

1Tim 23-09-24a

Good morning, welcome to the Sunday morning services at Grace and Truth Bible Church. Today's the 24th of September, 2023. We're continuing our study in the first letter of Paul to Timothy.

We are right at the intersection of chapter one and chapter two. There are three topics of interest here. We've taken a brief look at all three and it is contained in verse 20 of chapter one and verse one of chapter two.

We're going to take a bit more of a detailed look at these three topics. We will cover two of them today and then we'll have a detailed coverage of the third when we return after a bit of a break a week after next. Let's take a moment to ask God's blessing on our fellowship and our study and we'll begin.

Father, how grateful we are for this time of fellowship to receive the blessings that come from the gifts that you have distributed to each and every one of us and under the ministry and the power of God's Holy Spirit and the presence and guidance of your word. We find these connections in our spiritual family to be upbuilding and encouraging and restorative in so many ways. We thank you for the fact of our existence in the body of Christ, which relates uniquely to us, to you through the Lord Jesus.

And we pray that as we look at this portion of your word together this morning, it will contribute to that purpose that Paul detailed, that it will unify us, that it will strengthen and encourage us and give us the tools that we need to fulfill your will in our lives in the time that remains to us in this life. We ask it in Jesus' name, amen. Just as a reminder, there is a purpose, there is a reason for the exhortations that Paul is giving here and all of the information that's in this book, this letter, especially the opening section is very important.

We know this because this is a letter to a pastor from an apostle to a church through the angel. This is the mechanism that the Lord Jesus uses in Revelation chapter two and three. You remember that Jesus in speaking to each of those churches sends his message through the messenger of that church, the angel of that church, to the angel of the church of Ephesus Wright, to the angel of the church in Smyrna or Thyatira Wright.

And we understand that the material in this book is directed to Timothy, but it is to and through him to the church. So if you wanna know what ought to be going on in the life of believers in this age who are related to one another in the church, this is the book. And so we've seen the primary reason for this exhortation in verse five of chapter one, the purpose of the commandment is love.

It is an amazing thing when you look at the one another's in scripture, a lot has been said about the one another's and the alalone, which is the Greek word, A-L-L-E-L-O-N,

that is translated one another in all but maybe two places occurs about a hundred times in the New Testament in more than 90 verses. I think it's 94 verses that occurs a hundred times. There's a few verses where it occurs more than once.

Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another. You have a doubling in some of those verses, but of the one another commands, which there are many, a third of them, a third of all of the one another's in the New Testament are to love one another. I'm going to read you a quick list.

If you write fast, you can get them down. Otherwise just take my word for it. But love one another is in John 13, 34, John 15, 12, John 15, 17, Romans 13, verse eight, 1 Thessalonians 3.12, 1 Thessalonians 4.9, 1 Peter 1.22, 1 John 3.11, 1 John 4.7, 1 John 4.11, and 2 John 5. I'll skim through those again in case you missed any of the numbers.

John 13, 34, John 15, 12, John 15, 17, Romans 13.8, 1 Thessalonians 3.12, 1 Thessalonians 4.9, 1 Peter 1.22, 1 John 3.11, 1 John 4.7, 1 John 4.11, 1 Peter 1.22, 2 John 5. Those are the primary. We've seen before looking at parallels in the Old Testament between Kings and Chronicles. And in some cases we had a threefold reference in Kings, Chronicles, and Isaiah.

We've seen in the gospels that there's not one, not two, not three, but four separate gospel accounts. And in many places we have repetition of the words of Jesus, the exhortations of the Lord Jesus, the experiences, the miracles, the parables of the Lord Jesus, all four recount the crucifixion and so on. When the word of God repeats something so that we see it twice, you figure that's pretty important.

I was tickled to discover that the word from Deuteronomy that says, muzzle not the ox that treadeth out the grain is quoted not once, but twice in the New Testament by Paul. And you figure if God repeats himself, it must be important. So look at how many times the exhortation is to love one another.

And that is the goal of Paul's exhortation in this letter. And we know this at an academic level, we should love one another, we should be tenderhearted, forgiving one another. So many of the one another commands are expressions of love.

