

1 Timothy 1B

In my introduction last week I said that the heart or the center of Paul's letter to Timothy is found in Ch. 3 vs. 14-15. It is there that Paul expresses his purpose for writing this letter.

1 Tim 3:14 **I hope to come to you soon, but I am writing these things to you so that, 15 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 truth.**

- Here Paul describes the church (the ECCLESIA – the gathering of those called out from the world) that unique body of people belonging to the Living God.
- This gathering of God's people FUNCTION in this world as the PILLAR and BUTTRESS of the truth.
- The words, "Pillar and Buttress" describe the church's primary task of promoting and protecting God's revealed TRUTH.
- Then Paul goes on to describe that truth as "the mystery of godliness." In essence he is describing the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

SO: The church's primary task is to promote and protect the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Certainly we are all familiar with the (PILLAR) PROMOTION of the Gospel.

Mark 16:15 **And he said to them, "Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation."**

- Like a strong pillar the church is to hold forth the glorious Gospel of Christ in the world.

Here in Chapter 1 of Paul's letter to Timothy we find Paul's focus is on the PROTECTION (buttress) of the Gospel. Like a bulkhead that protects the beach from the constant battering of waves, the church is to protect the truth of God.

Why does the church need to protect the Gospel; because we have an enemy who is Biblically described as a liar and deceiver. (John 8:44)

- According to the Lord Jesus himself, we are to be alert and watchful for false prophets.

Matthew 7:15 **"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. 16 You will recognize them by their fruits.**

- *Recognize them by their fruits* – remember that! We will return to the fruit at the end...
- When Questioned about "End Times" the 1st thing out of Jesus' mouth was a warning:

Matthew 24:4 **And Jesus answered them, "See that no one leads you astray. 5 For many will come in my name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and they will lead many astray.**

- The Apostle John spoke also of the deceivers in the end times:

1 John 2:18 **Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time.**

Studying Paul's first letter to Timothy we find that his concern over false teachers actually BRACKETS the letter. Like book-ends Paul begins and ends with clear warnings.

1 Timothy 4:1 **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, 2 through the insincerity of liars whose consciences are seared,**

Remember that Paul is writing to young Timothy who he left behind in the city of Ephesus:

- Paul had a very close relationship with the church at Ephesus. He actually spent three years of his life establishing this church.
- (after 2nd mission) When he was returning to Jerusalem he called the elders of the church at Ephesus to meet with them one more time. After encouraging them and reminding them of his labor among them, he challenged them with these words:

Acts 20: 28 **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.**

29 **I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; 30 and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them. 31 Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to admonish everyone with tears.**

- Years had passed since Paul's tearful good bye to the Ephesian Elders. He was arrested in Jerusalem and imprisoned for a couple of years in Rome.
- This letter to Timothy comes about after Paul's first imprisonment.
- So it is possible that 10 years has passed since Paul's words of warning to the Ephesian Elders.
- But just as he warned, fierce wolves had come into the flock of God at Ephesus.

1 Timothy 1:3 **As I urged you when I was going to Macedonia, remain at Ephesus that you may charge certain persons not to teach any different doctrine,**

- While the letter begins and ends with Paul's deep concern over the false teachers who were presently plaguing the leadership of the church at Ephesus, the underlying thread that we MUST grab hold of throughout the book is this: LISTEN CAREFULLY:

ONLY Sound Doctrine can produce a radically transformed life which reflects the nature of God. On the contrary False Doctrine transforms NO ONE!

Those who embrace the deceitful doctrines of the false teachers continue as Paul describes in Chapter 6: "*Depraved in mind and deprived of the truth.*"

- The PURE GOSPEL – produces PURE LIVES – FALSE DOCTRINE – leaves a person in his unregenerate state: Lustful, Proud, Materialistic (as we will see in Ch. 6)

Let's investigate the false teaching that was infiltrating Ephesus: 2 simple exercises:

1. Identifying the error
2. Inspecting the fruit.

1. Identifying the Error:

3 **As I urged you when I was going to Macedonia, remain at Ephesus that you may charge certain persons not to teach any different doctrine, 4 nor to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies, which promote speculations rather than the stewardship from God that is by faith.**

- As we hold ALL teaching under the magnifying glass we find:

- There is sound doctrine and there is different doctrine
- There are facts and there are fables
- There is revelation and there is speculation.

