

1Tim 23-07-09b

We're ready to look at the text of this letter. We have given some background for it, the relationship between the Apostle Paul and Timothy, his son in the faith, the occasion for the writing of the letter, which is the need for instruction in the Ephesian church. Paul has gone on to Macedonia, but there is already a threat and this threat consists primarily in alternative and false teachings.

Teachings that are in competition with, are not in harmony with what Paul has shared as an Apostle of Jesus Christ. So he has left Timothy there to continue to emphasize, preach and teach the truth, always with his eye on the goal. The goal of our instruction is love that is sourced in a pure heart, a good conscience and a genuine faith, not hypocritical, not put on, not for show, not falsely characterized or falsely sourced, but sourced in truth.

Faith in terms of its value is only as good as what it is in. The merit of faith is in the object. We have heard that before, but it is true.

The merit of faith is not in having faith or how deeply held the faith is, but is it in the truth, specifically the truth of God. So pure heart, that requires some thought. What is the source? What is the nature? How do we maintain a pure heart, a good conscience? What is the source of the information, the norms, the standards, the goals, the values, the priorities that characterize the conscience? Our conscience, we have this saying, let your conscience be your guide.

Well, only if your conscience is reliable. You got a faulty conscience, like a faulty compass, it's gonna lead you astray. If it is swayed by the nearness of other fields, such as self-interest or emotional shallow evaluation and so on, the conscience can't be trusted.

If it feels good, do it, was one of the mantras a few decades ago, to thine own self be true. Well, if yourself is a rascal, what's the value in being true to that? So a good conscience and faith, all of these, the pure heart, the good conscience and the unhypocritical or genuine faith, all are aspects of our existence, our life, that are reliant upon the word of truth and the spirit. We understand this.

So we begin the letter now, noting that the purpose of it is this goal of instruction. So the themes are going to revolve around what happens in a church. Timothy, as we saw in the first session, has been a companion of Paul for years.

He knows Paul's theology. He has heard Paul preach and teach his apostolic witness for a decade and a half. So Paul is not going to rehearse a great deal of biblical doctrine, as you might call it, or Christological theology.

Why? Timothy already knows these things. It is the practical outworking of the understanding of that truth, the communication of that truth, its value, its necessity in combating error and heresy that is in view. So this is more, as they would say in seminary, it's ecclesiological.

It has more to do with what happens in a church in and around the teaching of this truth than rehearsing the truth itself. For this reason, the canonicity, the Pauline authorship of all three of these pastoral epistles has been called into question by scholarship, especially in the last recent decades and last couple of centuries. Now, people have questioned whether Paul actually wrote them and one of the arguments is the vocabulary is different and the theological themes that are found in Paul's epistles to churches are lacking here.

Therefore, the vocabulary is different. And so they'll use a computer analysis and say, statistically speaking, 87% of the words used here aren't found in Paul's acknowledgement. Well, if you took a letter that I wrote to my wife when I was deployed and a letter I wrote asking for an extension on a course at seminary, would you find any correspondence in the vocabulary? They have completely different purposes.

They have completely different audiences. They have completely different context, background, and so on. And the idea that all of Paul's letters should share the same vocabulary is really specious.

There are reasons why people do not want these letters to carry apostolic authority, as we will see, and they wanna dismiss them. They wanna say they were not written by Paul, therefore they don't have authority in the church. What are those objectionable areas of content? We'll see them as they go through, but one of them is let a woman learn in silence with all subjection, that is odious to many.

The requirements for elders that Paul details, whether he, what does it mean to be the husband of one wife? When Paul talks about the wives of deacons, are they deaconesses? Do they have some sort of office or function in a church that isn't detailed elsewhere? The ministry to widows, there has been some argument that there should be a separate structure in the church that is run by older widows training younger widows. And you can't believe the kind of machinations that go on when people find something objectionable, they wanna find a way to dismiss it. We do this individually, we receive a personal comment or something we take to be a criticism or pointing out something that is unflattering to us.

We immediately wanna find ways to discredit the source, to blunt the sharpness of it. Our defenses all go up. Well, you can imagine some of the content of these pastoral epistles is unflattering to those who want to compromise.

It is directed against those who engage in false teaching and it affirms biblical roles for

men and women that have become socially unfashionable and have been for many decades now. Therefore, the attack on the authenticity of the letter is equally persistent. We'll see these as we encounter them in the text.

Let's begin by looking at the greeting. Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, Paul begins many of his letters in this way. And when he states his apostolic identity, there's a reason for it.