And love implies unity. Pretty tough to have a love relationship where there's division, strife, combat, debate, separation, being on opposite sides. It is possible to be politically divided and yet be married.

I remember years ago, there was a couple that were talking heads on television and they were on opposite sides of the political fence, but somehow they were able to be married. But love expresses itself in unity. So these one another commands include Mark 9, verse 50, where Jesus says, be at peace with one another.

John 6, 43, don't grumble among one another. Romans 12, six and Romans 15, five say,

be of the same mind with one another. Romans 15, seven says, accept one another.

First Corinthians 11, 33 says, be sensitive to one another in the context of fellowship meals. Galatians 5, 15 says, don't bite, devour, and consume one another, kind of the negative side. Galatians 5, 26 says, don't challenge and don't envy one another.

You have both a positive expression of love and unity and what love and unity proscribe, forbid. Mark out of bounds. Patiently and gently tolerate one another.

That's Ephesians 4, 2. Ephesians 4, 32, the one I just quoted, be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven you. Colossians 3, 13, bear with one another, forgive one another. First Thessalonians 5, 15, seek good for one another.

Don't repay evil for evil. Again, that's First Thessalonians 5, 15. James 4, 11 and 5, 9, don't complain about one another.

Sowing the seeds of strife and division. James 5, 16, confess your faults to one another. Sometimes misunderstood that you should stand up in the congregation and let the cat out of the bag.

This is between parties. This is what Jesus said. If your brother has ought against you, go and be reconciled and try that more than once with more than one person if need be.

But reconciliation, having inflicted a grievance, having a fault that you're responsible for, go be reconciled and that is the confession. You go to the brother and say, I have wronged you. I want to get past that.

The one another commands. Those are all subsumed under these manifold references to loving one another. Love is the sign by which all men will know that we are disciples of the Lord Jesus.

By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, that you love one another. So that's what's great about the book of 1 Timothy. This letter that Paul writes to Timothy and through him to the people in the church is designed and has the purpose of telling us not only that we should love, but how.

What are the positives and what are the negatives? Just as we've seen in the many examples of these one another exhortations, commands, and descriptions. So you remember chapter one. We've been over it many times.

I just want to draw toward the conclusion once again, because two of our three topics are in this final verse of chapter one. And these topics are, one is stated and one is veiled. The stated one is Satan.

The veiled one is apostleship. Satan and apostleship. Both are contained in verse 20 and

both are extremely important, even though at this initial mention, they are given kind of a passing emphasis.

They're critically important for us to understand. What is the role in God's plan and purpose for Satan? Why is he granted the authority to be the God of this world? Why does he touch our lives in various ways? He is allowed to roam the earth like a lion seeking whom he may devour. He is allowed to sift Peter like wheat.

Remember when Jesus says to Peter, Satan has desired you that he may sift you like wheat. What's the rest of that statement by the Lord Jesus? Jesus, but I have forbidden him is not the rest of that sentence. Satan has asked for you that he may sift you as wheat, but I used my authority as the second person of the Trinity and the son of God to tell him, get thee behind Peter, Satan, which would be sort of poetic justice, wouldn't it? Peter represents the viewpoint of Satan and thinking the thoughts of men.

And Jesus says, get thee behind me, Satan. But what does Jesus use to finish that sentence? Satan has asked for you that he may sift you as wheat. Doesn't sound like a fun process, but what? You remember? I have prayed for you.

I have prayed for you, which is our third topic in chapter two, verse one. I exhort first of all, the supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made. Get thee behind me, Satan.

He has asked for you to sift you like wheat, but I have prayed for you. Isn't it interesting the Lord Jesus offers prayer and we take this for granted. We know he prayed in the garden.

We know he went off by himself numerous times to pray, but stop and think the Lord Jesus Christ, the incarnate God in whom the fullness of deity dwells in bodily form, doesn't solve problems using his own deity. He doesn't direct, forbid, limit Satan using the power of his deity. What does the Lord Jesus do when there is opposition, when there is hardship, when there is testing, when there is a need for guidance and direction to stay in the very center of God's plan and purpose? The Lord Jesus himself prays.

