

Introduction to 1 Timothy

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Bible Text: 1 Timothy 1:1-2
Preached on: Sunday, January 20, 2019

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Well, grab your Bibles and go to 1 Timothy, the first of three of what the theologians and scholars through the ages have called the pastoral epistles or the pastoral letters. These are letters the Apostle Paul wrote to different men who were his understudies in ministry, men he was discipling to take over the churches, and that comprises 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy and Titus, and we'll, of course, be looking at 1 Timothy to kick off with. We'll call this the introduction to 1 Timothy in this series I'm entitling "Beautifying the Bride: Her fashion and her function." The Bible speaks of the church as the wife of the Lamb, his bride, and yet we have this awesome responsibility to be instruments in God's hands to build the church and function as the local church so that we are doing church his way so that the bride is properly adorned. Her structure, her order, I use the word her fashion and her function are pleasing to him and in line with him in his divine wisdom. Look, we do not, we do not have the liberty to function in Christ's church the way we think it ought to function or according to the fancies and the fads of the world or to do things that make the culture like us better.

Look, it's not our bride. I don't like it if you mess with my bride, what do you think Jesus thinks when these preachers mess with his bride? We're under divine edict to function so that we are even now in this world beautifying God's body, his church, by plying his wisdom into how we order ourselves and to how we function together and that's what this pastoral epistles are mainly about, Paul instructing these younger ministers in how to lead and order and deal with issues in the church.

So just to kick off, verses 1 and 2 of 1 Timothy 1.

1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus according to the commandment of God our Savior, and of Christ Jesus, who is our hope, 2 To Timothy, my true child in the faith: Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

Now we'll get to the actual unfolding of the exposition next week, Lord willing, but today let's introduce this book of the Bible.

First of all, the human author. Obviously God's Holy Spirit is the true author that God superintended through men what he wanted to become his word, and here God is using

the Apostle Paul to write this word. One scholar said the Apostle Paul is the greatest theologian ever possessed by the church, but I really want to throw this out this morning and this comes out in my preaching a lot, and that is there is far too great a disjointedness in Christendom and in the way we view things as far as the disciplines of the Christian faith. Paul was a great theologian but only to the end that Paul was a great evangelist and only to the end that Paul was great church-planter and a great church-revitalizer. Those always go together. Theology is for the church and the church is for the glory of God. We should not say, "Well, this guy, he studies theology. Now he's not much of a pastor or he's not much of an evangelist, he's a theologian. Over here you have these other guys and they're pastors." Well, I struggle with that greatly because the New Testament gives us no such thing. The great theologian of the church was the great pastor, church-planter of the church, Paul. If you are studying theology and it doesn't cause you to have a passion for evangelism and the church and the church being planted and built up and true to God, then you are terribly disjointed and in error. Paul, this great theologian but this great missionary church-planter and church-revitalizer, he's the author.

I just in my study meditating on this, jotted down three things about Paul's ministry and you can pretty much put everything Paul did under these three headings. First of all, he preached the word. I mean, everywhere. Paul didn't have this approach and that approach, he didn't have, "Well, when I'm with these kind of people, I'll do it this way, and when I'm with this kind of demographic, well, I'll change my method and do it that way." Paul knew one method and one method only, "I'm not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ for it is the power of God unto salvation to all who believe, to the Jew first," that's one cultural ethnic group, "and to the Gentile," that's another culture or ethnic group. Don't listen to these guys today, and I know some of them are in the Reformed camp and some of them are people we like to read and they are helpful, but when they begin to tell us we've got to reach this ethnic group and that ethnic group and this minority and that minority and we've go to do this, this. No, we do it just the way Paul did it, we preach the word. Paul told the Ephesian elders right before he left, "I did not shrink from declaring to you everything that was beneficial for you to know. I declared, in effect, the whole counsel of God. I preached God's word to you."

So he preached the word of God. He preached it in season and out of season. He was faithful. That was his method. Also, he planted and strengthened churches. He planted and strengthened churches. If you look at Anchored in Truth missions, you'll say, "Boy, y'all don't do much. Y'all just pretty much do one thing, you preach the word and plant churches and help revitalize churches to preach the word some more to plant more churches and revitalize. That's all." Because that's all I find in the New Testament. I can't find anything else. That's the only method I find in the Scripture. There may be 1,001 other good things to do in this world, there may be a 1,001 good things to do in ministry but there's one thing you must do to have a biblical ministry and that's immerse your heart and your energies in the preaching of the word, the planting of churches, and the building up of churches, and trust me, that is a lifetime full-time job. You never get done with that.