Paul's letters uniformly begin, Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, why? We've seen this in recent studies over the last few weeks. All authority, Jesus says, has been given to me in heaven and on earth. Paul is an apostle, not because he decided to be one or he sensed that he was one or he didn't know what other gift he might have, so he must be an apostle.

He was specifically called by name by the Lord Jesus Christ as were the other 11 apostles. Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ. If you go to 1 Corinthians in the order of our New Testament canon, after the Gospels, Acts, you have Romans and then 1 Corinthians.

When you go to 1 Corinthians, Paul says, Paul, a called apostle. It's *kleitos*, called, commissioned, authorized, called out by the Lord Jesus. In Romans 1, 1, he says, Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God.

These letters of Paul always begin with this affirmation of their divine authority from the Father through the Lord Jesus. When Jesus says, all authority has been given to me, there has to be someone greater than the Lord Jesus, higher in rank and authority, who can give it to him. It isn't given to him by acclamation from his subjects.

He isn't voted in as the Christ. The authority that Jesus has in heaven and on earth has been granted to him by the Father. Those who are called by the Lord Jesus Christ are similarly called in and by divine authority.

So Romans 1, 1, Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God, the good news of God. Separated, sanctified, called out. In 1 Corinthians, Paul, a called apostle of Jesus Christ.

2 Corinthians 1, 1, Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, which is what we are going to find similarly stated here in our epistle. 2 Corinthians 1, 1, Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God. This is what we reviewed just this past Wednesday.

The message begins, the authority begins, the plan and purpose begins with God the Father through the Lord Jesus Christ. And in the presence and power of the Holy Spirit and the true word of God, that gospel is expressed to the world, Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, the nations, through those 12 apostles. No other intermediaries, no intervening branches or byways or detours.

No popes, no bishops, no cardinals, no priests. The Lord Jesus Christ is the high priest.

We are priests directly under his leadership.

There's no intermediate level of priesthood or accountability. Jesus said, I and my father are one. Jesus said to his disciples, I will be with you in the presence of the spirit and in the power of the word.

And that witness is expressed directly to us through the scriptures. We are led into that truth by the Holy Spirit. There is enablement, there is speaking the truth, there is communicating the truth.

Somebody has to communicate that truth. Have you noticed the difference between the word and the spirit? The word is entrusted to faithful men who teach others also. We are stewards of the word of truth.

Men set it down as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. Peter talks about this. No scripture is of any private origination.

Men set it down as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. It is an inspired truth, but it was originally set down by men and it is communicated by men. We have the privilege of being involved in the communication of the truth.

Do you notice that it is not by the laying on of hands or by some human ministry that the Holy Spirit comes? The Holy Spirit descends directly from the Father onto the Lord Jesus Christ like a dove. The Holy Spirit descends like tongues of flame on the assembled believers in Acts 2 at Pentecost. And at the point of expressing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit comes immediately from God the Father and God the Son to the believer to indwell and to be a comfort and an encouragement and to accomplish his sealing, indwelling, gifting, baptizing, and hopefully filling ministries directly from God.

The Spirit isn't brokered or enabled by human agency. The word of truth isn't created or composed by men. It is conveyed and communicated by men.

And we have the privilege of speaking it one to another. Those who are teachers and preachers have that as a formal function and obligation, but it is spoken by human lips. It is written down with human hands to be communicated.

So Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, Yeshua Mashiach. Jesus speaks of his humanity. Christ Messiah speaks of his role as savior, as mediator, as God's anointed messenger of the gospel and embodiment of truth, embodiment of the gospel, embodiment of the virtues and characteristics of God himself.

Called Paul an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God, our savior, by the commandment of God. Notice again, the emphasis that Paul's authorization to communicate these truths is divine. It is the commandment of God, our savior.

We generally, when we say the savior, my dad wrote a wonderful hymn, "'Do You Know the Savior?' He's talking about the Lord Jesus Christ. And we generally think of the savior as Jesus Christ. But there are passages, and this is not the only one, especially in Paul's later writing, where it is God, our savior.

And this is in the, somewhat in the Old Testament sense, we're gonna see that Paul is going to affirm the value of the law. There are occasions where he has had to remind people of the place of the law. The law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ.

There are times when in trying to get something into its proper perspective, you have to sort of push beyond the center. If people are so wrapped up in the blood of Christ that they think that the blood itself had some mystical power and that if you could find a few droplets of it, if you could have scooped some up at the foot of the cross, it would have magical power. And so there is the pushing against assigning mystical power to the physical blood of Christ.