Paul “URGED” Timothy to remain in Ephesus, He was instructed to “CHARGE” (*a strong military word, to pass on a command*) And Paul’s command - not to teach different doctrines.

- Different doctrines – HETERODIDASKALEIN – instead of orthodox teaching this is heterodox, different teachings.
- Orthodontist straightens teeth / Orthodox teaching is straight teaching.
- From the context we understand that the false teachings were a poisonous mixture of Jewish Legalism, Mythology and Asceticism. (Asceticism – outward pietism through strict dietary laws, forced celibacy –it is an OUTWARD appearance of godliness)
- Let’s take a closer look: (False teachers were devoted to myths)

Myths – (MUTHOS) A tale or fable, fabrications of the mind. Throughout Paul’s writing Myths are viewed in a negative light because they are a perversion of the truth.

1 Timothy 4: 7 **Have nothing to do with irreverent, silly myths. Rather train yourself for godliness;**

Albert Barns: “These (myths) were composed of frivolous and unfounded stories, which they regarded as of great importance, and which they desired to incorporate with the teachings of Christianity.”

Illustrate – You are familiar with the “Orthodox” teaching concerning Mary the Mother of Jesus. We recently went through the Biblical account as we studied the Women of Christmas.

- She was a young virgin, espoused to a man named Joseph.
- Before she and Joseph came together (in a Biblical way) she was found to be with child by the Holy Ghost.
- She gave birth to the Lord Jesus and went on to live a normal life as a wife and mother. Having other children. We know of James and Jude.

NOW the Heterodox teaching concerning Mary the Mother of the Lord Jesus launches from the pages of the Bible but enters the realm of Mythology: (The Catholic Writings)

- Perpetual Virginity - We know this through the witness of Scripture and Tradition, that Jesus was Mary’s only child and that she remained a lifelong virgin.
- Mary is the New Eve, that she was sinless (full of grace). Adam and Eve fell from grace because even though they were conceived without Original Sin, they disobeyed God. Mary is the New Eve and she too is conceived without Original Sin. Unlike the first Eve, Mary always obeyed God, just like Jesus who is the New Adam. Whereas the first Adam and Eve died and turned to dust, the New Adam and Eve were lifted physically into heaven.
- We believe that Mary was taken body and soul into heaven. (called the Assumption) Since it is sin that brings about death, then Mary who is sinless cannot have died. The Roman Catholic Church teaches that at the end of her earthly life, she was taken up, body and soul, into heaven. This is supported by the lack of relics
- You see how that which begins in scripture is corrupted through mythology.

- In the Catholic Writings the doctrines of total depravity, Justification by faith are set aside for the sake of the myth.

Endless Genealogies - The Hebrew People kept careful genealogical records. This was necessary in order that the distinction of their tribes might be kept up.

- Fanciful Hebrew writings like the “Book of Jubilees” consisted of whimsical rewriting of scripture with elaborate descriptions of family trees.
- The whole purpose of keeping genealogical records among the Jews was the anticipation of the coming Messiah. NOW that Jesus had come there was no longer a need for those kind of records. As a matter of fact with the destruction of the temple in 70 ad most of the records were lost.

TODAY – The greatest heterodoxy with regard to “endless genealogies” comes from Mormonism.

- LDS interest in genealogy is based on their fundamental doctrines of salvation, agency, and exaltation. It is the plan of God that all persons shall have the opportunity to hear the gospel of Jesus Christ and receive the saving ordinances, regardless of when they lived on earth. If they do not hear the gospel preached through the Lord's authorized servants in this life, they will hear it in the spirit world after death.
- Latter-day Saints identify their ancestors and arrange for baptism and other ordinances to be performed by proxy-that is, with a living person standing in for the deceased person-in a temple. This is not an optional function of LDS belief; it is, rather, a commandment of God. As Elder Oaks further explained, "We are not hobbyists in genealogy work. We do family history work in order to provide the ordinances of salvation for the living and the dead"
- Heb 9:27 *And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment,*

John Calvin – “He (Paul) calls these genealogies endless, because vain curiosity has no limit, but continually falls from labyrinth to labyrinth.”