Now I have sympathy and I want to be balanced here because I know there are good brothers and sisters who find themselves in very very weak congregations and they find very weak fellowship, spiritually speaking, in their local churches and they find other group people to meet with in order to get the kind of vital spiritual fellowship that they need. I understand that and I'm not condemning that, I just think it's a shame that the church is not being the church in those cases, and that was my passion approaching four decades ago when God saved me was, "Why don't we just let the church be the church and we won't need all these other ministries. If the church is really the church, the other ministries may be fine but they're not essential." Paul preached the word, Paul planted and strengthened churches, and then Paul trained future leaders for the churches and that's what we see as he writes here to Timothy.

So the pastoral epistles, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, and then Titus, they give us keen insights into Paul's investment into the lives of young ministers. I'm so thankful that through Anchored in Truth ministries, I shouldn't say through it, it actually developed because of the requests we began to receive from primarily younger preachers across the country and across the world as they would say, "Would you please mentor us? Would you please let us be connected to your church. We want to learn what you guys have learned." So Anchored in Truth missions kind of developed out of their requests and I was thinking how many Timothys God has given me, several out of our own congregation. By the way, I'm praying that as preaching through this book we're going to see several more. I'm asking God to give us several more young men to surrender to Gospel ministry as we go through this. But so many of my Timothys came from other places and with the internet and different things, there's a way you can mentor and equip guys without being hands-on with them in a local church. Now that's the best thing, to have them right there with you, but some of these guys just can't be here. Thank God he gives us, and I say us because I've always included you. This isn't Jeff's ministry on the side, this is our ministry together, because if you're not living out the reality of it, I'm just a hollow noise. It's got to be the truth proclaimed and the truth embodied by us for it to have the proper impact.

The human author, the Apostle Paul. The date about 63 or 64 AD. This was likely written after Paul's first imprisonment and before his second imprisonment. The setting, well, he likely is writing this from Philippi or some other Macedonian province. By this time, Paul is older. He's suffered much in the Gospel ministry. As I said, he's in between two imprisonments as he writes this letter and he's writing it, of course, to Timothy.

Let's talk for just a moment about Timothy. Timothy was a young man who was converted under Paul's ministry. He calls Timothy his true child in the faith and Timothy has served with Paul, alongside Paul for many years and he was Paul's associate, but now Timothy has been assigned to stay in Ephesus and minister to the local church in Ephesus, and so Paul writes this letter to Timothy as he's overseeing the church in Ephesus, to guide him and to give him understanding of how the church is to function.

Now continue in the setting, let's talk about Ephesus. It would be hard to describe a more wicked city than ancient Ephesus. The citizens of Ephesus worshiped an idol that stood in the center of their city, this idol was called Diana or Artemis. It was a goddess of fertility.

She stood 52 feet tall and she was grotesque, and practically all the people worshiped her, and to encourage Diana to bless your crops and your livestock with fertility, the men would come to this idol temple and they would commit lewd sex acts with the temple prostitutes. I believe I'm correct in saying there were usually thousands of them and that was the centerpiece of the city.

Isn't it interesting how nothing changes? This was 2,000 years ago and you find today as countries forsake God, everything tends to be centered on human sexuality and the perversions of it. That's ancient Ephesus. I mean, buddy, they did it all. Is it not bizarre, is it not base and degrading, is it not far beneath the dignity of being made in the image of God that the United States of America has come to the place where a good percentage of our people define their reality and their whole lives by their sexual lust and the perversions of it therein?

Well, so this is the kind of city this little church has been started up in. This is where Timothy is. But even with all that wickedness, Paul preached the Gospel there and a number came to true faith in Jesus Christ and they're growing in Christ, the church is coming along, but as always is the case, false doctrine and false teachers begin to creep in and so Paul is going to tell Timothy, "You stay behind and straighten some of this false teaching out." Now understand something: when false teaching comes into the church, it always looks good, it always sounds good, it always has some Jesus in it and some Scripture in it and you think, "Wow, that sounds good. That sounds good. That sounds like that would be wise," and that's why God gives elders and preaching pastors to the church to identify and continually, and I mean continually combat the encroachments of error and false doctrine that's ever-creeping into the church. Well, it was creeping into Ephesus and that's one of Paul's primary reasons for letting Timothy stay there. So Paul writes this letter to instruct Timothy in that task of confuting and removing false doctrine back out of the church and among a number of interesting things.