It is a symbol that has no innate power of its own. This is why the blood itself can be symbolized by the cup in the upper room. This cup is the new covenant in my blood.

Jesus can say in John six, you've got to eat my flesh and drink my blood. Well, it's not anything other than its metaphorical value that is in view. But to push against that sometimes, we have to, in earlier days, there were pastors who said, we don't wanna be singing these songs about there's power, power, power in the blood and so on.

And they would ban those hymns from their churches and so on, why? Not to diminish the teaching in scripture about the blood, but to try to achieve some balance. Sometimes you have to overreact against a thing to get it put back in the center where it belongs. And there had come such an emphasis in the later days of the first generation church on the Lord Jesus.

And was he an emanation? Was he a vision? Was he substantial or insubstantial? Did he come in the flesh or was he a spiritual being? That people had lost sight of God the Father as the originator of salvation, as the deliverer in the Old Testament sense of savior. Salvation means deliverance. Soterios, soteria, salvation, being saved.

These speak of deliverance. And to maybe clarify this in a balanced perspective, we might translate this by the commandment of God, our deliverer, our deliverer. If we want for clarity and convenience to reserve the term savior in English for the Lord Jesus Christ, the meaning is the same, but God's deliverance is not by placing himself as the Father on the cross, but it is he who sent the Son, John 3, 16, in his love for the world, he sent the Lord Jesus Christ so that whosoever believes does not perish, but has everlasting life.

But deliverance and salvation are sourced in the Father. The commission to deliver that message is also sourced in the Father. The Father sent the Son.

The Son sends his apostles. So even as the Father sent me, so send I you, Jesus says to his apostles. The Father sent me, I send you.

But the source is the Father. And that's the emphasis here, this authority to deliver this message and to combat other messages, other ideas, other philosophies, competing and heretical doctrines. You can't get one sentence into this letter without seeing that Paul is emphasizing what I am telling you and my exhortation and my commandments are a reflection of the exhortations and commandments of God himself.

It is so important when you see aphorisms and quotations and sayings from authors in the modern day and people will go back and quote Bernard of Clairvaux, they'll quote St. Valentine's, they'll quote Augustine, they'll quote anybody in the last 2000 years that has a pithy saying that is somehow related to spiritual life. And especially in the modern day, people write books and so they will be quoted. Those words do not carry the divine authority of the apostolic witness.

And they do not have the power of the apostolic witness. To the extent that they reflect the truth, think on the positive side about hymn lyrics that rephrase divine truth. You should be able to take any human expression of a biblical truth or what purports to be a biblical truth and you should be able to find it directly and clearly communicated in scripture.

If people start extemporizing and opinionating and bloviating about what a believer ought to think and ought to do, and you can't find chapter and verse in the prophetic witness and in the apostolic witness, cuidado, caution, watch out. The authority for faith and practice is in the scripture, not in what people have concluded by reading the scripture. There is a difference.

This is what Paul is going to exhort Timothy to preach about and against, is people who want to interpolate and extrapolate and go beyond what is written. Go beyond what the Lord Jesus said and did or read into and extrapolate out of what Jesus said and did, things that Jesus never intended, conclusions that should not be drawn, practices that shouldn't be followed, beliefs that shouldn't be held, a false and hypocritical faith that always ends up in some way, shape or form being self-seeking. It begins at the beginning, Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the commandment of God, our deliverer, and the Lord Jesus Christ, our hope.

Notice there are many things that the Lord Jesus is. There are many things that God the Father is. Paul, in other contexts, will say he is the creator of all things.

You remember Acts 14? He's pleading with the Greeks who are trying to deify him. No, no, no. God in heaven is the creator of all things.

I didn't create anything. I'm a man like you. I am communicating truth to you.

Focus on the truth, not the man. Here, the aspect of God the Father, of the many that you could, you can begin with the old essence box and go on to all of the roles and functions and activities that God has engaged in, that has recorded in the inspired scriptures. What is the one that Paul chooses here? God is our deliverer.

As soon as you say deliverer, is our, the one who saves us, you have to ask the question, delivered from what? Saved from what? A little child could look at an uncle and say, he's my deliverer. He's my savior. How so? You need to know the story of the little child riding out into the street on their tricycle and the uncle seeing it and leaping up from his folding chair and dropping his beverage and running out there and snatching the child just before a speeding car comes around a curve.

