

# Studies in 1 Timothy-01 1 Timothy-1

by William MacDonald

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*Paul's epistle to Timothy emphasizes the importance of order in the church of God and warns against false teaching that leads people away from the truth of God's word.*

**Duration:** 42:18

**Scripture:** Acts 9:1

**Topics:** "Gods Grace", "True Doctrine"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher begins by emphasizing the magnificence and greatness of God. He highlights that the gospel is the good news of the glory of God. The preacher then expresses his gratitude for his own salvation, acknowledging that he doesn't understand why God chose to save him. The sermon also includes a charge to Timothy to teach and uphold the true doctrine, as some false teachers were promoting a salvation based on law keeping. Overall, the sermon focuses on the wonder of God's grace and the importance of standing firm in the truth of the gospel.

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## Transcript

So, we hear this morning in our Bible through 1 Timothy, Paul's first letter to Timothy. I thought during this month we would take a series in this epistle. We won't be able to finish it, I'm sure, in the five Sundays, but we'll try to take at least a chapter a week.

1 Timothy, chapter 1, verse 1. Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the commandment of God our Savior, 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. 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 of a sign which is in faith.

So do. Now, the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faint unfaithfulness 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. 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 for saints, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, for whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for men-stealers, for liars, for perjured persons, 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.

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, that I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. The grace of our Lord was exceeding abundance with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. This is a faithful faith, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners of whom I am chief.

Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all known suffering for a pattern to them which should hereafter be laid on him to life everlasting. Now unto the King Eternal, Immortal, Invisible, to the only wise God be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen." Good charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before unto 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 shipwrecked, of whom Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme." This letter, written by Paul to Timothy, is full of instructions concerning order in the church of God.

That's the general subject of the epistle, order in the church of God. It's an older Christian, an older servant of the Lord, writing to a younger man and teaching him what he should know in his service for the Lord Jesus. Now, in this first chapter there are four distinct sections.

First of all, in verses one and two, you have Paul's opening greetings. Opening greetings, or sometimes we call it salutations. Then, in verses three through eleven, you will have noticed that there is a charge to Timothy, a charge, instructions to Timothy.

Paul has left Timothy in Ephesus while Paul goes on to Macedonia, and there are certain things he wants Timothy to do, especially silencing false teachers. So, the second section is verses three through eleven, charge to silence false teachers. Then, in verses 12 through 17, Paul bursts into praise to God for his wonderful grace.

Paul never got over the grace of God that would reach down to someone like him and save him. He had been an arch persecutor of the church of God, and yet that day on the road to Damascus, the Lord Jesus revealed himself to Paul, and he was gloriously converted. Then, in verses 18 through 20, you have the charge to Timothy restated.

It's as if Paul has disrupted the charge with his thanksgiving, and now in the last three verses he comes back to the charge with which he began the chapter, and he repeats it again. The charge to Timothy restated. So, we'll go over the chapter with those four sections in mind.

First of all, Paul begins with the opening greeting. He introduces himself as an apostle or a sent one of Jesus Christ. In some of your versions, it will say Christ Jesus there.

So, isn't it the same? Jesus Christ, Christ Jesus. Usually in the New Testament, when the expression Jesus Christ is used, it emphasizes the earthly ministry of the Lord, and when Christ Jesus is used, it emphasizes the Lord Jesus attended and seated at the right hand of God. Now, Paul never knew Jesus here as a man on earth.

He doesn't very often use the expression Jesus Christ. Paul was commissioned by the Lord Jesus in glory, and typically he speaks of him as Christ Jesus. Not always, but typically he speaks with him.

An apostle of Christ Jesus, by the commandment of God our Savior and Lord Jesus Christ to do our hope. Paul wasn't called to the ministry by any man, or even by his own choice, although his own willingness was involved, but Paul was commissioned to the work of God by a divine cap on the shoulder. He could say truly, Christ the Son of God hath sent me to the midnight lands, mine the mighty ordination of the pierced hands.

That's the kind of an ordination he had. We really don't think very much of human ordination ourselves. It's like laying empty hands on an empty head.

It really can't confer any ecclesiastical standing on anyone. Unless God calls a man to the work of God, it's really all in vain. Paul didn't know anything about a human ordination.

