

## 1 Timothy Chapter 1 D

- Billy Sunday
  - Born in poverty, raised by a godly mother, an athletic young man, Billy's speed and agility landed him in the ranks of Major League Baseball in the 1880's. His success and newfound affluence led to a lifestyle of drunkenness until one Sunday afternoon (in his own words) "*we got tanked up and then went and sat down on a corner*" It was there on a curb in the city of Chicago when the Lord opened the blind eyes of a man who would become one of America's greatest Evangelists.
- Raul Reis
  - The Vietnam war took a great toll on Raul. He returned home to L.A. a very violent and unpredictable young man. Every weekend he and his buddies searched out opportunities to express their violent rage.
  - Raul's lifestyle continued on a vicious downward spiral until one day he stood with a shotgun in his hand waiting for his wife to come home. He had determined to bring a violent end to her life. As he stood waiting by the door he turned the TV on. There on the screen Pastor Chuck Smith was explaining the Gospel. After only a few minutes Raul set the gun down and Jesus made him a new creature.

I am quite certain if I would pass a microphone through the aisles here this morning and we would hear a few compelling testimonies of the life changing power of the Gospel.

These testimonies are examples of Paul's words to Timothy: (1 Timothy 1:5) **The aim of our charge** (The Goal of our command to proclaim a Pure Gospel) **is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.**

- Remember that Paul has commanded Timothy to stand against false doctrine because **ONLY** the true Gospel has the power to transform the heart of a man.

AGAIN: It is the revelation of Jesus Christ, his perfect life, his atoning death and his glorious resurrection that brings new life to those who were dead in their sins.

Paul's message to Timothy is this: False Doctrine is powerless to change a man's life!

- But the **PURE GOSPEL** – makes a man a **NEW CREATURE!**

2Corinthians 5: 17 **Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.** 18 **All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation;**

- **ALL** this (*removal of the old and establishing of the new man*) is from God. New Birth is God's work, transformation comes only by His power.

Here in verses 12 – 20 of Paul's letter to Timothy he uses his own life as an illustration of the Gospel's power to radically change a man's life.

Paul's radical transition is recorded in Acts Ch. 9: where Paul went from (Verse 1) ***breathing out threats and murder against the disciples*** to (Verse 20) where: ***he proclaimed Jesus in the synagogues, saying, "He is the Son of God."***

- That is quite a turnaround in 20 short verses.

- Even today, Paul's life remains one of the greatest testimonies of the life changing power of the Gospel.

As we consider the example of Paul's life let's follow these 3 points:

1. The Basis of His Position.
2. The Impact of His Conversion
3. The Invitation to His Battle.

First – What is Paul's position??

1 Timothy 1: 12 **I thank him who has given me strength, Christ Jesus our Lord, because he judged me faithful, appointing me to his service,**

Interesting that Paul views his position as one of “service” not leadership, not honor but service. (DIAKONIA – a service or labor)

- He is a servant of Christ, A servant of the Gospel, A servant of the church.
- Servanthood is the essence of Christian leadership, *We learned that from Jesus himself:*

Mark 10: 42 **And Jesus called them to him and said to them, “You know that those who are considered rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. 43 But it shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, 44 and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. 45 For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”**

Even after many years, Paul was still amazed at God's saving and sustaining grace.

If someone were to ask me what do you think of the Apostle Paul?

- The greatest theologian who ever lived.
- The greatest evangelist
- Most prominent apostle in all the church.

But take a second look at how Paul describes himself in vs. 13:

1 Tim 1: 13 **though formerly I was a blasphemer, persecutor, and insolent opponent. But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief,**

Imagine Paul appearing for an interview for pastoral ministry: He meets with the church's search committee and they ask: “Tell us three things about your background that best describe your character up to this time in your life.”

Paul answers, I suppose I would have to say that I have been a blasphemer a persecutor and a harsh opponent of the church. OK then, we will be in touch with you....

In Acts 26 Paul shares his testimony with King Agrippa:

Acts 26;9 **“I myself was convinced that I ought to do many things in opposing the name of Jesus of Nazareth. 10 And I did so in Jerusalem. I not only locked up many of the saints in prison after receiving authority from the chief priests, but when they were put to death I cast my vote against them. 11 And I punished them often in all the synagogues and tried to make them blaspheme, and in raging fury against them I persecuted them even to foreign cities.**

- To what can we liken Paul's behavior prior to his conversion on the road to Damascus?

- We might liken him to a leader in the ethnic cleansing that took place in Sudan where the National Islamic Front slaughtered over 2.5 million Sudanese Christians. name of Allah
- We might liken his attitude to a high ranking Nazi officer who was bent on finding and persecuting the Jews in the second world war
- He was a ruthless, violent murderer who justified his actions thinking that he was defending Jewish monotheism.
- Looking at Paul's behavior, reviewing his background there is NO WAY that he should ever be in a position of leadership in the Christian church.

WHAT THEN IS THE BASIS OF PAUL'S POSITION? The BASIS of Paul's position (servant of God) is the overflowing grace of God

1 Tim 1: 14 **and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.**

- This same grace is the Basis of our salvation, the basis of our adoption and our service in the Body of Christ.

SECOND POINT: What is the IMPACT of Paul's conversion?