- One religious speculation leads to another and another taking the unsuspecting soul further and further away from the truth. They “*promote speculations rather than the stewardship from God that is by faith.*”

2. Inspecting the fruit:

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.*

- The Goal of Paul’s command to Timothy, the goal of orthodoxy, is LOVE that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.
- So as we inspect the soundness of our belief we SHOULD find the fruit of LOVE.
- ONCE AGAIN, Sound Doctrine should produce a life that is transformed, displaying, albeit imperfectly the character of God which is love.
- This is what John said in his first Epistle:

1 John 4:7 *Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. 8 Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.*

- For John the TEST of a truly redeemed life is the manifestation of divine love that is the dominant characteristic in the fellowship of believers.

As we inspect the fruit of our doctrine, let's look carefully at the THREE PRONGED BASE from which this love springs: TRIPOD supporting the transformed life of love.

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.**

Love issues or arises from a pure heart.

PURE – (KATHAROS) We get the word catheter (That tube that is used to drain the impurities from one's body.)

- You have heard of a “Cardiac Cath” This is the work of the Gospel!
- The believing soul has been transformed, catheterized to rid it of the impurities of sin.
- The word literally describes a heart that is devoid of defiling elements like dirt and debris. Of course it is used here in a moral sense for the cleansing that comes through faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Psalms 51:10 **Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.**

Love that arises from a good conscience.

A man's conscience is his “self awareness” Literally the word means “With Knowledge”

The conscience is a gift from God which in all men has been distorted by sin.

Titus 1:15 **To the pure, all things are pure, but to the defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure; but both their minds and their consciences are defiled.**

From the book of Hebrews we learn that the Blood of Christ (His Death) is able to cleanse our guilty conscience.

Heb 10:22 **let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.**

- The cleansing blood of Jesus removes my sin, the Word of God renews my mind and the Spirit of God gives me a new heart.
- My conscience being good is sensitive to all of my offences. That spiritual sensitivity keeps me returning to the cross in humble confession of sin and leads me to live in a right relationship with both God and man. (LIFE OF PEACE, JOY IN THE H.S.)

2Corinthians 1:12 **For our boast is this: the testimony of our conscience that we behaved in the world with simplicity and godly sincerity, not by earthly wisdom but by the grace of God, and supremely so toward you.**

- Paul's confidence was in the work of Christ and ITS transforming power by which his life had been radically changed.

A sincere faith

Very simply a “Sincere Faith” is an UNHYPOCRITICAL FAITH”

- The Greek word for hypocrite was commonly used to describe an actor, someone who wore a mask depicting an unreality.
- But Paul speak of a genuine faith, a faith that is authentic, without pretense. A sincere faith is never put on display. It functions from internal not external motivations.

I have been saved by the GRACE of God, through FAITH in the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

- God revealed this grace to me opened my blind eyes to see his love and I am HUMBLED.
- I do not need to put on a front because God KNOWS my thoughts, my motives. He placed His love in me so I don't need to put on a religious show, I simply need to love as he loved.
- SOUND DOCTRINE to me is the strong tower that I run into. It is the ROCK on which my life is built.

Meditate on This: Quote from Allister Begg:

SOUND DOCTRINE – “is not a bomb to be dropped nor is it a banner to be waved but it is that which God has given to the believer as a bastion (*stronghold, citadel*) and a garrison for his soul.”

- Through it God grants the gifts of repentance, faith and everlasting life.
- ALL of my days, I cling to the TRUTH of God which He graciously revealed through his unchanging Word.
- The teaching of Christ is a BASTION (stronghold a fortress) for my soul.

When the enemy comes to bring his accusations, the Gospel stands in my defense
When I fall, the Gospel of Grace lifts me up and secures my life in the finished work of my Savior.