



1 Timothy

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Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the commandment of God our Savior and the Lord Jesus Christ, our hope, 1 Timothy 1:1

Welcome to the book of 1 Timothy! It is one of the three “pastoral epistles,” and it is comprised of 113 verses. Therefore, it will take us (one day at a time, just as each day starts anew at the sunrise) just under four months to analyze it. It is hoped that you will be blessed as each verse brings marvelous insights into this beautiful epistle from the mind of God and through the hand of Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles.

As we will see, there are a couple of reasons why Paul wrote this letter to his beloved protegee Timothy. The letter is intended to send encouragement to Timothy, and to build him up in his position as a leader in the church. It is also written to warn him about the false doctrines and false teachers who were already steadily working within the church to cause confusion and division.

He begins by stating his name and title – “Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ.” Because of this, it shows that this letter is more than a simple personal letter meant for Timothy to read and cherish as his own keepsake. Instead, it is intended to be maintained as an authoritative letter of doctrine for the church at all times.

The title "apostle" in relation to Christ Jesus is something which is incorrectly applied in the church today. True apostles are only those who personally witnessed His work. Paul was called as an exception to this because he only came to know Christ after His ascension. He specifically notes this calling in 1 Corinthians 15:8. The apostolic age ended with the completion of the

Bible and the death of the last apostle. Being an apostle of the Lord, then, had a special significance and only came about by a specific calling by Christ himself.

After stating his official title, he next says, “by the commandment of God.” At other times, he says, “by the will of God.” The word translated as “commandment” here is as “an order that arranges things so they build on each other to achieve the needed goal” (HELPS Word Studies). God ordained that Paul would be an apostle in order to assure that His goals of the church age would be properly met. This is an important thought for this pastoral epistle. It is showing that Paul’s words, despite being personally addressed to Timothy, are intended for the proper functioning of the church which had come into existence. Pastors are to read these letters and hold fast to the doctrine which is contained in them.

This “commandment of God,” however, is more fully expressed with the added words, “our Savior.” This designation when ascribed to God by Paul is unique to the pastoral epistles. Jude also uses it in his short letter as well. It is a note that God has saved us through Christ Jesus. Both can be termed Savior, because God is the Author of salvation, and Christ (being fully God) is the means by which salvation is effected.

He then states that the command for his apostleship was not just from “God our Savior” but also from “the Lord Jesus Christ, our hope.” Acts 9 gives the details of Paul’s commission directly from the Lord Jesus. That commission is then stated by Paul in Galatians 1:11, 12 as well. The “hope” that Paul speaks of which is found in Christ Jesus is “the hope of glory” which is noted in Colossians 1:27. It is through the work of Christ, and through that alone, that we have a hope of future glory, dwelling in the presence of God. This hope is found in Christ, and it is one which has sustained the church for 2000 years now.

The stating of this about Christ Jesus shows that Jesus is, in fact, God. If he were a mere man, he could not be our “hope” in the eternal sense. But He is our hope. It is in Him that we place our confidence, something that would be blasphemous to do in anything, or anyone, less than God Himself.

Life application: The pastoral epistles are intended for proper doctrine within the church, and for the selecting, and guidance, of leaders within the church, but they are also to be studied and understood by all in the church. Church members are to be familiar with them so that they can rightly evaluate if a pastor, deacon, or teacher is living and teaching in accord with the word of God. Each individual should be familiar with these letters, and they should refer to them from time to time to keep the content fresh in their minds.