- Surely you would agree that YOUR New Birth had a significant impact on the people within your sphere of influence. (Your marriage, your family, your co-workers)
- What was the unique impact of Paul's Conversion?

1 Timothy 1:15 **The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost. 16 But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life.**

The impact of Paul's conversion is found in verse 16, in the words "display and example"

- Display = HYPOTUPOSIS – a sketch, an architectural drawing, a pattern.
- Paul's conversion and the radical transformation brought about by the Lord Jesus serves as a pattern for all who would come after him. Paul describes that pattern in this way:

1 Timothy 1:15 **The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost.**

You could describe this PATTERN as a one size fits ALL pattern for salvation.

- How can salvation be "one size fits all?"
- If the pattern, the work of Christ, is sufficient to save the greatest of all sinners, surely He can save you.

In Paul's Mind, his Conversion displays the magnitude, the "outer limits" of God's grace and mercy.

PAUL Sees himself as God's POSTER CHILD for grace and mercy. IF God can save him, as grave a sinner as he was, He can save ANYONE!

- Paul described himself as the FOREMOST (the chief) of all SINNERS.
- HOW many of us, who have not sinned after the similitude of Paul consider ourselves the greatest of sinners.
- We may not have persecuted believers but we have broken God's holy Law.

- We may not have consented to the murder of innocent men but unrighteous anger has gripped our hearts on numerous occasions.
- Like Paul the remembrance of our sinful condition serves to beautify the grace and mercy of God.

In Vs 14, Paul describes God's grace as: Overflowing (super abundant)

1 Tim 1: 14 and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.

- This "super abundant" Grace is what Paul described in his letter to the Ephesians:

Ephesians 1: 5 he predestined us for adoption through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, 6 to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.

7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, 8 which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight 9 making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ

Back in 1 Tim 1:16, Paul sees himself as an EXAMPLE of God's great patience.

16 But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life.

- God's patience with Paul is an expression of His Glory.
- We read that Patience is a MANIFESTATION of God's glory in other places:

Exodus 34:6, gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness,

2 Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.

- When Paul begins expounding the wonders of the divine attributes, his patience, his mercy, his kindness... he moves from exposition to worship.
- That is what happens in Vs 17

1 Timothy 1:17 To the King of ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

- These outbursts of worship are called doxology, (DOXA – is GLORY) they are a brief hymn of praise exalting the glories and perfections of the Lord.

### 3 The Invitation to His Battle

1 Timothy 1:18 This charge I entrust to you, Timothy, my child, in accordance with the prophecies previously made about you, that by them you may wage the good warfare, 19 holding faith and a good conscience. By rejecting this, some have made shipwreck of their faith,

- Here Paul charges Timothy to fight the good fight for the truth.

As far back as the Garden of Eden man was engaged in a spiritual battle, at its very essence it is a battle for the TRUTH:

Genesis 3: He (The Serpent) said to the woman, "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden'?"

- The serpent brings confusion as he questions the Word of God and the battle for truth begins.

Paul was very much aware of the Spiritual battle in which he was engaged.

- Here in Vs 18 He reminds Timothy of the RICHES of truth that has been “ENTRUSTED” to him.
- Paul reminds Timothy of his ordination and the words of prophecy spoken over him when God set him apart for ministry.
- Paul begins and ends his letter to Timothy with a “CHARGE” to GUARD the TRUTH.

1 Timothy 6:20 **O Timothy, guard the deposit entrusted to you. Avoid the irreverent babble and contradictions of what is falsely called “knowledge,” 21 for by professing it some have swerved from the faith. Grace be with you.**

TWO things were necessary in order for Timothy to wage a good warfare, they are “**holding faith and a good conscience.**”

1. Holding Faith – is holding fast to the revealed truth of God. Timothy’s first responsibility before the Lord was to remain loyal to God’s objective body of revealed truth, the Holy Scripture.
  - Unlike those who had turned away from the faith, Timothy was to hold fast to the Word of God:
  - He was to guard it (6:20) Nourish himself on it (4:6) and preach it (4:13)
2. Good Conscience – comes through the cleansing blood of Jesus and is maintained by the sanctifying, continually purifying work of the Holy Spirit.
  - Living in a attitude of humility, quick to repent, living a life of dependence on God for the power to overcome the flesh.
  - The conscience is to the soul what Pain is to the body. It is an early warning system, telling us when something is threatening our well-being.
  - Pain tells us when something threatens our body, the conscience tells us when something is threatening our soul.

All of us, who hold the testimony of Jesus Christ are engaged in the same battle for truth. We have been made New Creatures in Christ, We have been sealed for the day of redemption by the precious Holy Spirit, We have been empowered by that same Spirit for the day of battle.

REMEMBER at its very essence this is a battle for the Truth, a battle for the purity of the Gospel **because the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation for all who believe.**

- There is a day, when the battle will be over, the victory finally won. Listen to the final declaration and take note of how the victorious have overcome.

Revelation 12:10 **And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, “Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God.**

11 **And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death.**

- We conquer NOT by our own strength, NOT by our own power but by the blood of the Lamb – The victorious death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.
- The word of our testimony.

Remember Paul's testimony:

Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost

Let that be yours as well.