

# Aiming for Love

## 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 1:1-7

Ben Deaver @ Tallgrass Church Central Gathering on July 15, 2018

### Intro 1 Timothy

- Thus far we've covered Reclaiming Neighboring, Life Together in the Body of Christ, Reasonable Faith, and Peter Ruby did a great job teaching us about worship last week.
- Now...finally...after much anticipation...and without further ado...we're going to study a whole book of the Bible...finally. 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy! Yay! This is gonna be fun!
- Read 1 Timothy 1:1-7

### Pray

#### Paul

- Raised in a devout, wealthy Jewish home
- Top notch education in Jerusalem
- Successful career in religion/politics
- Aggressive, brilliant, iron-willed
- Killer of Christians...
- Until he met Christ...
- Dramatic conversion (Acts 9; 1 Tim 1:12-17)
- Forgiven & appointed as an apostle (Verse 1)
- Amazing leader, planted churches all over the Roman Empire
- Planted the church in Ephesus, where Timothy is
- Wrote 13 (really 16) of 27 NT books, all Epistles, or letters

#### Timothy

- Jewish mother who believed in Christ, Greek father (Acts 16:1-3)
- Well thought of
- Paul circumcised him
- Young (1 Tim 4:12; 1 Cor 16:11)—Let no one despise him for his youth.
- Sickly (1 Tim 5:23)—Drink wine for your frequent ailments. He was probably lactose intolerant and gluten-free.
- Shy/Timid/Fearful (2 Tim 1:6-7; 1 Cor 16:10)—Not a spirit of fear but of love, power, and self-control. Put him at ease. We could call him Timid Timmy!
- Faithful (verse 2; 1 Cor 4:16-17; Phil 2:19-24)—Faithful child in the Lord. No one else like him, who is genuinely concerned for your welfare.

#### Ephesus—See map

- 350,000 people
- Rampant paganism
- Hugely responsive to the gospel! Acts 19—baptisms (v. 5); destroyed magic books (v. 19); economic downfall (v. 24)

## Temple of Artemis—See picture

- Located in Ephesus
- This was one of the Seven Wonders of the World.
- 450' x 225' x 60' with more than 127 columns
- “Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!” Acts 19:28, 34
- Acts 20 – Paul already bracing for a spiritual counter-attack
- <sup>28</sup> Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood. <sup>29</sup> I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; <sup>30</sup> and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them.

## Certain persons...duh, duh, duh!

- We'll get back to them.

## So why did Paul write this letter?

- Letters are “occasional documents”. This doesn't mean they are to be read occasionally but means they were written to address specific occasions.
- When we study the Bible we're trying to discover what it meant to them *back then and there* and then apply it with wisdom to us *here and now*.
- Reason for writing—Refer to the Scripture Memory card.
  - **1 Timothy 1:5** The aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.
  - **1 Timothy 3:14-15** <sup>14</sup> I hope to come to you soon, but I am writing these things to you so that, <sup>15</sup> if I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth.

## Aiming for love in the household of God

- The main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing.
- Don't swerve from the Gospel.
- Cut a straight path to Jesus / the Gospel.

## Love = Agape

- The love of God. See 1 John 4.
- Who knows the Tallgrass Mission Statement? Because God first loved us, we exist to love God and love our neighbors.
- Illus: Parenting kids—Giving your kid screens, sugar, lack of sleep, etc. Does this feel like love? Yes! Is this love? No!
- Illus: Parenting teens—You find out that your daughter is in a relationship where abuse is occurring. She swears she loves this guy. She desperately wants your affirmation of this relationship. You smile and say, “This is great! I support you. Whatever makes you happy.” Does this feel like love? Yes! Is this love? No!

## Stewardship = Provision

- “stewardship” = “good order”; “oikonomia”; “economy”; “provision”
- The Gospel is the Provision of God
- Christ died for our sins. God made a way where there was no way for us to be in relationship with him.

## Sound Doctrine (1:10) = that which brings health

- Not just “doctrine” but “sound doctrine”. Not just things that are true but that which brings health, human flourishing.
- “hygiano” = ὑγιάνω = hygiene = that which brings health
- What’s the sound doctrine, the teaching that brings health?
  - Is coffee good or bad for you?
  - Are eggs good or bad for you?
  - Do you need 7-9 hours of sleep or is 4-6 sufficient?
  - Etc.
  - Illus: Doctor—Go in to see your chiropractor and he says I need to adjust you right here and have you do these exercises daily. And you’re like, “No, that won’t work. Just give me a little pat on the back and I’ll go about my way. I have a few exercises in mind that I think will work.” He’s like, “Yeah, that’s cool. You’ll be fine.” Will this bring health? No! Why not? Because you’re trying to address your own problem without reference to the person who knows what they’re talking about. This is a doctrine. But it’s not sound doctrine.

