

1 Timothy Chapter 1 C

From time to time you will run into someone who seems to ENJOY confrontation.

It almost appears that they have prepared an argument for just about ANY topic of conversation that comes within their hearing. How do you deal with them?

- I look at these individuals as TOOLS, God uses them in our lives to develop the divine attributes of patience, gentleness, kindness LOOOO suffering

From what I read in Paul's Epistles Timothy was NOT one of these individuals. He seemed to be somewhat shy, even timid:

IN his second letter Paul encouraged Timothy to use the gifts that God gave him:

2Ti 1: 6 **For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands, 7 for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.**

- The word that Paul uses for "FEAR" speaks of cowardice or timidity.

Like many of you I DON'T LIKE confrontation but I have learned over the years that there are times when love is best expressed through confrontation.

- I will confront my grandson when he is riding his bicycle toward the street.
- I will boldly confront a person who poses a threat to my family or the church.

Those of us who avoid confrontation understand how difficult it must have been when Paul URGED Timothy to "command" certain individuals not to teach false doctrine.

- Those who shy away from confrontation don't usually COMMAND others very well.

If all this talk of confronting bad doctrine makes you uncomfortable, I hate to break it to you we are going to face this frequently as we finish our study of the New Testament.

Paul's letters to the churches at Galatia, Corinth, Colossi as well as his letters to Timothy and Titus, ALL contain some form of confrontation or correction.

The Epistles of Peter, John and Jude also confront erroneous teachings in the church.

- Actually, Peter uses some very colorful speech in his Second Epistle when he confronts false teachers

2 Peter 2: 12 **But these, like irrational animals, creatures of instinct, born to be caught and destroyed, blaspheming about matters of which they are ignorant, will also be destroyed in their destruction, 13 suffering wrong as the wage for their wrongdoing. They count it pleasure to revel in the daytime. They are blots and blemishes, reveling in their deceptions, while they feast with you. 14 They have eyes full of adultery, insatiable for sin. They entice unsteady souls. They have hearts trained in greed. Accursed children! 15 Forsaking the right way, they have gone astray. They have followed the way of Balaam, the son of Beor, who loved gain from wrongdoing,**

- Peter's zeal for the Bride of Christ is evident. He stands with boldness to protect the one for whom Christ bled and died.

False doctrine is like a poison that threatens to bring sickness and death into a healthy body of believers.

- Because the Gospel of Jesus Christ is the Good News of God's GRACE, perversions of the Gospel will always distort the grace of God.

As we consider Paul's exhortation to Timothy this morning WATCH for these 3 points

1. The MODE of False Teaching
2. The MOTIVE of False Teachers
3. The MEASURING of the Law.

False teachers are like blind archers shooting at a target. They are totally blind to the grace of God. Their doctrines are like arrows that consistently MISS THE MARK.

- Some arrows that FALL SHORT of the Gospel of GRACE. They get stuck in the mire of LAW and human effort.
- Some arrows FLY FAR BEYOND the Gospel of GRACE enter into the extremes of LICENSE. Let me explain

In the Mire of LAW we find False Teachers who are discontent with salvation that is by grace alone, through faith alone in Christ alone, for the glory of God alone.

- IN their blindness they insist upon some level of human effort as a requirement for salvation.
- They may require: Obedience to the Mosaic Law, Circumcision, Sabbath observances ritualistic rites and obedience to various traditions of men.
- Legalism makes room for pride and boasting among those who meticulously observe the rules and rituals.
 - Paul confronted this legalistic error in the church at Galatia.

Galatians 3:1 **O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? It was before your eyes that Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified.** 2 **Let me ask you only this: Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by hearing with faith?** 3 **Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?**

- Any teaching that insists upon legalistic observances in place of or in combination with faith for salvation is a false Gospel.
- That is the Mire of Law. Now let's consider the other extreme, the excesses of License.

In the excesses of LICENSE - Some false teachers promoted a marked separation between the inner man and outer man (body and soul) the body along with all physical matter was inherently evil BUT the spirit realm along with the inner man was inherently good.

- In my inner man I could possess the knowledge of God while my outer man was free to live in the lusts of the flesh without penalty.
- Today we would consider these people to be gross hypocrites. They say that they possess the mysteries of godliness but they live like Hugh Hefner.

Jude confronted this kind of excess in his Epistle.

Jude 1:4 For certain people have crept in unnoticed who long ago were designated for this condemnation, ungodly people, who pervert the grace of our God into sensuality and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.

- Because you have been saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ it doesn't matter how you live. Since all of your sins are paid for you might as well run up the bill.

Back in Ephesus (where Timothy was sent by Paul) the false teachers were promoting some form of mystic Jewish legalism.

Certain persons at Ephesus had SWERVED from Sound Doctrine that results in *“Love that springs from a pure heart, a good conscience and sincere faith.”*

- They had gotten off course (SWERVED - Lit. missed the mark.) Their arrows were falling short of grace. They were stuck in the mire of legalism.

1 Timothy 1: 7 *desiring to be teachers of the law, without understanding either what they are saying or the things about which they make confident assertions.* 8 *Now we know that the law is good, if one uses it lawfully,*

- Here Paul exposes the MOTIVE OF TEACHERS: PRIDE

Verse 7, They desired to be teachers of the law.