He was ordained to the work of God by the mighty, by the pierced hands. Now, these writings of Timothy, my own son in the faith, that could mean that Paul himself had led Timothy to the Lord, or it could mean that Timothy was that child in the faith in the sense that he imitated the Apostle Paul, that he was like Paul. We use the expression sons of Abraham in the bible.

That means people who have, that could mean people who have Abraham's blood flowing in their veins, but it could also mean people who imitate Abraham's faith. All true believers are children of Abraham in the sense that they exercise faith like Abraham, and maybe that's what it means here. The general impression we have is that when Paul first met Timothy, Timothy was already a believer, and so this might just mean that he was a child in the faith to Paul.

Then, Paul wishes him grace, mercy, and peace. If you have the grace, mercy, and peace of God, you have about all the best things that God can give any poor sinner on this side of heaven. And there isn't anything better you could wish for a person than grace, mercy, and peace.

Grace means the unmerited favor of God in all the changing circumstances of life. Mercy means the compassion of God to people who are weak and frail in a world like this, and peace means the tranquility of heart that you can have in a world like ours where everything tends to distract and distract a person. And notice that these three things come from God the Father, and Christ Jesus our Lord.

The Apostle Paul didn't hesitate to put the Lord Jesus Christ and God the Father on the same level. He spoke of them in the same breath. Why? Because he believed they were equal.

That's why, and we do too. We believe that the Godhead in our holy trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, are all three persons of the Godhead equal. And Paul shows that here by saying that these three graces, grace, mercy, and peace, come jointly from God our Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

Now, there's something interesting. Here's an older man, and he's interested in this young man, Timothy, and wants to help him. Every older Christian should be constantly trying to encourage and teach younger Christians.

Really, the elders in the local assembly should be constantly taking younger believers aside and teaching the ways of God and encouraging them on in the faith. Paul did that. The easy thing to do is to take a young believer and just let him grow like a weed in the garden of God, but that's not the best thing, and Paul wasn't that kind of a man.

And in this epistle, you hear the heartbeat of Paul. Paul's going to be passing off the scene. Conditions aren't getting any better, believe me.

They're not getting any better, and his great burden is for the perpetuation of the Christian faith, and for men of conviction and courage will stand up for the truth of God. And he thinks he's found a man like this in Timothy, and so he's pouring himself into Timothy. Who is he doing? Pouring himself into Timothy and telling him how to live for God in a day of darkness and declension.

Now, verses 3 through 11, we have Paul's charge to Timothy. What was the problem? Well, the problem was that some false teachers had come into Ephesus, and they were pushing the law. They were teaching that justification was by law-keeping, and sanctification was by law-keeping as well.

So, Paul says, 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. Now, actually those words down at the end of verse 4, you could sit in there sober. I told you to do this, now do it.

As I besought thee to, now do. Paul was very conscious of what was happening there at Ephesus, and I was thinking this morning how interesting it is. It's funny that Paul didn't decide to stay himself and tackle these false teachers.

He didn't. He trusted this younger fellow to do it. He was willing to let Timothy try his wings and charge into the battle.

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. Does this have any voice for us today? Well, it really does. It really does, because there are always attacks being made on Christian doctrines, and in the day in which we live in some so-called evangelical seminaries and other places, the inerrancy of the Bible is being pushed.

That is the heresy of the Bible. Many so-called evangelicals are teaching today that the Bible contains error. For instance, Dr. Daniel Fuller.

I don't mind naming names, because Paul names names here in this chapter. Dr. Daniel Fuller of the Fuller Theological Seminary says we know the Bible contains error. Jesus said that the mustard seed was the smallest of all seeds.

We know that the mustard seed is not the smallest of all seeds, therefore the Bible contains error. This is a so-called Christian institution. Now, what Mr. Fuller doesn't tell us is if the Bible contains error, where does the error stop and the truth begin? The truth can make that decision, and yet, sad to say, our young people continue to go to a school like that, and generally speaking, the evangelical world people think of it as a true evangelical school.

I consider this to be a frontal attack, not only on the inspiration of the scriptures, but the truthfulness of the Lord Jesus. He's not just attacking the word of God, he's attacking my savior. He's saying my savior said something that wasn't true.

You say, well, what about it? What about the mustard seed? So, give the Lord Jesus credit. He's the son of God come down to this earth. Give him credit for not saying something that would obviously be untrue on the basis.