We take it for granted that there is power in prayer. There's nobody in the Christian world who would say there is no power in prayer, but when you think about the Lord Jesus Christ who test drove the human life enabled and empowered by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God and the presence and power of God's spirit, who conveys our prayers to the throne room of God? The Holy Spirit with a language that sounds like groanings and we cannot duplicate. It is a translation.

It is a transference. It is a representation on the part of the Holy Spirit before God's throne, taking what I can only assume to be our inadequacies and our shortcomings and our limitations in attempting to pray and represent ourselves before God's throne. It

reminds me of some of us who went, when I went to the Naval Academy as a plebe, I was from the country, hadn't been to formal dinners, didn't grow up in wealth and affluence and understand these manners that pertain to those who were in the upper crust and the upper class.

I knew to put the fork on the left and the knife and the spoon on the right and stick the napkin under the fork. And if you want something to drink, the glass is gonna sit above your knife. That's how my mother taught me to set the table and that's how I've done it from that day to this.

But as a Naval officer, you're often invited to formal occasions and there's multiple forks and multiple spoons and several glasses and all kinds of extra accouterments. There are salad plates and wait staff coming and going and bringing things and picking things up. And I didn't know that those people are instructed to serve from the left and retrieve from the right.

I didn't know what all of these extra things on the table were for. So there was a lady and it was her job for decades at Annapolis who would take each incoming class of midshipmen and regardless of background, station, experience, training or whatever else, all of us were trained by Mrs. Marshall on decorum. How do you function at the table? How do you dance? How do you enter and exit a room? How do you introduce people to each other? Someone who is notable and is the guest of honor, maybe they were the speaker at a function and you're introducing a friend.

In the social levels, if one is higher than another, which one do you introduce to the other? Whose name do you say and how do you say it? And if you've got a captain that is with you and you're making introductions with an admiral, how does that work? How exactly is it done? And so our good desire, we want to be appropriate. We want to have good manners. We want to be courteous.

We want to operate within that realm without making ripples or drawing attention to ourselves by drinking out of the finger bowl. We need training. We need someone to bridge the gap between what we don't know and what we fail to understand in terms of polite function and social graces with those who are long accustomed to it.

And so there was this transfer and this instruction so that we could represent ourselves and represent our unit, represent our service, Marine or Navy or whatever it might be, appropriately in an unfamiliar context. This is how I view the role of the Holy Spirit who works with us and the word of God that we have listened to and placed our faith in to construct our prayers, to put it in a form with an emphasis and a content that is acceptable in God's sight. Having done that, worked with us to construct the prayer, the Holy Spirit says, okay, that's pretty good.

I am now going to take this and present it before the throne on your behalf because in

your fallen flesh, you're not qualified to go into that room and present this request. I will format it, I will communicate it, I will clean it up, I will impart grace and beauty to it and present it before the Father. And so our prayers are taken before the throne in a language that we cannot duplicate or understand.

Groanings that cannot be uttered is how Paul describes it. The Holy Spirit is there with us, helping us if we listen to him to construct our prayers and then he conveys them. This does not in any way diminish what is said in Hebrews chapter 10, that the Lord Jesus has made a new and living way through the torn veil, which is his flesh and that we can come boldly before the throne of grace for help in time of need.

But remember there is ultimate agency and there is immediate agency. And we coming before the throne are not standing there bare and naked in our still fallen state. It is actually the Holy Spirit who represents us.

It's like someone with a good lawyer. They tell the defendant, you don't speak, let me do the talking so that we don't wind up in contempt of court or you get yourself convicted because you said the wrong thing. The lawyer is the voice for the defendant.

The lawyer puts it in legal terms and knows what to avoid and what not to say, what is allowed and what is not. But it is still the defendant who is on trial and whose interests are being represented. So the reason I'm belaboring this a bit is like a court trial, there is also a prosecutor.

There is an attorney for the people, quote unquote. It's the people versus the defendant in many cases, many trials, criminal trials. And we have all three of these elements in these two verses, the accuser, Satan, the apostle Paul, who introduced himself in verse one, the relationship between the apostle Paul and Satan, which is interesting because there are passing references to it several places in scripture.

