

1Timothy 1:3–7

Recipe for Reformation: Christ's Own Men and Teaching, Producing Genuine Love

Thursday, August 25, 2022 • Read 1Tim 1:3–7

Questions from the Scripture text: Where had Paul gone (v3)? What did he leave Timothy behind to do? What were they to teach? To what two things weren't they to give heed (v4)? What do these things cause? What don't these things cause? Of what does v5 tell us the purpose? From what three sources does this love issue? But what did some do (v6)? To what did they turn aside instead? Out of what desire did they do this (v7)? What two things didn't they understand?

What did Paul leave Timothy behind in Ephesus to do? 1Timothy 1:3–7 looks forward to the second serial reading in morning public worship on the coming Lord's Day. In these five verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **churches urgently need called men to teach right doctrine that results in right living**.

The right men, v3, 7. Not everyone who has an idea should get to say it in church. In fact, many desire to be teachers (v7a), but they don't even understand their own words (v7b), let alone how off their theology is (v7c). So, in his apostolic authority, Paul had left Timothy behind with instructions to, among other things, recognize and appoint the other teachers whom Christ Himself was calling to the ministry (cf. 2:12–3:7).

The right doctrine, v3–4. The right men need to teach the right doctrine, which is to say “no other doctrine” than that apostolic doctrine that is recorded for us in Scripture. One favorite mode of teaching for those who wish to appoint themselves is just to teach “clever” ways they have come to think about theological or spiritual things. Another favorite is to “give heed to fables,” adopting men's ideas that have gained the appearance of weightiness by being passed down in the church. A third mode of false teaching is to take more difficult passages of Scripture (like genealogies) and endlessly teach those instead of the plainer passages of Scripture that teach us how to understand the more difficult.

Unsurprisingly, all three modes of false teaching produce disputes. Their talk is idle/useless (v6), but they are not without effect. They stray from that gospel upon which all true believers can agree, and thus fail to build the church up in God. But this “godly edification” is exactly what grows out of faith. When believers are actually growing in understanding, approving, and being shaped by the truth of God's Word, the result is not disputes but the building up of the household of God.

Resulting in right living, v5–6. The word translated ‘commandment’ here refers more to instruction/urging than the one in v1, which indicates authoritative injunction. It's referring to the urging of v3. Why is it so necessary that the right men teach the right doctrine? To produce right living—which we might also call right *loving*. The Lord brings us to love Him with all the heart, our brothers as He loved us, and our neighbors as ourselves. And He does so by the mechanism described in v5.

The Lord uses right teaching to make the heart pure/good/sincere. It is His own Word that He promises to write on our hearts (cf. Heb 8:10, 10:16). And it is His own Word that has the power to do this (cf. Ps 19:7–8). The idle talk of man has neither this promise nor this power.

The Lord uses right teaching to make our conscience good. A bad conscience approves the wrong things. A good conscience approves the right things. It is the renewing of our minds that transforms us so that we can prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God (cf. Rom 12:2). It gives us a good conscience.

The Lord uses right teaching to give us sincere (un-pretended) faith. It's one thing to try to appear to others to be confident, or even to try to stir up a feeling of confidence within ourselves, but such faith is “pretended.” It is merely put on. True faith is being convinced of what God says, even if it's not visible or hasn't happened yet (cf. Heb 11:1). And it is the Word of God itself that produces this faith (cf. Rom 10:14–17).

How does God give that love for Himself and others by which He builds up His church? He uses the proclamation of His Word. To have other men teach other things produces the disputes of men where the Word of God has been given to do the work of God.

Why must you be careful not to appoint yourself a teacher or follow self-appointed teachers? What kind of teaching should we expect from those whom Christ has truly appointed? What should you be seeking to have produced in yourself by sitting under such preaching and teaching?