Now Timothy is young and this is his first full-time assignment, best we can discern, and he's inexperienced at least in doing this by himself, and he has a lot of insecurities. He has some difficulties. He's sort of timid. He's young and we do know from the text that some of the men were overlooking him and not respecting him because of his youthfulness. So he has a number of things that are going on that make this pastorate quite difficult. Timothy, himself, is distinguished for his earnestness. He's distinguished for his simplicity. He has a deep consideration for others. He's a devout and a spiritual young man and he's proven over the years a most loyal and faithful serving companion of the Apostle Paul.

Now the Bible tells us that in Timothy's earlier years, he was disciplined by a godly mother named Eunice and a godly grandmother named Lois. They devoted themselves to teaching Timothy the Scriptures. We know from the history of the era that it's highly unlikely that this Jewish mother and grandmother who had this boy Timothy in their home, now his dad was a Greek, a non-believer, but anyway, Lois and Eunice, the mother and grandmother, teach him the Bible and primarily because there's no formal Jewish synagogue in their area. If they don't teach the Bible there, there's no Bible teaching, but

the Bible points out that Timothy was thoroughly taught the Scriptures from his early days by his mom and by his grandmother.

It's quite certain that during Paul, I think you touched on the edge of it in your small group lesson today, that as Paul traveled from Iconium, then to Derby and to Lystra, that was the region Lois and Eunice and Timothy lived in, and they undoubtedly went together to hear Paul's preaching there for ever how many months or years that he preached in that region.

Now, so Paul writes this letter, no doubt, to encourage Timothy. Again, he's got the kind of personality where he kind of would hold back, he would sort of defer to others, quite different than Paul, but he writes to encourage him and to embolden him as he faces these difficulties in the church. So we have the author, the Apostle Paul. We have the date about 63 AD. We have the setting, Timothy, the young understudy, a wicked city of Ephesus that he's overseeing, Paul's writing to guide him, to encourage him, to embolden him.

Now the uniqueness of this book. There are a lot of things here. First of all, this is just one of four books in the New Testament that's addressed to a person. You have 1 & 2 Timothy addressed to a person, you have Titus addressed to a person, and then the book of Philemon. That makes it unique.

Also it's unique in that we see a whole lot more of the personal side of the Apostle Paul as he writes this letter to Timothy because he's writing this to his dear, close friend and his son in the faith. We note that it's a close and tender relationship. It was meshing of two lives together and you have two very different personalities, you have the bold and assertive Paul, and you have the rather sheepish and more humble in spirit and more, "I'm fine just being seen and not heard," Timothy.

Thirdly, it's unique because it contains many quotes that we often throw around in the church. For example, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all." That's in the pastoral epistles. "The love of money is the root of all sorts of evil." That's in the pastoral epistles. "I know whom I have believed in and am persuaded that He's able to keep that which I've committed unto Him against that day." That's in the pastoral epistles. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God." That's in the pastoral epistles. "Be instant in season and out of season." That's in the pastoral epistles. "To the pure all things are pure." And one that some of the brethren seem to want to cling to today more than they used to, "Take a little wine for thy stomach's sake." That's in the pastoral epistles.

Another unique thing is that it contains a wealth of practical instruction for church life. In 1 Timothy 3:14-15 Paul writes to Timothy and he says, "I am writing these things to you, hoping to come to you before long; but in case I am delayed, I write so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth." I'm writing so you guys know how to function as a church because I may not get there to do it myself.

So we're going to see a lot of things. In particular, there are guidelines on public worship. There are certainly thorough qualifications and guidelines on church leadership in the church, including elders and deacons. There are guidelines here on a pastor's personal and public life. There are guidelines here on how to deal with sin in the church. He deals with the role of women in the church, that's become a new hot topic as some among us have jumped on this bandwagon of empowering women and they don't really define what that means and I want to say I'm all for empowering anybody the Bible wants to empower in the way the Bible wants to empower them, but don't throw phrases out that just have this broad generic understanding to a pagan culture. So Paul gets down to, "Well, here's the role of women in the church." We'll look at that in a few weeks. He deals specifically with the care of widows in the church. He deals with how to view and use money. And of course, as always, he lays out again the great importance of sound doctrine.