- These individuals wanted the prestige, position and the prominence that was afforded Rabbis in Jewish culture. Of course they wanted financial rewards as well.
- Jesus warned his disciples about this kind of PRIDE:

Matthew 23: 5 (speaking of the Scribes and Pharisees) *They do all their deeds to be seen by others. For they make their phylacteries broad and their fringes long, 6 and they love the place of honor at feasts and the best seats in the synagogues 7 and greetings in the marketplaces and being called rabbi by others. 8 But you are not to be called rabbi, for you have one teacher, and you are all brothers.*

- Outward or legalistic righteousness always sets the teacher apart from the student promoting spiritual pride and hypocritical faith.
- Jesus forbid such a separation among his followers. In Christ we are ALL brothers and sisters, partakers of the same grace, adopted into the same family, filled with the same Spirit.

SO we see that the false teachers in Ephesus were misrepresenting the Law of Moses. What should we do about that? Get rid of the Law?

- Because WE have a tendency to throw the baby out with the bath water, because our spiritual pendulum swings from one extreme to another, Paul assures Timothy that the Law is GOOD and there is a rightful place for the LAW in the work of the Gospel.

1 Timothy 1: 8 *Now we know that the law is good, if one uses it lawfully,*

- There is nothing WRONG with the Law. The Law is GOOD!

Romans 7: 12 *So the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good.*

- The condition in which the Law is good is *“IF ONE USES IT LAWFULLY.”*

A kitchen knife is a good thing when it is used properly. When I grab it out of the drawer and use it as a screw driver because it is closer than my tool box I am not using the knife for its proper purpose and I generally damage something (*like my fingers*)

- That brings up the question, “How does one use the Law, Lawfully?”
- Paul answers that question for Timothy (and us.)

1 Timothy 1: 9 **understanding this, that the law is not laid down for the just but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who strike their fathers and mothers, for murderers,**

10 **the sexually immoral, men who practice homosexuality, enslavers, liars, perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine, 11 in accordance with the glorious gospel of the blessed God with which I have been entrusted.**

- The Law is NOT laid down for the just – it was given to sinners to EXPOSE their sinfulness.

Romans 7:7B, **Yet if it had not been for the law, I would not have known sin. I would not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said, “You shall not covet.”**

- In telling me, “*I should not covet*” my covetous thoughts are illuminated, brought to the forefront and exposed.
- God’s written LAW actually confirms the law that is written on my heart.
- (DEEP INSIDE) I know that the passions and desires that I struggle with are wrong because I hide them from others. (I cover them up) BUT when I hear the commandment of God I have no excuse.
- My sin is confirmed by God’s LAW.
- I can either REPENT and look to Christ, believing that he is the one and only atoning sacrifice for my sin.
- OR I can SUPPRESS the truth, Rationalize away my feelings: My guilt must come from society. I have been programmed to think that these desires are wrong....

So you could say that the LAW functions as a STANDARD OF MEASUREMENT. It is the YARDSTICK by which God measures the holiness of men.

- Because there is NONE holy, no one can measure up to God’s righteous standard.

Understand this: The Law is ONLY a measuring stick it has NO ABILITY to make anyone holy, it can only SHOW that you are NOT.

Romans 3:20 **For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.**

- Oh how sharp is the double edged sword of God’s Word when it brings the conviction of sin to the soul whom God has awakened from slumber.
- Earlier I told you that I DON’T LIKE CONFRONTATION. Bringing the “**Knowledge of Sin**” the Law brings confrontation to my INNER MAN.

When God says: Exodus 20:3 **“You shall have no other gods before me.”**

- My heart recalls ALL of the times when I have gladly yet foolishly put myself, my pleasures, my desires before him.
- My list of priorities always includes God but he rarely makes it to the top of the list.

- I intend on doing devotions (BUT I sleep in) I can pray in the car (traffic – angry) I’ll read my Bible tonight.. (I open it up and fall asleep)

Exodus 20:7 “You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain,”

- There I am in traffic again – taking the name of the Lord in vain...
- How many times have our lips spoken empty words defiling the name of our holy and loving God?

Exodus 20: 8 “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. 9 Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, 10 but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God.

- I am well aware that work rules my life and that worship and quiet devotion is too easily set aside for all of the things that simply need to be done.
- I find it HARD to REST in the finished work of Christ.. When I fall into sin I always feel a need to WORK my way back to His good Grace.

Exodus 20: 17 “You shall not covet your neighbor’s house; you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, (car, motorcycle) or anything that is your neighbor’s.”

- I believe that God saved this 10th commandment for last because it is the nail in all of our coffins.
- The iPhone 4 gives way to the iPhone 5 and suddenly I AM DISCONTENT with that which was such a great blessing just 12 months ago.
- Your best girlfriend meets a handsome Christian man who turns out to be a dream come true and the man of your dreams stopped paying attention to you years ago.
- We are discontented with God’s provision and find ourselves longing for something or someone better.....

The Law reveals layer upon layer of sin like the peeling of an onion, where are we to turn?

Ephesians 2:4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— 6 and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, 7 so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. 8 For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, 9 not a result of works, so that no one may boast. 10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.