Sample prayer: Lord, forgive us for wanting others to hear our opinions about theology, Scripture, or spiritual things. Forgive us for when we follow the traditions of men, or make big mistakes from lesser-understood passages. Grant unto us men like Timothy, and those whom he was to ordain, to teach us Your Word. And, use that teaching to work in our hearts and minds. Produce in us that love for Yourself, brother, and neighbor by which You build Your church up in Yourself, which we ask in Your Name, Lord Jesus, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP19B “The Lord's Most Perfect Law” or TPH19B “The Heavens Above Declare”

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First Timothy chapter 1 verses 3 through 7. These are God's words as I urged you. And I went into Macedonia remain in Ephesus that you may charge some that they teach no other doctrine nor give he disables and endless genealogies which cause disputes rather than godly edification, which is in faith.

Now the purpose of the commandment is love from a pure heart, from a good conscience. And from sincere faith from which some having strayed have turned aside to idle talk desiring to be teachers of the law understanding. Neither what they say, nor the things, which they affirm so far, the reading of God's inspired and inherent word.

Well, one of the things that has gone wrong benefits. You remember, hopefully from last week, this is towards the end of Paul's ministry. They have already strayed from the first love that they had. There are things. At least three things that this letter. And the next letter to Timothy are addressing.

Teaching has gone off the rails are all sorts of men, teaching, false doctrine, who starts to deal with that. Here. There is immorality, disobeying God, and living in sin, not fighting against sin, that has taken hold in that summer. Even promoting and there's disorder in the church and all of those things actually are addressed in some measure.

In this kind of opening instruction, reminding him that what he's writing in these letters and in this letter in particular, is what he had urged him when he was leaving Ephesus. Was in where well, it's not on that map. We're turkey is now and Macedonia is towards where Greece is now.

So Paul was leaving to go west. There was apparently something urgent enough in the churches for him to do that and he leaves Timothy behind and that's important. Because Timothy is not an apostle and the apostles and the age of the apostles is coming to an end. And how is the church to be guarded and protected and grown and serve the Lord without apostles?

Well as most other churches have known more than Ephesus. They do it by the use of faithful elders. Yes, Ephesus has elders and has had them and they come and they meet Paul in Acts chapter 20 and so forth. But they also have had not only the Apostle, Paul but also the Apostle, John.

And then Apollo sent Timothy at other times, have been a preaching and pastoring, in Ephesus who were associated with the apostolic Ministry. And so he is telling Timothy that one of the ways that the Lord will bring this revival of the faith that they had at first and Reformation of the teaching and of, and of the living in Ephesus is by the right men.

He said he left Timothy. He told Timothy to remain in Ephesus and he's telling him again, stick with it. Stay there. We're gonna find out that Timothy's has been trying and doesn't feel to him. Like the ministry has gotten the traction that he hopes and perhaps he would think, well, I could have a more fruitful ministry somewhere else.

This is a temptation for me. Sometimes when in my grate and gratitude to God, I allow myself to indulge thoughts about how difficult it is. In this aspect of the ministry or with this person and the congregation And I think well, I could probably have a fruitful ministry somewhere else, but he urges Timothy to remain an emphasis because one of God's solutions is the right men and as he's going to get to in chapter, towards the end of chapter 2.

But especially in chapter 3, the Lord has called particular men to the ministry of Shepherd teacher, which Paul had written to this church in Ephesians chapter 4, for the building up of the entire congregation. And so these are gifts from Jesus, the right, men. Not everyone in the church, who has ideas should get to say them?

That's an insanity that grows up in the egalitarian. Tendencies of our flesh, wanting to think our ideas and our grace. And our understanding is as equally good. Does anybody else's not recognizing that the Lord's way is to give special grace, and gifts to particular men, not for their own sake and not to exalt them.

But for the sake of the church and to build up the church and that when we don't follow the Lord's order of the Lord's way, we're not raising ourselves downward destroying ourselves because the Lord is the one who has invested the teaching of his church in in particular, man.

And so it requires humility from them as well. Here when we get to their character in chapter 3 but and we'll see in chapter 3, it's not wrong to desire, the office of overseer but there are some who desire to be teachers who don't have a clue what they're talking about and they should not get to talk in church when they should not teach their other doctrine, that they have, They should be quiet and they should listen.

And they should have their own understanding corrected and increased by the Lord has called particular men to that. So the right men, teaching the right doctrine, that they teach, no no other doctrine and then you hear where some of this wrong doctrine came from One, it came from outside of the Bible and too.