For you men, you heads of the households, can I implore you again as your pastor: be discerning and mature men. Everything that sounds sound is not sound and that's part of what Paul and Timothy are dealing with here, is men would come in with what seemed like sound teaching but it always had a little spin or a twist on it that made it unsound. You've got to be careful with everybody that throws around the name of Jesus and throws around so-and-so many were saved, and this Scripture and that Scripture. You've got to make sure you know what sound doctrine is and how it's to function.

We do know this book is the true word of God not only to Timothy but to ministers in churches of all the ages. It was written to encourage us in church life and to edify us on church life.

The purpose. The purpose of 1 Timothy is to provide the local church of all the ages with God's divine plan for her fashion, the way she's ordered and structured, and her function, what she does. I use those words because it evokes more of a picture of a bride. We think of her fashion and her function because that's the image God wants us to see. As a matter of fact, on your screen is Revelation 21:9, "one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and spoke with me, saying, 'Come here, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.'" Who is that? It's the church in her final purified, glorified state. Now we're not together like that right now, right now we're in these local churches all over the place. As a matter of fact, when you see the original Greek word "ekklesia" or translated "church," almost every time it's in the Bible it refers to a local visible congregation of believers. We can't really relate to this total glorified bride of Christ that's one day going to be unveiled and that's what we're talking about here, but we can relate to our part of the bride, our local church, and make sure we are beautifying her by biblically looking to her fashion and her function.

Look at the glories and I believe these things are both figurative and literal. I can't explain all that, there are mysteries in Revelation, but in context of the church, this bride of Christ, the church being revealed in the last times, Revelation 21:11, "having the glory of God." Oh, one day there is going to be the purging away of everything that's contrary to the great purity and holiness of God, purged away from every single one of us

individually and purged away from all of us collectively as the bride of Christ. God's glory will radiate in and through all of us.

He builds on the glory and the beauty of this, "Her brilliance was like a very costly stone, as a stone of crystal-clear jasper." Revelation 21:18-21, "The material of the wall," it's talking about a city but the city represents the church, "The material of the wall was jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass. The foundation stones of the city wall were adorned," notice that's the word you would use in adorning a bride for her wedding day, "they were adorned with every kind of precious stone. The first foundation stone was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, chalcedony; the fourth, emerald; the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, topaz; the tenth, chrysoprase; the eleventh, jacinth; the twelfth, amethyst." The beauty, the wonder, the glory of the church. This is the wife, the bride of the Lamb. Our joy and our heart's desire should be to be the instrument in God's hand that we fashion his bride, the church, and we function as his bride, the church, so that it honors him and pleases him, reflects him to the world and, therefore, brings him the glory he deserves.

Christianity is not you getting with four or five ladies in a Bible study. It's not you getting with four or five men in a Bible study and y'all being sold out to God. Christianity is all of us fighting and working and loving and encouraging and reproving and disciplining and teaching and rebuking and preaching the word so that we can all be Christ's bride to the fullest extent possible so that we show his bride in the beauty he's given her both on the order of her fashion and her function, and that's why God gives us 1 Timothy, to help guide us and teach us what we need to understand so that we are being used by him in his work to beautify his bride.

Three conclusions for practical application. I call them CPA's, not certified public accountants. This isn't about Frank Spire or Bill Newman, alright, though they are good men who understand good things. This is about conclusions for all of us to put into our lives from my research on introducing this book.

1. I want to say may the spirit of family discipleship increase. Eunice and Lois, what an example they are to us. Now think about it: two ladies, the man of the house is an unbelieving Greek, he has no reverence for the God of Israel, he has no reverence for Jesus Christ, but these two ladies, and this should be an encouragement to many of you ladies who may find yourselves in a marriage or in a home where the male leadership is not spiritual and not solid. I'm telling you, God will honor your work to teach your babies and your children's children the word of God. These ladies likely had no formal synagogue, no called men teachers to help them but they made sure they got copies of the holy Scriptures and taught them to young Timothy.

Just some verses. Acts 16:1, "Paul came also to Derbe and to Lystra. And a disciple was there, named Timothy, the son of a Jewish woman who was a believer, but his father was a Greek." 2 Timothy 1:5, Paul is writing to Timothy now and says, "For I am mindful of the sincere faith within you, which first dwelt in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am sure that it is in you as well." Isn't that amazing that sealed in the canon

of eternal Scripture God points out these two ladies because they had such an impact on training Timothy to love God in their home. 2 Timothy 3:15, "and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."

