

**1st Timothy 1: 1 and 2; “The Divine Appointments”, Sermon # 1 in the series –
“To Honor God in the Church”, Delivered by Pastor Paul Rendall on
January 5th, 2014, in the Afternoon Worship Service.**

This young man Timothy, whom the Apostle Paul was writing to, was an evangelist. The office of evangelist, as it existed in the times of the early Church no longer exists today, because there are no longer Apostles today, and an evangelist was an Apostolic helper. The men who are termed “evangelists” today are simply itinerant preachers; men who may or may not be appointed by a particular church to their work, and their object is usually to attempt to win people to Christ. But the evangelist of that day would communicate to the churches, on behalf of the Apostle, the words and will and letters of the Apostle that he sent him to the church with. The evangelist would act as an Apostolic representative, giving the Apostolic instructions to the people of a particular church so that God-honoring order would be established or restored where needed. Here the Apostle Paul is writing a letter to Timothy which would probably be read by others, even though it was only addressed to him. We will see this as I attempt to take you further through this letter. But this afternoon I would like to take you on a short tour of the offices of Apostle and Evangelist by looking at their authority and responsibility. They were not self-appointed men, nor were they self-sufficient men, but their authority and responsibility were established by Divine appointment. I, as your pastor can identify with these men even though I am not in their office; I am in the office of a pastor-teacher. I have been 10 years in the ministry now, and I have at many points in those years understood my own insufficiency for the task of what God has called me to do. I fully agree with the words of the Apostle Paul in 2nd Corinthians 3: 5 where he says: “Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as coming from ourselves but our sufficiency is from God, who also made us sufficient as ministers of the New Covenant, not of the letter, but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.”

My great desire for this church is to see the Spirit’s work among us; to know the ministering power of God’s Holy Spirit making us sufficient to do what God commands us in His word. This is why I have chosen to preach to you from this particular book. 1st Timothy is a book which shows us the duties of a pastor and the duties of Christ’s people in the local church. And I believe that as we go through this book together we will understand better what we are about as a local church. We will see, I trust, what it is that God has commanded concerning the local church. But we will not want to separate out our duty from the work of God’s Spirit. It is not the letter (that is, knowing our duty), that gives life and power; but the Spirit. This means that we will seek God in prayer so that by His power we will be made sufficient to please Him in keeping His commandments. Then we will see everything that is good as coming from Him, and our duty will become our delight. Then the commandments of God’s word will come to us with beauty and power, and then there will be indeed much accomplished for Christ.

By way of overview, you will find in this book of 1st Timothy, many things which God has commanded. He has commanded authority in the local church; which is what we will be looking at today. (verses 1 and 2) He has commanded sound doctrine be taught and held to, in the local church. (verses 3-11) He has commanded the gospel to be preached. (verses 12- 17), and spiritual warfare to be engaged in. (verses 18-20) In Chapter 2 we will see that our Lord Jesus Christ, through the Apostle Paul, has commanded prayer to be offered for all men; men to take the lead in this, and women to be silent, and yet participating in their hearts. In Chapter 3, Paul instructs Timothy on how potential office-bearers were to be recognized, and we also see many other commands given in Chapters 4-6. But this afternoon, let’s begin where Paul begins, with his salutation to Timothy. “Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the commandment of God our

Savior, and the Lord Jesus Christ our hope.” The first thing that Paul mentions is his apostolic authority. It is the commandment of God and the Lord Jesus Christ that made apostolic teaching the basis of all the duties in the Christian life, and in the life of the local church. This, by the way, is how Christ rules and governs His Church. This is how His righteous rule is established over His people. We find here in these words, that the authority of God and the Lordship of Christ are established by submission to his appointments. We find 3 appointments in the first 2 verses.

1st of all – God has appointed Apostles, and especially the Apostle Paul, to define for us, the doctrine and duties of the Christian life, and also those of the local church.

“Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the commandment of God our Savior and the Lord Jesus Christ, our hope.” Everything of importance and significance in terms of what we should be doing in the local church proceeds from a commandment; a commandment coming to us from God our Savior. God the Father has undertaken the salvation of a people for His own possession. He has intended this from before the foundation of the world, that He would have a people for His own possession; an everlasting inheritance, to the praise of His glorious grace. You can see this if you will turn over to John Chapter 12, verses 49 and 50. Here the Lord Jesus says, “For I have not spoken on My own authority; but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak.” “And I know that His command is everlasting life.” “Therefore, whatever I speak, just as the Father has told Me, so I speak.” You can see here that it was God the Father who commanded our Lord Jesus Christ what He should say and what He should speak. He did not speak on His own authority; He was not sent on His own initiative. He came and spoke, lived and died according to the commandment of His Father. He submitted to the eternal plan and purpose of God decreed for Him before the foundation of the world. He accepted the appointment and submitted to the commandment. God the Father’s command was eternal life. The Lord Jesus would fulfill all that was required of Him unto that end; the salvation of God’s elect and the purchase of grace for them in particular; the free and sincere offer of the gospel of salvation to be published to all men. You can see this if you will turn over with me to Titus 1: 1. “Paul, a bondservant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God’s elect and the acknowledgment of the truth which accords with godliness, in hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began, but has in due time manifested His word through preaching, which was committed to me according to the commandment of God our Savior.”

Now turn over to Ephesians 4, verse 7 – “But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ’s gift. “Therefore He says: ‘When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men.’” “(Now this, ‘He ascended what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.)” And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastor and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.” So, once our Lord had accomplished salvation, once He purged our sins, He sat down at the right hand of God the Father.” “He had chosen 12 Apostles whom He had appointed to be His servants in the building and governing of the Church. But God reserved to the apostle Paul to be the apostle to the Gentiles, the apostle born out of time, the one entrusted with the defense of the gospel itself. Paul was the one to preach and teach and define the faith of God’s elect, and to so preach as that men would acknowledge the truth that accords with godliness. God commanded that Paul would, through preaching, manifest His word. This word was committed to Paul, entrusted to him by direct revelation by the risen

Christ. Galatians 1: 1 says that Paul was an Apostle “not from man, nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised Him from the dead”. Paul was an Apostle of Jesus Christ appointed to be the man who defined for all Christians in every local church the doctrine and duties of the Christian life, the duties of members of local church, and how these churches would glorify God through and by the grace of Jesus Christ. The way that this would come about would be by Paul’s committing God’s word to writing in letters and then entrusting this truth in this form to faithful men.

2nd –God has appointed true sons in the faith to be the Apostle’s helpers.

“To Timothy, a true son in the faith.” Timothy is a very good example for us to consider. He is called here a true son. This expression is repeated by Paul in Titus 1: 4, where he calls Titus “a true son in our common faith”. Timothy is called a genuine or a true son in the faith. There were reasons for this precious commendation. Timothy was the son of a believing Jewish woman named Eunice. He also had a grandmother Lois whose faith along with his mother’s is called “genuine”. (2nd Timothy 1: 5) His father was a Greek, and he is not mentioned as a believer. But Timothy had improved upon the grace which had been given to him. He was well-spoken of by the brethren who were at Lystra and Iconium. (Acts 16: 1-5) Paul wanted him to go with him to deliver the decrees of the council at Jerusalem which had been written down; the truth that circumcision would not save. So, Paul had Timothy circumcised so that he would not be a stumbling block to those Jews who were zealous for the law. Timothy seems to have been somewhat timid by nature, and a bit sickly in his bodily constitution, but nevertheless he was a faithful man in spiritual things. In 2nd Timothy 3: 10 Paul says that Timothy had carefully followed his doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, and perseverance. He had followed Paul in all of his persecutions and afflictions which happened to him in Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra. He, as Paul, had been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel.

Turn with me over to 1 Thessalonians chapter 2, verse 4. Here Paul says, “But as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, even so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God who tests our hearts.” “For neither at any time did we use flattering words, as you know, nor a cloak for covetousness—God is witness.” “Nor did we seek glory from men, either from you or from others, when we might have made demands as apostles of Christ.” “But we were gentle among you, just as a nursing mother cherishes her own children.” You can see here that true sons in the faith know that God tests their hearts, true sons of the faith speak as those who would please God; not as pleasing men. They need not use flattering words, they weren’t in the ministry for the money. They did not desire anything from others but their conversion and their walking in the truth and in holiness following their conversion. They sought the glory of God. They knew the right use of their authority. Paul and Timothy were gentle among those whom they ministered to—even as a nursing mother cherishes her own children. And yet, this did not mean that they were unmanly or unable to aggressively assert and to propagate the truth. They were able to exhort, comfort, charge, and implore as a father does his own children; that they would walk worthy of God’s calling. To apply this to our church here; do you see the importance of the minister and the preaching and teaching ministry in this our local church? How important it is to pray for your pastor, that he would be a holy man of God. Only the Spirit of God can raise up such a man, who will be able to useful for service to Christ and His church.

