

1 Timothy

“Help Wanted, Apply Within”

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“Guard what was committed to your trust”

1 Timothy

1:1-2

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I. Introduction

II. Vs. 1-2 The writer, reader and greeting

I. Introduction

100 years ago on January 20th 1914 an article appeared in a London newspaper announcing Britain’s Sir Ernest Shackleton’s planned Antarctic expedition, it was accompanied by a **“Help Wanted”** add that read: *“Men wanted for hazardous journey, small wages, bitter cold, long months of complete darkness, constant danger, safe return doubtful. Honor and recognition in case of success!”* Amazingly thousands of men applied for the opportunity to *“boldly go where no other had gone before.”* Such has been the case countless times when world exploration offers have been made. Yet, there remains an ongoing **“Help Wanted”** add at the door of every church in the world, placed there by none other than Jesus and only a sparse few of His Church have answered. It might read something like this: *“Wanted men and women for a difficult work of helping to build MY church. You will often be misunderstood, even by your coworkers. You will face constant attack from an invisible enemy. You may never see the results of your labors, and your full reward will not come until after your work is completed. Your work may cost you your home, health, ambitions, and even your life. **Please apply with in!**”* Signed, Jesus! Essentially that is what this letter by Paul to his young protégé Timothy is all about. In spite of all the

demands, Church history is full of men and women who have filled out the application and gone to work reaching the lost world. Timothy was just such a man who took that sign from the church door and got to work at the age of 16 and as Paul took up pin and parchment he was serving at Ephesus. These six chapters follow a very deliberate outline with five specific charges for Timothy about fulfilling the work to which he had applied for. You will find those specific charges at the end of the theme of each of those 5 sections:

- A. **1:1-20 The Church and its message: 1:18-20 The message at work**
- B. **2:1-3:16 The Church and its members: 3:14-16 Proper conduct at Church**
- C. **4:1-16 The Church and its minister: 4:11-16 Exercises for ministers to stay fit**
- D. **5:1-25 The Church and its ministry to its self: 5:21-25 Ministry's do's and don'ts**
- E. **6:1-18 The Church and its ministry to the world: 6:20 Guard what was committed to your trust**

II. Vs. 1-2 The writer, reader and greeting

Vs. 1a In this letters introduction we are introduced to three things:

The writer: Paul

The reader: Timothy

The greeting: Grace, mercy and peace from God the father and Jesus Christ our Lord

For Paul to be the writer of this letter requires his release from his Roman imprisonment recorded for us in Acts chapter 28 and his continuation of missionary work. The problem is that we have no complete history on this. We can however using the New Testament this history after his first imprisonment in Rome. In his letter to the Philippians he anticipated his release from

Rome and it is possible that his Jewish accusers from Jerusalem never made the difficult journey to appear at his trial. Fulfilling his promise to the Philippians Paul sent Timothy to Philippi to tell them of his release while he went to Ephesus, in spite of his words to the Ephesian Elders at Miletus that he would never see them again. He no doubt visited other churches in the region like Colossi before rejoining Timothy in Ephesus. He then left Timothy in Ephesus while he traveled to Macedonia to strengthen the Churches there but was delayed and that is when he wrote this letter Timothy around A.D. 62-63 perhaps from Philippi. He later sailed to the Island of Crete where he left Titus to continue the work there while he went on to Corinth where he met up with Apollos and Zenas who were about to go to Crete so Paul wrote a letter to be sent by them to Titus on Crete. He instructed Titus to join him in Nicopolis after Artemas replaced him. Some believe that it was here that Paul traveled to Spain and perhaps even the British Island with Titus as he had planned while imprisoned in Rome. In an early church history document called "*Clement of Rome*" the church historian says that before the end of the 1st century Paul reached the limits of the West. Paul was most likely in Spain from A.D. 64-66 then returned to Greece then Corinth, Miletus and Troas where he was arrested. In His 2nd letter to Timothy he asks him to bring his writing's and his coat that were left behind after his arrest in Troas. The burning of Rome at the hand of Cesar Nero in A.D. 64 where he blamed the Christians had made Christianity illegal and he was imprisoned soon after where he wrote his 2nd letter to Timothy in A.D. 67. After his first court trial in which he was condemned and Paul was awaiting execution by beheading when in his 2nd letter to Timothy he urged him to see him before his death.

The three letters of 1st and 2nd Timothy and Titus are a radical departure in Paul letters as they are all written to people instead of Churches and have become known as pastoral because of the intimate words that he uses in writing them. I said a few weeks back that Christians often fail

to recognize the medium that God choose to use to communicate His truths to His people, personal letters. As such these truths are incased in human love between friends and are extremely relational.