Now these ladies are Jewish ladies and much of their training came before they came to Christ. They loved God, they loved his word, they taught his word, but they were not yet completed Jews. They had not yet received and accepted the Messiah, Jesus Christ. I'm convinced that happened in Paul's first missionary tour through Iconium, Lystra and Derby. But they taught what they knew to teach. They taught the truth as they understood it and then God saw, notice how he writes it here in Timothy, "that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." In other words, "This great foundation you had, Timothy, got you ready. Your mom, Eunice, and your grandmother, Lois, got you ready for that time when I toured through your area and preached for months and you came to be a completed Jew by receiving Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior."

Moms and dads, you have a great advantage at Grace Life Church. Now all of us, you could perhaps find better teachers and better preachers, I hold that out to you, but we have faithfully taught you from Sunday school in this pulpit the truths of God. Listen to me, it's very very easy for you to take notes during the preaching of the word, to take notes from your small group and just talk about the truths of God in your home. Don't wing it on your own. God intends for you to take what we teach and make that be an extension throughout your home. That's not hard. Be like Lois and be like Eunice and make sure God's rich biblical truth reverberates in your home. Pray for God to give you wisdom.

You see, after Jesus Christ, God's best gift to men, is a mom and hopefully a godly mother. He who rocks the cradle rules the world. Satan knows this and that's why Satan works tirelessly to get mothers out of the home and let someone else rock the cradle, but for better or worse, mothers are the makers of men. Here there's good evidence that this mother, Eunice, and this grandmother, Lois, they were wise and they were mature and they did not make Timothy the center of their universe. Some of you moms and dads worship your children and you must repent. That is blasphemous idolatry. Let your children know they're not most important in your life, that Christ is. That's the best way to love your children.

From the text, I pick up that this had to be the spirit of Lois and of Eunice. Timothy was not the center of their universe, God was. They saw Timothy as a precious child given to them as a stewardship from God. Timothy was God's gift to them and they were dedicated to be the godly mom and the godly grandmother that God had called them to be. This was not just some role they played, this was not something they just put on as a garment, it was what was in their heart. That's what comes out in these texts and genuine faith is always contagious. Mom, Eunice, and grandmother, Lois, taught Timothy the Scriptures yet really the sincere overflow of their faith is what taught him the most and I'm sure when the Apostle Paul hit the cities preaching, they were enthusiastic, "Get

Timothy. We're going to hear this man preach. We sense this is the truth based on all the Scriptures of the Old Testament we've studied together." So may I just thunder this morning, may the Eunice and Lois sorority increase.

2. May the spirit of God-honoring authority or rather of honoring godly authority increase. Timothy is a great example of this. Think about it. First of all, Timothy seemed to be very devoted to his grandmother and his mother's teaching. There doesn't seem to be a rebellious spirit or a rebellious heart about him at all. He was yielded. He was honorable. He was submissive. He was glad to get it.

Then in the church itself in that region, Acts 16:2 tells us that he was well spoken of by the brethren. In other words, he had a good standing in his local church. In his home, he was taught the Scriptures and he had a submissive, honoring of authority spirit. In the church, he was a young man, he was submissive and honoring of authority in the church. As Paul talks about him in 1 Timothy 1:2, he says, "you're my true child in the faith." You are an example of what a young minister should be like.

Let's expand on this a little bit. Paul wanted Timothy to join his ministry team and be a part of his mission staff, if you will, we see that in Acts 16. So we see Timothy, a humble and fully devoted follower of Paul's leadership. It comes out right at the beginning because right when Paul said, "I want Timothy to go with me," he took Timothy and he had Timothy circumcised. Paul knew that Timothy would never receive a hearing in the Jewish synagogues to preach or teach because his father was a Greek, if he had not been circumcised. It certainly wasn't important for his salvation or anything like that but it did gain him a hearing. The point is Timothy was submissive to whatever it takes to be a good servant of Christ. "I'll do that."