I can picture the Lord Jesus traveling with his disciples there, and they're going to a marketplace, let's say. This is very common in most countries. If you go to Nazareth today, for instance, they have the open air market, and you go through the little narrow lane, and there's all kinds of stands there, and there are kind of squares built into the stands, and they have different spices in the squares.

And, I can just picture the Lord Jesus coming along and saying, well, mustard seeds are the smallest of all seeds. He could have meant the smallest of all seeds in the market as they were passing by, or the smallest of all seeds that the housewife would have in her own kitchen. But, he doesn't seem to give a scientific discourse on the size of seeds, and to say that the Lord Jesus was guilty of terror, that he was a fallible savior, just takes the ground out from under the whole basis of Christianity.

That's one area. Watch out for it. The December issue of Interest magazine, there was a letter from Berkeley, California, suggesting that inerrancy is a speculation and a conjecture that cannot be proved.

In other words, that the Bible could be fallible. That's one area today I want you to be very much aware of. Another area is with regard to the person of Christ.

I could bring you some shocking things this morning, and read them to you. I haven't done it. When Jesus came down from heaven to this earth, he laid aside his deity, and he'll never take it up again.

And, these things are being taught today by so-called even philosophers. The person of the Lord Jesus is under attack today, his deity and his humanity. Now, in this particular case, it was the law-keepers that were at work.

The greatest heresy, I suppose, or teaching by which more people are going to hell than any other, is the idea that you get to heaven by law-keeping, or by doing the best you can. So, these people were active here in Ephesus, and Paul is saying to Timothy, I've already told you to stay there at Ephesus and charge them that they don't teach this false doctrine, or give heed to fables and endless genealogies which minister question, rather than godly edifying which is in faith. I had a young man in my place the other night, and he was talking most of the night to me about the sources that Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John used for their gospel.

And, I thought of this first. You know, some of these critical scholars of the scripture, they say, well now, Mark used such and such a source when he wrote his gospel, and Matthew used ... the first thing they're saying is that Matthew's sources were more reliable than Mark's, which is, of course, utter nonsense, even if these books were inspired by the Spirit of God. And, you can spend all your life studying the sources that Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and John used for writing their gospel, and all it is is what he calls here questions which ... things which minister questions, rather than godly edifying.

I want to tell you, when you find people whose lives are taken up with those critical views of the scripture, you find people whose lives don't have power for God. Those things don't produce spiritual power, and one of the lessons I want to get from this today is be willing to stand and be counted for the word of God, for the truth of God's word. A lot of people are kind of mealy-mouthed about it today, you know? They use measly words, and I have no use for that, personally.

I want to see men and women, young men and women, who know what they believe, who have convictions about the word of God, and are willing to stand for the truth of God. Now, Paul says in verse five that the end of the commandment ... and here the word commandment ... when you read that word

commandment, you have to think of the ten commandments, but the real meaning there is the end of the charge. He's saying the purpose of the charge, the goal of the charge that I'm giving to you, Timothy, is love out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfaithful.

What's he saying here? He's saying the things that the false teachers are pushing at Ephesus result in questioning and vain jangling. He says the purpose of the charge that I'm giving to you doesn't result in questioning and vain jangling. The goal of that charge is love.

Is that true? Love. The law produces strife. The grace of God produces love.

The end of the charge, the goal of the charge, is love out of a pure heart, of a good conscience, and of faith unfaithful. And he says these false teachers have swerved aside from that from which some, having swerved, are coming aside unto vain jangling. He says desiring to be teachers of the law, understanding neither what they say nor whereof they affirm.

Now, what does he mean by that? He means that God never gave the law as a way of salvation. God never intended that anyone should ever be saved by keeping the law. You say to people today, what's the way to heaven? Oh, just keep the ten commandments.

God never intended that. The law was given to a people who are already sinners, and even if they could have kept the law perfectly from that day onwards, they still wouldn't be saved. Why? Because of their past sins.

God requires that with his past, and even if you could keep the law perfectly from this day forward, it wouldn't save you. What about those past sins they need to be atoned for? God never gave the law as a way of salvation. The ten commandments were never intended to be a stepladder to heaven.

Why did God give the law? Well, this verse tells us. It says, The law is good if a man use it lawfully, and the lawful use of the law is to produce conviction of sin. The lawful use of the law is to show me that I'm a sinner.