And then the therefore in chapter two, verse one, therefore I urge and exhort prayer, supplication, intercession, thankfulness. The juxtaposition of these three elements at this point in the letter is significant. Let me first of all, talk about Paul's apostleship, which is how he opened the letter stating his authority by the commandment of God, our Savior, and the Lord Jesus Christ, our hope.

God, our Savior, Jesus, our hope. Everything is undergirded with this apostolic authority. So talking about those who are spreading deceitful teaching, misleading teaching, divisive teaching, those having rejected the truth and concerning the faith of suffered shipwreck of whom are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I delivered to Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.

I delivered to Satan. I would suggest that this is something only an apostle can do. There are things that are unique to the apostles that do not transfer to the first generation of

pastors, to elders and deacons in the church, or to any subsequent generations.

It is unique to the apostles. So let's talk a little bit about apostleship. What do we know about apostles? First, they were personally chosen by Jesus Christ.

Face-to-face, in person, their name was called. In the days of Jesus' earthly ministry, they come to be known as the 12. Multiple times in scripture, we've covered it in all four gospels.

We've done every single gospel, verse by verse, beginning to end. And you know the times when Jesus names the 12, climbs the mountain. He's been down visiting with them at the base of the mountain.

He goes and climbs the mountain, and then he calls them to himself. They've got to climb the mountain to receive their commission. They are the 12.

Obviously, Judas disqualifies himself and is not going to have his name on one of the gates of the new Jerusalem, and yet there are 12 gates, right? So in some way, shape, or form, there needs to be a replacement. This was understood even before Pentecost. Turn back to Acts chapter one.

This is a very useful passage for our understanding. Acts 1:5, in those days, remember Pentecost is in chapter two. The Holy Spirit has not yet descended like tongues of fire.

Feast of Pentecost has not yet come. This is a very short interval. Remember Passover, Feast of Unleavened Bread, 50 days, seven weeks, it's Pentecost.

Jesus was around for 40 of those 50 days, right? So we're talking about the space of a week and a half. Jesus has ascended last week, basically, and in those days, verse 15, Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, or brethren, depending on which text you want to follow. I personally think it's brethren, in the midst of the brethren.

Altogether, the number of names was about 120. 10 times the 12. There's 120 individuals there.

10 dozen. Peter stands up and says, now we remember Peter's personality. He's proactive, isn't he? If he, you know, see the hill, take the hill.

You have to love Peter. He sees the Lord on, as soon as John says, that's the Lord on the beach, Peter jumps in and he's swimming. If that's really you, Lord, bid to me to come.

Walk on the water. Only man other than the Lord Jesus to walk on water. He's a wonderful guy.

What is his Achilles heel? Almost literally. He will act without sufficient contemplation, without sufficient consideration, without sufficient prayer, without sufficient appeal. He

will speak impulsively, based on his emotional response.

He will act impulsively, based on his first emotional response. All of us can learn from that example and take a beat. Look upward before we reach out our hand to do something in the horizontal.

I would submit to you. I would strongly suggest. I personally believe in my heart of hearts that that is what is happening here.

Peter stands up in the midst of 120 people that includes the other 10 disciples and 110 other people. He says, men and brethren, this scripture has had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke before the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus, which is putting it charitably, who betrayed, who sold out, who let his greed get the better of him. You will notice two things here.

Peter is being generous in his description of Judas and he's gonna quote the Bible. He was numbered with us, obtained a part in this ministry. We have a parenthetical entrance here that talks about what happened to him in the interim.

He had purchased a field with the wages of iniquity, falling headlong, burst open in the middle. His entrails gushed out, became known to all those dwelling in Jerusalem. The field is called in their own language, Akel Dama, which is field of blood.

Remember Adam, Edom, there is the idea of redness of man. And so you have the word for blood here in Aramaic, but that's parenthetical. Peter says, this scripture had to be fulfilled.

Let his dwelling place be desolate and let no one live in it, which is a quote from Psalm 109, verse eight. And let another take his office. That of course is from, I'm sorry, Psalm 69, 25 and Psalm 109, verse eight.

I think you've got a text note in your New King James detailing those references. So he's been thinking about the Psalms. He's been thinking about Judas.

He's been thinking about the gap in the circle. So on the one hand, one scripture says, let his dwelling place be desolate and let no one live in it. If you just use that by yourself, you would think, well, the spot occupied by Judas ought to remain empty.