Vs. 1b Elsewhere Paul refers to himself as an apostle “*by the will of God*” but here he says that he is by the “*commandment of God*” which is a word that comes from a King thus a royal command. I believe that these were words of great comfort to Paul as there are times where we know that we are operating in the will of God but in so doing we have great adversity and distress and can begin to question if we heard God right. Ah but when we are doing what God has commanded we expect adversity and aren’t as prone to 2nd guess God’s calling because of adversity.

It is interesting to note the formality of Paul’s introduction as he addresses himself as “*an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the commandment of God our Savior and the Lord Jesus Christ.*” It is odd that Paul would start this extremely intimate letter to a young man whom he refers to as his son in the faith, this way. It would be similar to my children and grandchildren referring to me as pastor instead of Dad or Gran-pee. It is safe to assume that Paul didn’t need the recognition from Timothy and that Timothy clearly recognized Paul’s God given authority. What this suggests is that Paul clearly expected that this personal letter would be read by more than his son in the faith and that churches would one day refer to it as profitable for teaching, doctrine and instruction for all the churches. He had warned in Acts chapter 20 that after his departure “*savage wolves would come into the church not sparing the flock of God*”, and this was written before Timothy was left in Ephesus. This first letter to Timothy has a lot to do with the ministry of the Church...its character, nature and function in the world. Paul’s 2nd letter to Timothy centers on the message that the Church is to share. **Those two themes go hand in hand as the church must “walk its**

talk” as the church is not about where they meet but rather the reason for their meeting!

We are to be a people who meet for the sole purpose of Jesus sharing His work and life to all!

Vs. 2a It is not surprising that Paul would write this letter to Timothy to exhort him to continue to answer the call and wage the good warfare for the kingdom of God, (1:18). That he would continue establishing people who will carry on the work entrusted to them, as he had been unable to do so while imprisoned:

- He encouraged Timothy to maintain his own devotional life so that he would continue to be of use for the Master in chapter 4 verses 12-16.
- Finally Paul told timothy to guard what was committed to his trust.

Timothy had been acquainted with Paul for 20 plus years since Acts 14 when he was around 16 and first met Paul in his home town of Lystra so it’s no wonder that Paul refers to him as his son. These two men had a father-son relationship and Paul carried deeply for Timothy and his situation where he had left him in a great commercial and pleasure resort of the shores of the Mediterranean Sea full of wickedness. When Paul first come to Ephesus the city began to riot because the silver idol trade had been adversely affected because so many of those who had purchased multi breasted silver idols of the Fertility goddess Diana stop buying trinkets.

Paul calls Timothy a “*true son in the faith*” as he had demonstrated that belief in the truth is not intellectual agreement but rather obedience to what we hold as truth. **The mark of Christian maturity is when a person recognizes that our faith is NOT a pop quiz in which we merely need to answer the question correctly. No, it is a lifestyle of living out what we say we believe!** I have found that as a Christian I will be faced with either altering the word to fit my lifestyle or I’ll have to alter my lifestyle to fit the word! Timothy, Paul declares, was of the later

thus a “*True Son in the faith!*” Yet I find it refreshing that even though Paul asserts that character assessment of Timothy he still goes on throughout this letter to write five charges for Timothy to continue to guard what was committed to him! No doubt some of that was because of the continual infiltration of the church by those who were false teachers, something that he alludes to in verse 3-4. Clearly one of those false teaching had to do with a wrong understanding of the Old Testament Law, verses 7-9. The false teachers were trying to regulate people’s conduct by imposing regulations but were failing to recognize the power of grace and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in subduing our fallen nature. ***What the law cannot conquer love can!*** The can only show the ungodly how powerless they are to curb a sinful lifestyle. The law describes for us how love acts, it doesn’t commit adultery, it doesn’t kill or character assonate it’s brother, it doesn’t take what doesn’t belong to it etc. It was love that changed Paul from sinner to saint not the law as verses 12-15 indicate.

No doubt the closing of the introduction continued to speak to Paul’s heart as he wrote of God’s “*grace, mercy and peace*” the trifecta continual resources available to each and every believer from God the Father and Jesus Christ our Lord! If you were to cross reference this greeting with Paul’s other letters you would find that “MERCY” has been added and you will also find it added in his 2nd letter to Timothy as well as his letter to Titus in fact Paul only includes it when writing those three pastoral letters. Mercy is God’s grace distributed for deliverance from adversity and I think every pastor I know loves to know that mercy is available for us.