That's why that's how it is. Here's how it works. I say to God, I'm not such a bad person.

I've always done good. I've always gone to church. I've done the best I can, you know, and the law says, Thou shalt not covet.

In other words, the law says to me, what has your thought life been like? Because coveting takes place in the mind, and the law says to me, what has your thought life been like, MacDonald? And I begin to shrivel up and die. You see, the law convicts me of sin. It doesn't save me.

It shows me I'm a sinner. It's like a thermometer. You know, you're sick, and you put the thermometer under your tongue, and you leave it there for 20 minutes, and you take it out, 104.

You've got a fever. Well, what do you do, swallow the thermometer to get over the fever? No, you don't do that at all. The thermometer shows you you're sick, but doesn't cure the sickness.

You've got to go somewhere else to get a cure for the sickness. The law shows you you're a sinner, but it doesn't save you. You've got to go to Christ for that.

That's why God gave the law. The law is kind of a straight edge. You know, you wouldn't know a crooked line if you didn't know a straight line, would you? I say to you, what's a crooked line, Peter? It's one that's not straight.

That's right, that's exactly what it is, and the law is that straight line, and I stand next to the law, and I look like that. The law says, I shall love the Lord thy God with all my heart, with all my soul, with all my mind, and with all my strength. It says to me, have you done that, McDonnell? If that's what God requires, I'm lost.

Well, it is what God requires, and I am lost. However, God says, I sent my son to die as a substitute for people who've broken the law, and if you trust in the Savior, I'll save you. And, instead of that, these false teachers are coming in to Ephesus, and they're teaching law keeping.

And, you know, this is really very typical of false cults, false teaching today, and you only have to read the newspapers to know how false cults are proliferating, spreading today, and every one of them put people under law, and put people under bonds, and really the people love it. Young people that have lived permissive lives, have done their own thing, and got pretty sick of it all, and then some of these false gurus come along and have all kinds of harsh regulations on them. The young people love it.

They say, that's what I've always believed is, and they put themselves under this system of law, and that's what the teachers at Ephesus were doing. Now, they forgot that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, and Paul gives a whole catalog of the type of person that the law was given for. Now, the Christian is not under the law, neither for salvation or as a rule of life.

The Christian is dead to the law by the body of Christ. Does that mean he can live the way he wants? No, but it means that he's bound by a stronger cord than the law could ever bind him by, and it is led to the Lord Jesus. Perhaps I could explain it this way.

The law says, this do, and thou shalt live. This fail to do, and thou shalt die. Okay, I failed to do it.

Yes, penalty of death. The Lord Jesus comes, and he says, I died to pay the penalty of the law you broke. I died to pay the penalty of the law.

You trust me as savior, and I'll save you. I trust him as savior. He saved me.

He gave me eternal life. Now, he says to me, go out and live in a way that's consistent with the life of grace. I'm not going to put you under law.

I want you to go out and live consistently as a child of God. That's great. We're not under law, we're under grace.

Does that mean I want to go out and sin? No. When I think of what my sins cost the savior, I hate it. I hate it, and the people in the world today who live the godliest life are the people who have a true sense of the grace of God, of what the Lord Jesus paid to put away their sins.

Not the people who are under law. All the law does is stir up the passions that are already in you. You tell a person, now you can do anything you want, but don't do that.

What do you want to do? The law appeals to the sinful nature in man, and by prohibiting a thing it stirs up the desire to do it. That isn't the way grace is. Grace teaches us to live godly and righteously and justly in

this world, and to hate the thing that nails our savior to the cross, and love is the strongest motive for holiness.

If you really love the Lord Jesus, you won't want to sin. You could pass a law in Hayward today and say, whenever you see a building on fire, you must rush in and rescue somebody in it. You could pass a law like that, but not everybody would obey that law, I'll tell you that.

But I want to tell you, if that house is on fire, and the mother's outside, and the baby, her baby's inside, you don't have to pass any law for her to rush in and save that baby. I'll tell you, that mother will go through fire to save that baby. Love is the motive, and the Christian is bound to the Lord Jesus by the cord of love.

He wants to live a holy life. He wants to do the thing that will please the savior, and so Paul says in verse 11, after listing this list of sinners that the law was made for, according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God which was committed to my trust. Well, that according to means that all I've been saying to you, Timothy, is according to the gospel.