Let no one dwell in it. But he found another verse that says, let another take his office. This is a classic example of proof texting.

Don't have time to go back and read these Psalms, but it is taken out of context. Let another take his office. Peter says, this is my springboard.

This is my proof text from the Old Testament that we need to replace Judas. Let another take his office. Therefore, verse 21, of these men who have accompanied us all the time

that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John to the day when he was taken up from us, one of these must become a witness with us of his resurrection.

Peter has arrived at a criteria, set of criteria, a criterion that it is someone that had to have been there from the beginning, from the baptism of John. Now, stop and think about this. Let's think through our list of disciples.

Just a few will suffice. Was Levi the tax collector, Matthew, there at the Jordan, at the baptism of John? No. Jesus sees him collecting taxes, says, follow me.

He leaves his tax table and follows. Matthew is not qualified for this criteria, is he? And look at the list of others. James the less, the zealot, we know who was there at the baptism of John, and it is only the first four, Peter, Andrew, James, and John.

And Philip is under the tree, they collect him, but he wasn't at the baptism. You could say, well, loosely from the time of, but there's only half the disciples that go to the wedding feast of Cana. He has not yet called the other half of the disciple core.

But Peter has arrived at this set of qualifications, has to have accompanied us all the time the Lord Jesus went in and out among us. Isairchimai, exairchimai, went in and out. Beginning from the baptism of John to that day when he was taken up from us, one of these must become a witness with us of his resurrection.

One of these people that meets my initial qualification must join us as witnesses of the resurrection. Is it good to be a witness of the resurrection? Absolutely. Since Jesus has now ascended, the 40 days have passed.

They saw him lifted up in the earlier part of this chapter. Paul goes on to tell us how many witnesses there were of the resurrection, some of whom were still alive decades later when he was writing. How many did he say there were? He appeared to upwards of 500 in one place, right? Upwards of 500.

So there are many people who could be a witness to his resurrection, regardless of when they began to spend time with the Lord Jesus or came to an acquaintance or began to follow him, which includes half of the disciples. So they proposed to Joseph called Barsabbas who was surnamed Justice. I have so much sympathy and empathy and a heartfelt sense of what would approach pity for Justice, for Joseph Barsabbas.

He is put forward as a candidate for apostle and rejected. How would you live the rest of your life? I've been with you from the beginning. I'm beginning to end.

I was there at the baptism of John the Baptist. You guys met me. I've been traveling around with you all of this time.

Look at my name, Joseph. I've got the same name as the Lord's earthly father, Barsabbas, it's son of peace. You know, Ben Sabbath would be a way to put this in the old Hebrew.

I'm Joseph, the son of peace, son of rest. And they call me Justice. That's his Greek name.

He's got a reputation amongst the rest of them. And Matthias about which nothing is said. Joseph's got three names, Joseph, Barsabbas, Justice.

Matthias has got nothing. But these two guys are put forward and they prayed. They prayed.

What's our topic here? Apostleship, Satan and prayer. They prayed. You've got the apostles, the nascent incipient apostles are here, right? They're about to enter into their apostolic ministry.

They are all gathered with a whole bunch of other folks and they're going to pray. What would you suggest, knowing where I'm going with this, what would you suggest is wrong with this prayer? What do you think is the matter with this prayer? Isn't prayer always good? No, prayer is not always good. Why? A, what are you praying for? Have you put God in a box? Are you asking him to do something that he has already explicitly said he will not do? Another potential problem is timing.

Would it have been good in the abstract for this group to have a prayer meeting and to pray to God somewhere during these festivities? I would submit to you, this prayer is too late. They have already boxed God in. Lord, tell us if it's Joseph, Barsabbas, Justice, or if it's Matthias.

Lord, tell me which one it is. Tell us which one it is and we'll include him in. He'll replace Judas in the 12.

When you cast a lot, it's, you remember I made a lot years ago. I put, you know, it's the Urim and the Thummim. You've got an Aleph and you've got a Tav, a Tau, the ending letter.

And if you get two Alephs, that's a yes. If you get an Aleph and a, oh, lookie there, Elizabeth has them. How cool is that? There is the Urim.