## Love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.

- Pure heart or Impure heart
- Good conscience or Bad conscience
- Sincere faith or Insincere faith
- **1 Timothy 4:1-2** <sup>1</sup> Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons, <sup>2</sup> through the insincerity of liars whose consciences are seared...

## Now back to those “certain persons” ...

- Heresy (vv. 3-4)
- Theological Tangents (v. 6-7)
- Shipwrecked their faith (1 Tim 1:19-20)
- Cut a straight path, Timothy. Some have swerved from the truth. Their talk will spread like gangrene, not bringing health but bringing death and destruction. (2 Tim 2:15-18)

## What heresies threaten the church today?

- Works-based salvation
- You’re fine just how you are.
- Universalism, everyone ends up with eternal life no matter what.
- Health, wealth, prosperity Gospel
- Humanism, humanity is getting better and better apart from God.
- Human sexuality

## What theological tangents threaten the church today? What are potential ways we could swerve from “sound doctrine” into theological tangents?

These could be good things but shouldn’t eclipse our focus on the Gospel.

- |                                                              |                                |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| • End times obsession                                        | • Political focus              |
| • Denominational prioritization                              | • Green movement               |
| • Family-worship, making our family or our kids the ultimate | • Calvinism-Arminianism debate |
| • Social justice issues                                      | • Spiritual gifts infatuation  |
| • Pro-life focus                                             | • Music obsession              |

Raymond C. Ortlund, *Afterward from Passion for God* (Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway Books, 1994).

“What might take the place of the gospel in our sermons and books and...home Bible studies and, above all, in our hearts? A number of things, conceivably. An introspective absorption with recovery from past emotional traumas, for example. Or a passionate devotion to the pro-life cause. Or a confident manipulation of modern managerial techniques. Or a drive toward church growth and ‘success.’ Or a deep concern for the institution of the family. Or a fascination with the more unusual gifts of the Spirit. Or a clever appeal to consumerism by offering a sort of cost-free Christianity Lite...Or a determination to take America back to its Christian roots through political power. Or a warm affirmation of self-esteem. The evangelical (church), stripped of the gospel, might fix upon any or several of such concerns to define itself and derive energy for its mission. In other words, evangelicals could marginalize or even lose the gospel and still potter on their way, perhaps even oblivious to their loss.”

- This HAS occurred in MANY so-called Christian churches around the country and around the world. Let it not be so with us.
- We will cut a straight line to the Gospel. Our AIM is love!

## Bible Study Tips—Best Practices & Best Resources:

### Best Practices

- tawG—time alone with God; Jump on Slack with David Renberg, Dave Geldart, and me!
- Scripture Memory—Scripture memory card. Put it in your shower. Grab multiples.
- Handwrite the text, double-spaced—Slowdown...get messy!
- Read 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy...in its entirety...aloud...20x! 14 weeks before until we wrap up 1<sup>st</sup> Timmy.
  - Checkout the article “How to Change Your Mind” by Joe Carter—  
<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/how-to-change-your-mind/>
- Study without the verse markings—I have copies if you want one!
- Discovery Groups (3-5 people)—7 questions that become 9
- Inductive Bible Study
  - <https://www.xenos.org/essays/inductive-bible-study>
  - <https://www.xenos.org/essays/organic-discipleship-appendix-3-inductive-bible-study-method>
  - <https://www.xenos.org/teachings/?teaching=3901>

### Best Resources—Background on Letters and 1<sup>st</sup> Timmy

- Practical Guide to Hermeneutics (Xenos)—<https://www.xenos.org/classes/hermeneutics>
- Overview of the Epistles Genre (Xenos)—<https://www.xenos.org/classes/hermeneutics/epistles>
- The Bible Project—<https://thebibleproject.com/explore/1-timothy/>
  - 9 minute overview
  - Introduces some of the interpretive challenges without choosing a specific interpretation
  - Maris and Kate watched this together today and loved it.

### Other Best Practices or Resources?

### Read 1 Timothy aloud (16-18 minutes)

- “...devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture...” (1 Tim 4:13)
- **1 Timmy 4:13** Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching.
- I like doing this in LIFE Groups. Why not our Central Gathering?
- Scripture Readers come on up. Use the mic. Read nice and slowly with emphasis. This should take us 16-18 minutes.
- Pay attention to the issues Paul is addressing based on our intro to 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy tonight.

## Scripture Readers (19 needed):

1. Maris Deaver
2. Laura Wallace
3. Effie Swanson
4. Christian Greeve
5. Zachary Webster
6. Hope Kamanga
7. Dave Geldart
8. Rachel Whiteaker
9. Matthias Bieber

**Passages:** 1:1-7, 8-11, 12-17, 18-20; 2:1-8, 9-15; 3:1-7, 3-13, 14-16; 4:1-5, 6-10, 11-16; 5:1-8, 9-16, 17-25;  
6:1-2, 3-10, 11-16, 17-21

## 1 Timothy 1:8-11 NEXT WEEK!

Have someone pray.