It's in keeping with the gospel that I've preached. I'd like to mention here in verse 11, it says in King James, the glorious gospel of the blessed God. If some of you have a modern version of the Bible, it might say the gospel of the glory.

Does it? Anybody have that? The gospel of the glory. And, you know, that's beautiful. The gospel of the glory of the blessed God.

The gospel of the glory, yes. What it really means is, it doesn't mean just that the gospel is glorious. It is, but it's the good news of the glory of God.

You know, I often feel that if we could, if we as servants of the Lord, could present the Lord Jesus in all his glory, people think of him as the man of Galilee, or the carpenter of Nazareth. They think of him in his humiliation. They think of him hanging on a criminal's cross.

But, if I could present to you today the glory of the Lord Jesus, exalted at the right hand of God today, a prince and a savior, you'd be speechless. You really would. If I could present him in all his magnificence, in all his majesty, in all his greatness, in all the radiance of his person there at the right hand of God, I'll tell you you wouldn't be able to utter a word.

That's what the gospel is. The gospel is the gospel, the good news of the glory of the blessed God. Then, in verses 12 through 17, Paul bursts into thank-giving.

Whenever he thinks of the gospel, he thinks of the wonder that he was ever saved, and those of us today who are Christians here, I'm sure this goes to our minds all around. I'll tell you, when I think of my salvation, I just don't understand it. I don't understand why God saved me.

I have unsaved relatives. Why did he save me, and am I saved? I don't understand. And, it makes me a worshiper.

It really makes me a worshiper, that I'll be in heaven with Jesus, the Lamb of God, for all eternity. When I take a lesson from this, verses 12 through 17, and I think it should go with us through the year, a Christian should never be a complainer. A Christian should never be a murmurer.

Our hearts should be overflowing with thanksgiving to God all the time, and any time we tend to get discouraged, we should just thank God we're not in hell, because that's where we ought to be. Is that right? It really is. You know, people in the world are chronic complainers.

We've had a drought for almost three years, and it starts to rain, and what do people do? They complain. I said to a man the other day something about it. He said, yeah, I just wish it didn't complain, and San Lorenzo, he said, I have to work outside.

Just rain up in the mountains near the reservoirs, you know. Complain. And, you know, that's what really irritated God, if I can use that expression.

Back in the old testament, God led the children of Israel through the wilderness for 40 years. He provided manna. He provided miraculous food for them.

There was no safe way or lucky. There was no supermarket in all that wilderness, and they never went hungry. There were no gallon can shoe stores, either, and their shoes never wore out.

Their shoes never wore out. And what did they do? They complained. They said, if we could only have some of those cucumbers, and melons, and garlic, and leeks, and onions from Egypt.

That's what they said. Really? They were eating angel food, the manna, and all they could do was complain. God's marvelous care for them didn't seem to make any difference.

And, you know, we're just like that today, too. He said, yeah, but what's he done for me lately? Complaining is really a sin, and I think it's high time that we as Christians, and here on the first day of the year to be a very good resolution to make, that we're going to be grateful Christians. When I look back over my life, I often think of how extraordinarily happy I've been.

You know, that if I could have sat down and planned my life the way I would have wanted it, I couldn't have done as well as the Lord has done. And I look back on my life, and the way some of the things at the time they happened, not this, but I look back and I think, Jesus was leading the way. He was, too.

He really was. And if I could plan my life, if I could have it to live over, and have my own church, I'd want it just the way he chose it for me. Just the way he chose.

What's Paul is doing here? Paul comes to the word gospel, and when he's talking to Timothy, he comes to the word gospel, and his mind goes off. I was going to say the tangent, but it's not really a tangent. His mind just goes on.

Oh, the gospel! He said, I am saved by the grace of God, and I was an arch-persecutor of the church. I was a blasphemmer. I hailed the Christians into prison, into death, and I was injurious.

And he said, God looked down, and he had mercy on me. And you'll never hear the end of this. That's what he was saying here.

Look, but I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry. What does that mean? It simply means he calls me to serve him. The ministry there, there's nothing official about the ministry there.

The word just means service. People, all they can see when they come to that is stained glass windows and ecclesiastical garments, and all that has nothing to do with that at all. All Paul is saying, this means that God ever called me to serve him, but I should ever be privileged to serve him.