Okay, now I know how the uncle is that person's deliverer. Someone who appears and provides aid or comfort at a critical time. And you could say, I was in the depths of depression.

I was suicidal and this person came, he delivered me. He was instrumental in my survival in some sense. So when Paul says, I am an apostle by the commandment of God, our deliverer, this puts Paul's apostleship into the context of God's deliverance.

Paul's message, Paul's witness, Paul's function as an apostle is an expression of God's deliverance. Remember the verse, neither is there salvation in any other, neither is there deliverance in any other for there is none other name under heaven given by men whereby we must be delivered. There is no deliverance in any other.

There's no other name under heaven. There's no name given by men whereby we must be delivered. It is God the father sending God the son.

And that message expressed through the apostolic witness that is our deliverance. So this isn't just, I'm the apostle, so what I say goes. If I say women wear hats or don't wear hats, I'm the apostle.

The purpose of the apostleship, the message, the function of the apostolic witness and message directly under the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ and through him from God the father himself is deliverance, deliverance. In the context of first Timothy, what is the deliverance going to be from? Deliverance from deceit, from falsehood, from distraction, from variant and competing ideas and theories and notions about what is and isn't a virtuous life and a proper faith. God our deliverer has sent the Lord Jesus Christ and through the Lord Jesus Christ has sent the apostles with a message of deliverance.

It delivers us from the wrath to come. It delivers us from deception and distraction and being co-opted and carried away by cultural Christianity, by trendy Christianity, by false priorities, false values, false witness. I grieve and I shudder at the thought, at the judgment.

As clearly as could be stated in the 10 commandments, thou shalt not bear false witness at the expense of your neighbor. False witness harms your neighbor. Thou shalt not bear false witness.

You say a thing that is not the truth, does not comport with reality. It's as old as the 10 commandments and older. God is a God of truth.

Jesus said in John 14, six, I am the truth and you can't come to the father but by me. I am the truth, I am the life and I am the way to the father. The way to the father is life and truth.

So this introduction was carefully composed by Paul and as it continues, God our deliverer, this is God the father and the Lord Jesus Christ, our hope, our hope, our confidence. What does it say about hope? The hope is the hope of eternal life. I am life, Jesus said, I am truth and we need hope.

Many look around at current events, at the deterioration and disintegration of values and what used to be substantial and meaningful and valuable and admirable in our culture and it begins to look increasingly hopeless. Remember the solid rock hymn, on Christ the solid rock I stand. There is no other hope but Christ.

My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness. I dare not trust the sweetest frame but wholly lean on Jesus' name. On Christ the solid rock I stand.

All other ground is sinking sand. Political ground, social ground, what passes and purports to be spiritual ground in the modern day, it is Christ the solid rock on which we stand. That's a great example of hymn lyrics that are not direct quotations from scripture but every phrase you can document in the scriptures.

It is Jesus' blood and righteousness on which our hope is built. Jesus Christ, the Lord, our hope. Paul states it right here.

Remember 1 Corinthians 15, if there is no resurrection, if Christ is not raised, we are not raised and we have no hope. Those who have died have no hope but Christ is raised from the dead and is the first fruits of those that sleep and that is our hope and confidence. Jesus Christ, our hope.

So the direction, the emphasis that Paul is moving here of all of the things he could say about the Father and the Son, the source of our deliverance, both in salvation from sin and from death and in deliverance in this present evil age, the source is God the Father to whom we pray, to whom we give thanks, to whom we appeal for our daily bread, to whom we look as we await the kingdom that will come and the will that will be done. It's God's kingdom and God's will that we look forward to. It is our hope.

When you pray, pray this way. Our Father who art in heaven, may your name be

revered, sanctified, hallowed, not used in vain, not invoked to support falsehood. Your name should be hallowed.

Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. That doesn't happen today. It doesn't happen now.

There is no present form of the kingdom where that takes place. God's will is manifestly not done on earth the way it's done in heaven. Is there any hesitation, any disobedience, any lackadaisical apathy in heaven? Jesus said, when you approach the Father, you should approach him in hope of the day when his will will be done on earth the way it's done in heaven.

In the meantime, this day, we need provision. We need support from you. Give us this day, our daily bread.

Forgive us where we trespass as and to the extent that we forgive each other. We shouldn't be forgiven if we can't forgive each other. We don't have the repentant heart.

Only a repentant heart can forgive someone who has wronged us. And it is only a repentant heart that God can forgive or will forgive. Don't lead us into temptation.