There's not a closer or a more lengthy fellowship among men recorded in the New Testament than that of Paul and Timothy, even though there was a great age difference between them. Timothy was glad to be a servant to Paul and to Paul's associates. As a matter of fact, as you go through Acts, you get hints of Timothy being there but he's not always mentioned. It means he was way down on the ladder and seemed happy to be way down on the ladder. Climbing the ladder was not his goal. Honoring those in authority over him was his goal because that, he thought, was pleasing to God.

He worked with Paul or in association with Paul in Berea, Macedonia, Athens, Philippi, Thessalonica, Corinth, Ephesus, Troaz, Jerusalem, Caesarea, and he ministered to Paul during his imprisonments. We do know that Timothy, himself, was imprisoned at least once because of his association with Paul, we see that in Hebrews 13. Paul and Timothy had almost a 20 year relationship and yet throughout the Scriptures we find Paul having a problem with John Mark, and we find Paul calling out the names of some men who go AWOL on God, but throughout that 20 year relationship there's not one trace of Timothy being anything other than a servant, submissive and honoring and a blessing to his authority of the Apostle Paul.

Philippians 2:19-22 reflects well on Timothy's spirit of submission to authority. He writes to the church at Philippi and he tells them, "I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, so that I also may be encouraged when I learn of your condition. For I have no one else of kindred spirit who will genuinely be concerned for your welfare. For they," the others other than Timothy, "all seek after their own interests, not those of Christ Jesus. But you know of his," Timothy's, "proven worth, that he served with me in the furtherance of the gospel like a child serving his father." First of all, this is the spirit of all Christians. May that spirit increase for all of us, but more specifically, it is the normal and expected pattern for the training and proving of young ministers.

We've seen some good examples. We have some young men that felt maybe led in the ministry and they have this spirit entirely. Brother Chad H. worked alongside me for years and he had this spirit, just glad to be a servant, glad to honor my authority. Blake K. he had this spirit and there are many others and this is the way it ought to be. That's the way a Timothy should be. Beware when you see a younger man in ministry who maybe is very talented and seemingly very effective, but ask yourself, "Does he honor biblical authority? Does he look to his pastors and elders for guidance and oversight?"

May the spirit of being wholly devoted to Christ cause increase, that's the third one. May the spirit of being wholly devoted to Christ cause increase. We see this in the Apostle Paul. He is unbelievably devoted, just throws it all on the line. You saw in your small group lesson I think today, the Apostle Paul departs from ministry to the Jews, he heads to minister to the Gentiles now. He finds himself in Iconium and he preaches and many are converted in Iconium but he also assesses quite a crowd of enemies. These enemies hate his preaching.

Now do you want me to get to it? Are you ready for a perfect application to modern America? Do you know what keeps bothering them? Because as these men preached the Gospel, they preach against the worship of Diana which means they preach against sexual promiscuity which means these people get mad. Do you want people to get mad and claw your eyes out? Tell them their sexual expression is sin and wrong. That's what happens when men are turned over to a depraved mind, they worship sexuality. Now sex is a wonderful gift from God, it's to be celebrated, and might I say indulged in, in marriage, but I tell you as your pastor this morning, work on your sex life. That's biblical. Get into it. Throw yourself into it. But it's not our god. Our God gave us this gift so we want to guard it, we want to guide it, and we want to govern it, first of all, so that we get more pleasure from it and God is glorified through it.

But these people as Paul preached against their wickedness and against their worship of Diana, he got into their pocketbooks and he got into their bedrooms too much and so the enemies rise up in Iconium and decide they're going to kill him. Well, somehow he gets away. He escapes to Derby. While he's there in Derby, he performs a healing, God does the healing through the Apostle Paul, and the people are amazed at this and they want to start worshiping Paul and Barnabas, calling them Greek god Zeus and Hermes. The Apostle Paul and Barnabas refuse their worship and refuse them sacrificing to them, and then some time goes along and the enemies from Iconium, which were actually some of

the enemies from the Jewish regions, come down to Derby where he is now and they stir the people up and this time they're successful. They actually stone Paul, convinced he's dead, drag him out and leave him for dead, but either they just knocked him out and he comes to or God raised him from the dead because he continues on.

Now here's what's interesting. Now think about this. Here's a guy as he's in this region of Iconium and Lystra and Derby preaching, every other day there are people not threatening, literally trying to kill him. Then he gets to Derby and they're literally stoning him. He's beaten to a pulp, blue and bloodied. They believe he's dead and all this time, do you know who's watching all this? Eunice. Lois. And their son and grandson, Timothy. Are you going to sign up and follow Jesus if that's what his preachers are treated like? They did. They did. And I agree with all the biblical scholars, it was during that season of time preaching in those cities and during that kind of persecution that Timothy comes to faith in Jesus Christ.