I who persecuted the church of God. And he says that, verse 13, who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious, but I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly and unbelief. Paul thought when he was trying to kill off the Christians that he was doing the will of God.

After all, they were a threat to his mother's religion, and he thought he was doing God's service in killing them. He did it ignorantly and unbelief, and he says the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundance with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. The grace of our Lord was exceeding abundance.

You know what that exceeding abundance means? It means like the overflowing of the banks of the river. Beautiful, isn't it? The grace of God comes flowing down to the apostle Paul, and just overflows its banks, and it wasn't ineffective because it resulted in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. This is what took place in Paul's life.

First of all, he looked often faith to the Lord Jesus and trusted him as Savior, and then his heart overflowed with love to Christ and love to his fellow men as well. And then Paul breaks out into this lovely statement of the gospel. He says this is a faithful faith worthy of all acceptation that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners of whom I am chief.

Just think of it. Christ Jesus, the God man, came into the world. Well, that's what we were thinking about last week in a special way.

Christmas came into the world to save, not to condemn, to save. To save what kind of people? To save sinners of whom I am chief. Was Paul the chief of sinners? Well, he said he was.

I wish he'd move over on the bench and let some of the rest of us sit down beside him there. The way I explain this, of whom I am chief, he didn't do some of the things that some other men in history have done. Some other men in history have done a lot worse things than he did.

I believe that the closer you are to Christ, the more you're aware of your own worthlessness. But I think this is a testimony of a man who's living in fellowship with God. Let me say that again.

The closer I am to the Lord Jesus, the more I'm aware of my own nothingness. You know, the stars shine at night, but when the sun comes out you don't see the stars. Then I might look very good in my own eyes, you know, in the dark, but when the sun of the grace of God comes shining, I don't see myself.

I see only Jesus. They saw no man but Jesus only. And then he says in verse 16, Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy that in me first Christ Jesus might show forth all longsuffering for a pattern to them which should after believe the life everlasting.

What Paul is saying is God reached down and says, Paul, I just want you to be a patterned saint. I want you to be exhibit A of what the longsuffering of God can do in a person's life. It's nice, isn't it? And so it was that, and we look back today, and we think of how God can take a nice sinner in blasphemy, and injurious, and all the rest, and transform, and make him exhibit A in the church of Jesus Christ.

That's what he did. There's still hope. And then he breaks down into that lovely benediction, that lovely verse 17, Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, the honor and glory forever and ever.

What the Lord Jesus did in the life of Paul made him a worshiper. It should make us worshipers, too, if we've tasted of his grace. And then he finally restates his charge to Timothy in verses 18 through 20, and with his eyes closed.

First of all, a reminder of his call to Christian service. So, the first part of verse 18, Paul takes him back to the time when he was called to Christian service. Timothy, verse 18a, a reminder of his call to Christian service.

Then a statement of the charge, a statement of the charge, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare, holding faith and a good conscience. That's what he's to do. And then a warning as to the peril of departure, which some, having put away concerning faith, have made shipwreck.

And he mentions these two men, Hymenaeus and Alexander, who had become false teachers, and Paul says, I've delivered them over to Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme. I think that means they were excommunicated from the local church, and when a man is excommunicated from the local church, he's put into Satan's territory. He becomes Satan's prey.

Satan can attack him through sickness, and even through death, as we read in other portions of the word of God. Well, here is a chapter from one of Paul's letters that breathes with love and interest in this young servant of the Lord, but not only so, it breathes with messages for us today living in the 20th century. Shall we look to God in closing prayer? Father, we just thank you for your precious word.

We think of the attacks that are being made upon it today. We pray, Lord, that we might be simple believers, that we might come to this word in faith, believing that you've said it, and that because you've said it, it's true, it contains no error. We think of what this word has done in our own lives, Lord, and we're often reminded that the one who has felt the force of it is not apt to deny the source of it.

We just pray, Lord, that during the year ahead this word might explode in our hearts and lives, that those of us who are believers might really have a passion to obey the word of God, whatever the cost might be. We pray for any who do not know the Savior, starting out on another year on the road to eternity. Father, we pray that any such might see a vision of the glory of the Lord Jesus, and might bow at his feet and accept him as Lord and Savior.

We ask you, giving thanks in his worthy and precious name. Amen.

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