Then 3rd – God has appointed that the Lordship of Christ be established by grace, mercy, and peace being given to every believer in the local church.

“Grace, mercy, and peace from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord.” It was God’s powerful working in grace which made Paul an Apostle, and Timothy a genuine son. Grace and mercy and peace come from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. William Hendricksen says that grace is God’s love toward the guilty, and mercy, His love toward the pitiable, and certainly this is true. But grace goes even beyond that; to the actual enabling of the believer to

will and to do according to His good pleasure. (Philippians 2: 13) God's giving us grace, mercy, and peace, are the only way that we will come to love and do Christ our Master's will. The Great Commission does not say, "Go therefore and make converts of all the nations". Jesus said: "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations; teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you". Receiving grace, mercy, and peace from God and Christ are the only way that people will come to do what God has commanded, and accept what He has ordained. God has plans for each and every believer, but we do not always live up to all the grace that we have been given. But the more that we realize that God's grace is the basis for all that we will accomplish for Him, the more we will be praying and asking for ourselves and one another, that God would bestow grace, mercy, and peace upon us. For grace is not only God's favor; it is His enabling us to His will. To prove this to you, look over with me at 1 Corinthians 15: 9. The apostle Paul says: "For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God." "But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me did not prove vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." You will notice here the humility of Paul. He had been given such great grace and revelation of the truth of God, and yet he calls himself "less than the least of the apostles because he persecuted the church of God." You will also notice that he attributes all of the strength for his abundant labors, to the grace of God. He labored more abundantly than they all, yet not him, but the grace of God which was with him. Let me ask you now whether you have this same mindset as Paul; whether you see that you don't have to strive to be somebody great, or even labor for Christ more than everyone else around you; you simply need to cultivate your relationship of fellowship with Christ to the place where you know what He would have you to be doing, and you go about to do it with all of your might. Ah, this is a great thing to learn.

Now, look over with me at 2 Corinthians 3: 18. "But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord." "Therefore, since we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we do not lose heart." You see what Paul is saying here, don't you? He is saying that even though he is an apostle, he too must be transformed by the grace of God by degrees, by the working of the Spirit of God. But since he knew that he had received mercy, he did not lose heart. He had regard to the loving authority of Christ in his life. He knew that the Lord Jesus had shown him tremendous mercy on the road to Damascus, at the time of his conversion. And he knew that since He had already shown him this great mercy, that He would continue to do so, even amidst all of the trials and difficulties of preaching the gospel and ministering to the churches. Even so, dear Christian, the Lord will be faithful to show you the same kind of mercy. This does not mean that you do not need to pray for grace or mercy for yourself or for other people; surely it is always wise to do so. But you can be assured that our Lord Jesus is a merciful and faithful High Priest, as it says in Hebrews 2: 17, in things pertaining to God. He has made propitiation for the sins of all of His people, and since that is the case, since He has suffered being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted, in any area where they find that they are concerned about themselves.

And now that we are going to close this first day of worship of the year 2014, turn with me over to Romans chapter 15, verse 8. "Now I say that Jesus Christ has become a servant to the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made to the fathers, and that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy, as it is written: 'For this reason I will confess to You among the Gentiles, and sing to Your name.'" "And again he says: 'Rejoice, O Gentiles, with His people!'" "And again: 'Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles!'" "Laud Him, all you people!" "And again, Isaiah says: 'There shall be a root of Jesse; and He who shall rise to reign over the Gentiles, in Him the Gentiles shall hope.'" "Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and

peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. What gives us hope in this New Year? It is that Jesus Christ is Lord, and He will give grace, mercy and peace.