It came from misusing the Bible. Fables here is a reference to anything man-made that has been taught over time. There's another word for traditions, but we could use the word traditions here. It's just ideas of men that had been built up over time. Certainly, they would have been familiar with those teachings or ideas or philosophies that came from Greek.

And Roman thought Ephesus was one of the main Roman cities, the remain Roman city and what was called the province of Asia. Modern Day Turkey, those of a Jewish background, would have had all of the traditions of the rabbis that were added to the Bible. And the church in 2000 years has built up a lot of false teaching and practice that seems to have way to because of how long it the history is of it being added to the Bible but it doesn't have weight or if it does.

It's not the weightiness of something important and honorable, it's like weight like that, which is tied around you to sink you to the bottom of the ocean and kill you. That's the kind of weight to cut away. Not to treat as a way too. So that's one place that false teaching comes from is things from outside of the Bible.

The other place that it comes from is taking that which is either less understood or more easily abused or, or doesn't mean at all, what you are about to use it for and one of the easiest places to do that is genealogies. In fact, there are a couple of books that were popular in the, in the so-called Evangelical, Christian world.

10 to 20 years ago that were from genealogies that that taught a good sounding doctrine that could have been pulled from some places in Scripture, not necessarily those and then added to it to the ideas of the writer. Because what are you going to do with a genealogy? You got to import a bunch of your own ideas, and the text gets twisted.

And so there's the use of that, which is outside of the Bible, and then the twisting of that, which is inside the Bible. Both of those were places that fall doctrine came from and Paul was urging Timothy to remind men that you need to teach from the passages that clearly teach.

And scripture, interpret scripture Don't set your doctrine on genealogies. Set your doctrine on the plainest things and understand the more difficult passages in light of the clearer and more easy to understand is a conversation recently on baptism in which the testimony of the spirit and the water to Jesus's divine sonship at His baptism, and the testimony of his blood and the water coming out of his side of the cross and the blood on him at the cross to which even the Romans Centurion when he saw the way that he died and said truly this was the son of God.

And so those testimonies to Jesus's sonship divine sonship in first John 5, which is a wonderful passage. Jesus is the Son of God for sure. Trying to make some point about our baptism is in the mode of it which had. And if there is then, well the spirit came down on Jesus's baptism and whose feet are not.

You're not exactly. You know, the blood Jesus didn't get dipped in blood on the cross and the blood came out of him. Anyway, it just didn't If you want to talk about something like the motive baptism, go to places where the Bible teaches the mode of baptism. So people were building all kinds of weird teaching at a genealogies because when they did, so a couple of things happen, number one, the plain meaning of the text isn't as obvious and so people don't, it's more difficult to argue with you.

And when you do that, other people tend to think, oh, you must be really smart to get all that out of a genealogy. But if what you come away with is how smart the teacher has not how wonderful the text is something has probably gone wrong so he's urgent Timothy to remain in order to put the right men in places of teaching and that they would teach the right things for the right reasons, resulting in, right living.

So verse 5 now the purpose of the commandment and that's both God's commandment. That Christ would be an apostle and they're sorry that Paul would be an apostle of Christ and which establish these churches and pastor them and that you would write this letter. You have that in verse 1, Paul and Apostle.

Jesus Christ commandment of God, but it's also referring to Paul's own. Commanding Timothy in the Lord to stay in Ephesus as I urge. You remain an emphasis. It's a command. And so that command in this command, and indeed all God's commandments have this purpose. Love from a pure heart, from a good conscience.

And from a sincere faith. And so the Lord uses this right teaching that Timothy is being commanded to remain an emphasis and ordain the men whom got his called to teach the the scriptures that God has given and teach rightly from the scriptures He uses right to teaching. First of all to give love from a pure heart, A heart that is sincere single-minded, good devoted to God.

And the Lord promises to use his own word to write it upon our hearts. It is his own word that has the power to do this, and we know that from other passages like Hebrews eight verse 10, he was 10 verse 16. Psalm 19 versus seven through eight the whole.

It's all 119 the new covenant promises in Jeremiah and so forth. Idle talk of men from which some have strayed have having strayed having turned aside to idle talk. The idle talk of men can't give you a pure heart, only the words of God to which are attached, the promise of the spirit working in the power of God can actually give life and goodness and parity to your heart.