Jesus tells his disciples, we're not ready for that testing. Deliver us from evil. Jesus said to his disciples at that stage, when you pray, pray that you're not led into testing and that you be delivered from evil and not tested by it.

You're not yet strong enough. You don't yet have the Holy Spirit. And once again, this is a prayer that Jesus gave to the 11.

He didn't announce it from the Mount. He didn't announce it in the 5, 6, and 7 of Matthew sermon. This is specifically to his disciples.

Lord, teach us to pray, they asked. And this is what he said. It's included in that context, but it is specifically addressed to them.

We have a message of hope. Paul uses the word hope in his epistles upwards of 40 times. Faith, hope, and love.

The triad of Christian virtues. The Lord Jesus, our hope. He's gonna say in Titus, the letter we will look at after this one in 2.13, that we are looking for that blessed hope, the glorious appearing of the great God and our savior, Jesus Christ.

The blessed hope, glorious appearing, the great God and our savior, Jesus Christ. 1 Thessalonians 1, verse three. It is the patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the sight of God and our father that is in view.

As Paul reviews those Christian virtues, patience of hope. Hope enables us to endure. I

can put up with this because I know its outcome.

Women do this in pregnancy and labor. People do this enduring insults to their physical frame that are necessary to produce a desirable outcome, an operation, a procedure. We undergo things that are uncomfortable, if not painful, because the outcome is going to be a wonderful improvement, a great benefit.

We suffer now a momentary light affliction because we are looking forward to an eternal weight of glory, as the St. Paul says in Romans. So patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. When we want to have that hope, we look to the Lord Jesus, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame and is now seated at the right hand of the father.

Many, many ways and places this word hope is used. The Lord Jesus is the embodiment of our hope. It is to him that we look so that our bodies with all of their deteriorating characteristics will be transformed into the likeness of his glorious body.

He is our hope. We hope to see him as he is. We don't know what we will be like, but we will be like him and we will see him as he is.

Well, that's verse one. Verse two to Timothy, a true son in the faith. We understand that this family level of fellowship abides and persists in the church.

We are brothers and sisters. We are fathers and sons and mothers and daughters in the faith. When the Old Testament says there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother in the fellowship of the faith, there are relationships that are as close, as meaningful as any within a family established by heredity and by physical relationship.

And when Paul says, you are my son in the faith, this is an abiding and indeed an everlasting relationship. It will be so in the resurrection. These wonderful relationships, our fellowship, our closeness, our communion in Christ will persist as long as we do and Christ does, which is eternally.

My true son in the faith, truly a son, truly respectful and desirous of preserving and extending the apostolic ministry that Paul is entrusting to him in terms of teaching and placing these truths in the hands of faithful men who will teach others also. Our final observation this morning, grace, mercy, and peace from God, our Father and Jesus Christ, our Lord. Once again, you have that expression, the role of the Father and of the Son, but notice it says grace, mercy, and peace.

In every letter that Paul writes to an epistle, the greeting is grace to you and peace from God, our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, grace and peace. Every single one, look them up. Romans, first Corinthians, second Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, both Thessalonian letters.

But when Paul writes to an individual, it is grace, mercy, and peace. We as individuals need mercy. And Paul wishes, grants, praise, and expresses the desire for mercy on Timothy.

Mercy, Elias, more about which we will see next week. But you find this in Paul's epistles to individuals. And you also find it interestingly in 2 John.

And 2 John, 1 John is written to groups. I write to you young men, I write to you old men, and so on. But 2 John is written to the elect lady and her children.

And whoever the elect lady is, she is visualized or personalized as an individual. And so John, in his second letter, says grace, mercy, and peace. Mercy at the individual level.

And how we need mercy. More about that next time. We'll close here in a word of prayer.

Father, thank you for the truth of your word, the presence and power of your spirit. Everything we need for faith and function in this life, to grow in grace and knowledge, to be sustained in times of trial, to have the patience of hope in the Lord Jesus Christ, that as he was sustained by your spirit and by your truth, living in every word that proceeds from your mouth, we can likewise follow his example. We can take part in understanding and sharing the truth, enjoying the power and the presence that you yourself and the Lord Jesus offer to us through belief in that truth, having and keeping those commandments in the presence and power of your spirit.

We pray that this fellowship will persist not only in relationship to you and to the Lord Jesus and to the Holy Spirit, but also laterally with one another, that we together can be edified and be a source of edification, that the body fitly joined together will be a reflection of your glory and reflect the glory and grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. We pray it in his name, amen.