wage the good warfare*** against false doctrine. In 2 Timothy, Paul similarly reminds Timothy that his gifts were through the laying on of the Apostle's hands, 2 Timothy 1:6. ***faith and a good conscience...*** Timothy needed to continue to trust and to not violate his own conscience as he served.

- vv.19b-20 - Did you ever wonder how false teachers can be so brash, dishonest, bold, confident and greedy? It is because they reject their own consciences; they are able to act and teach as if they have none. They are hardened, seared. ***the faith... shipwreck*** They have crashed and been destroyed with regards to the true gospel of Christ. They were almost certainly never truly saved, for the evidence of the Holy Spirit restraining them is absent. In any event, they certainly follow Christ no longer. ***Hymenaeus and Alexander*** are examples of these. delivered to Satan... Likely a reference to the only thing to do with a false teacher: put them out (it seems that Paul, when he was freed from his first Roman imprisonment, made a trip to Ephesus, put these two men out, then instructed Timothy to stay there as he continued to Macedonia).