And so the point of teaching is to depend upon the power of God who uses the teaching to give you that pure heart. And so, that's something when you're you're thinking about what kind of books to read or one day, you may be in a position where you or with, with a husband or thinking about, you know, what church to go to, or if you need to come to the session and talk about the teaching, and preaching that you've had recently in a church that you are in or whatever.

And you need to remember that the importance isn't just to get the doctrine, right. But that God uses the right teaching to exercise his own power upon our hearts to give us this pure hearts from which love for him comes and and so it's very important. And then when you do have good teaching as I pray, you have in this home.

And in this church, one of the things to ask God is Lord use the teaching to give me that sort of pure heart that you talk about in First, Timothy chapter 1. So that love for you will come out of it, love for the brethren and love for for my neighbor.

So, the Lord uses right teaching to make the heart, pure the Lord uses right teaching to make our conscience, good Love from a pure heart, and from a good conscience, a bad conscience, approves bad things. And there are men who love evil and their conscience becomes bad. They actually call good evil and evil, good.

And so their conscience starts to work against their souls. And so we need the Bible taught rightly to correct those ideas for us so that our conscience will be good because we still have that remaining sin and we need God's gift of a conscience to be a blessing to us to say that's not loving God.

His words says this, that's not loving your brother. His words says you love your brother this way. That's not loving your neighbor. You're his word, says loving your neighbor this way. And so the need for God called men Christ, called men, teaching God's own doctrine, Christ's own doctrine from the scriptures is not just so that you'll have a pure heart, but a good conscience, because a good conscience that calls good good and calls evil.

Evil is part of what God uses to stir up. Love in your own heart and then the third place in verse 5, love from Pure Heart, from a good conscience, from sincere faith, The Lord uses us right teaching to give us unpretended faith, Faith that understands what God says and holds to it because it's God.

Who says it faith? That is in my self. Is a false faith, Faith. That is not convinced from the Word of God is a pretended faith. You might agree with all the right doctrines, but if you're not agreeing, because it's God's doctrine because it's God's Word, then it's a pretended faith, true, faith, as a gift with the Holy Spirit gives us when He convinces us of the truth of something.

Because God is the one who says it. And so you see why they had lost their first love for first and foremost for God. And then for the brethren and then for their neighbor and that's because God uses teaching his word correctly by the men whom he has called to give us that love.

And isn't that what he hit? First done in Ephesus, those three years. And those five hours a day in the whole of Tyrannus. The love didn't come out of thin air or, or from, you know, trying to feel mushy about Jesus. The affection for the Lord came from knowing him through his truth as he attended the teaching of his own word by the power of his spirit to give a pure heart, a good conscience and sincere unpretended faith.

That's what the Apostle wanted. Timothy to remain an emphasis to call and to train and encourage the right men to teach the right way to do and that's what our Lord wants for us. Doesn't a pure heart and a good conscience and sincere faith out of which love flows through out of which love flows from you unto him.

Isn't that who what he wants for you. And so as we read about Timothy's task, in Ephesus in this letter and in the next one and our second Timothy, and then Titus's task and Pret. We'll be hearing about the Lord Jesus's plan for us too and we'll be thinking about how to respond to what the Lord has given us so that he may produce these things in us.

It's right. Oh, Father us to we come. Give us the same blessing and pray that especially you help me in this home and all of the fathers and husbands in their own homes and myself and the other elders in the church that we would heed the urgings given to Timothy and Lord help us all to respond to the teaching that you give us attend it by the power of your spirit to give us that pure heart.

We pray make our conscience as good so that they approve of what is good and hate what is evil and give us sincere faith. Unpretended. That miraculous gift of your spirit, who convinces us that your word is yours. So that we love you from a conviction that you yourself have given and your power and your mercy, your grace, right?

This I pray for each of my children that they would not learn to ape Christianity. Just by having been up close to it, but that you would produce it from their hearts and then in their children as they minister to them. And down through the generations, glorify yourself by doing us miraculous.

Wonderful, redeeming. Good for. We ask it in your name O God, our strength and our redeemer. Amen.