That's the Aleph. This is the other side of this chicklet, kind of an oversized thing. Maybe the size of a playing card had to fit in the breastplate of the high priest, right? That is the Tav.

Looks like a falling cross. And that this is the original, this is the old Hebrew. This is not the Aramaic square script.

Breastplate of the high priest didn't use Aramaic. It used the proto, the old Hebrew script. Urim and Thummim, well, you've got two of them.

That is so helpful, Elizabeth, thank you. So if you get two of these, that is thumbs up. That is a yes, right? That's a yes.

If you get two of these, that's a no. No, no. If you get this, God declines to answer.

Assuming that God is guiding the fall of the lot. God is not required anytime a human being decides to cast lots to guide their fall. If he is present, if it is in his will to provide his guidance, if people are looking to him for his guidance for the right reasons and in the right way, God will guide.

But they cast these lots and the lot falls on Matthias. They prayed and said, you, O Lord, who know the hearts of all, show which of these two you have chosen. Which of the two that we have chosen, have you chosen? It's just facepalm time.

To take part in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas by transgression fell that he might go to his own place. They cast their lots and the lot fell on Matthias and he was numbered with the 11 apostles. It's interesting, I think Luke has a little subtle commentary here.

Matthias was numbered with the 11 apostles. It doesn't say he was numbered with the 11 apostles. As one of the 12, he was numbered with the, there are 11 apostles at this point.

And Luke, I don't know at what point he wrote Acts. Was it after his experience with the apostle Paul? I think so, because he, I think these chapters and all the rest of it were written and he goes on to detail. And you remember the we sections of Acts and so on where Luke is with Paul.

But I think this is a very subtle and tactful way of saying Matthias was numbered, he was numbered by the people with the 11 apostles, not made one of the 12. What is the point of this? It is possible to get ahead of God. It is possible to think there is a way that seems right, but it isn't productive.

Nothing ever is heard from Matthias again. He is recognized at the human level as a legitimate apostle and as one of the 12, but what is God's opinion? Who is the 12th apostle? It is not Matthias. And you just got to have sympathy for Joseph, or Sabbath's justice.

Did he stick around after that? Hi there, I'm not the 12th apostle. God turned me down, two thumbs down on me. Is there something wrong with me? What's the matter? Look, I got three names.

I got more names than Matthias, but maybe because one of them is justice and I circulate with the Greeks. Who knows what he would have thought, how he would have handled that, but it's entirely a human operation and significantly it does not happen after chapter two. The Holy Spirit has not yet been fully given.

Jesus has breathed on them, but you can tread over the Holy Spirit. We can all do it. We all do it.

And I think Peter does it here. So what does it really take to be an apostle? Jesus calls you by name. Did Jesus call either one of these individuals by name to be an apostle? Can it be recognized by human wisdom, human standards? Well, if you meet these characteristics, you're in and we'll vote you in.

We'll do whatever we do to make choices and you'll be in. We'll flip a coin. What's fascinating about this is the later experience of Saul of Tarsus on the Damascus road where Jesus personally appears to him.

He is a witness to the resurrection. He is personally called by name and commissioned as the 12th apostle in God's time, in God's way, according to God's standards and God's knowledge and Paul opens every letter with the declaration that he is an apostle. What does apostleship mean? It is unique in many ways, not the least of which is an apostle can deal out divine discipline and divine judgment as the immediate agent of something that is ultimately sourced in God.

Peter is not recognized as an immediate agent for electing an apostle or choosing an apostle. We need to know what can we individually represent God for and what can we not. Even as an apostle, Peter is manifestly an apostle but he mistakes what he is and is not allowed to do in this case and as with many of his other actions, we can empathize, we can relate, we can identify, we can get ahead of God's Holy Spirit, we can get ahead of God's timing, we can do the right thing in the wrong way, we can quote scripture, we can pray, we can appeal to our fellow believers and yet it is not God's way, it is not God's plan and it is not God's purpose.

But we're gonna pause here and take our break. When we come back, we're gonna continue this look at what is unique to the apostles, what were they commissioned to do and how does that differ from what we are capable of, granted authority to do and so on. We'll see that when we come back.