Now from this time, you go forward about two or three years. Paul returns back to the region of Lystra and Derby and he lays his eyes on this guy, Timothy. He probably knew him from earlier ministry two or three years ago but this time Timothy's older, he's matured, he sees his devotion, and furthermore, he finds Timothy is well spoken of in the region. Acts 16:1-3, "Paul came also to Derbe and to Lystra. And a disciple was there, named Timothy, the son of a Jewish woman who was a believer, but his father was a Greek, and he was well spoken of by the brethren who were in Lystra and Iconium. Paul wanted this man to go with him." So Paul finds Timothy and I'm convinced if the church had not spoken well of Timothy, Paul would have never put him on his staff. That submissive spirit again.

Now let's go forward in chronology. Timothy has served with Paul, years have gone by, now Paul is in prison this second time and he writes 2 Timothy in that imprisonment and he writes as a beaten, weakened, not weak in his faith, not weak in his spirit, weakened bodily, weakened maybe emotionally, a man incarcerated who is living under the shadow of his impending death. As a matter of fact, credible church history records that it was during this second imprisonment that Nero had the Apostle Paul beheaded. It's likely Timothy was there and saw it.

Also credible church history records that Timothy stayed on in Ephesus, had quite a long ministry there, was effective in his pastorate, but he was bold and unflinching in preaching against the idolatry of worshiping the fertility goddess, Diana. On one occasion, some men became so enraged they formed a mob and they, according to church history, beat Timothy to death in the streets of Ephesus. That's the way the early pastors concluded their ministries.

Paul's spirit of a whole devotion to Christ's cause has had an enduring global impact that's powerful still to this day. Concerning Paul, it is true he being dead, yet speaketh. Paul's devotion to never flinch and never compromise the truth no matter the cost, left an enduring imprint on those under his leadership like Timothy. Today, it seems to be right the opposite. Today, the trend the fad is compromise that a pastor should somehow hold

to the truth but twist it, contort it, massage it, so that the godless culture is not offended and don't become your enemies. Which by the way, to take the true Gospel, the word of God and shape it so that the culture is not offended is impossible. We should not try to be offensive, amen? But preach the truth and it's going to be offensive. You just keep sharing the true Gospel out in the workplace, you keep sharing the true Gospel out in the schools and you'll see some people rise up against you. Today it seems that the great preacher is the one who can at least claim to hold to the truth over here but never offend the world over there. It was interesting, Paul couldn't figure that out. Timothy never got that figured out. Do you think these guys are better than Paul and Timothy? No, they're slick, they're clever, and they're compromising if they can have a long ministry and faithfully build the church according to the word of God and faithfully preach God's truth and not have any enemies.

You see, compromised ministries produce Joel Osteens, wholly devoted to God's cause ministries produce Timothys. Timothys. When that mob rose up and started beating Timothy to death, in a way he might have said, "What took y'all so long? The man that was preaching when I was saved was stoned a couple of days after I received Jesus." This is just the way it is. May the spirit of being wholly devoted to Christ's cause increase. May Grace Life Church of the Shoals be a church, and I think by God's grace we have, be a church that produces not Joel Osteen types, false teachers who compromise, but Timothys. Timothys.

I believe by God's grace I'm willing to go that road if that's what God has. As a matter of fact, in this last election I didn't want to vote for Donald Trump but I asked God since he had used godless men, Pharaoh, Nebuchadnezzar, you just call the roll, since he had used godless men in ages past for the good of his people, I asked God if he could use this man for the good of his church if he'd let him get in office. I believe God answered that prayer. I believe I got two Supreme Court justices to prove that I believe God is saying to his church, "I'm going to hold off hell a little while longer." And I believe God's helping us.

Now you can have your own conviction about Trump, I don't care about that. Well, I do care but I don't judge you for that. But let's all be sold out in our hearts that the spirit of Eunice and Lois and family discipleship will keep increasing and the spirit of young people, and particularly young ministers, of honoring their authorities would increase like Timothy, and the spirit of being wholly devoted to Christ's cause like Paul would increase, and that's our introduction to the epistle of 1 Timothy.