

1 Timothy Chapter 1A (Introduction)

In his Third Epistle, John writes these words:

3 John1:4 **I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth.**

Speaking as a parent, I would agree with John; watching your children grow to be strong healthy disciples of the Lord Jesus is one of life's greatest blessings.

- Some of you are still in the heat of the battle, laboring through long days of discipline and long nights of prayer I want to encourage you, to remember God's call to the Moms and Dads who made up the nation of Israel:

Deuteronomy 6: 6 **And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart.**

7 **You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.**

8 **You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes.**

9 **You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.**

- How do you actually do this? Everyday of our lives the Lord surrounds us with glorious displays of His grace and provision.
 - The rain that refreshes the land and cleans the salt off of the streets.
 - The food that we eat, the homes where we live all testify of God's faithfulness.
 - Our need to forgive one another amidst our many offenses reveals our constant need for the forgiveness that God provides through Jesus Christ.

Before you know it our little ones will become big ones and the Word of God that we have imparted to our children and grandchildren will act like the rudder of a great ship holding them on the course toward eternal life.

Here in the Body of Christ you don't have to have physical children to be a Mom or Dad.

- I would venture a guess that most of us in the church have had the blessing of being cared for by a spiritual Father or spiritual mother.
- I remember WAY BACK when I was 18 I was nurtured by some very precious Christian men who helped me to grow in my faith. (friends at work, men's meetings)

There is no record that the Apostle Paul ever had children of his own but that did not stop him from describing himself as a spiritual father.

As a matter of fact he had many spiritual children.

1 Corinthians 4: 15 **For though you have countless guides in Christ, you do not have many fathers. For I became your father in Christ Jesus through the gospel. 16 I urge you, then, be imitators of me.**

Among Paul's many spiritual children there were two young men who were especially dear to him: they were Timothy and Titus:

- In his letter to the Philippian church Paul writes to recommend Timothy:

Philippians 2: 19 **I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, so that I too may be cheered by news of you. 20 For I have no one like him, who will be genuinely concerned for your welfare. 21 They all seek their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ. 22 But you know Timothy's proven worth, how as a son with a father he has served with me in the gospel.**

23 **I hope therefore to send him just as soon as I see how it will go with me,**

Paul addressed Titus in a similar manner:

Titus 1:4 **To Titus, my true child in a common faith: Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior.**

As we open Paul's letter to Timothy we recognize that this is a letter addressed from a Father to his beloved son, a mentor to his protégé, an Apostle to a young Pastor.

- 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus are often called the "Pastoral Epistles" because in these short letters Paul imparts to young Pastors the essentials that they will need to faithfully lead the family of God.
- Timothy was sent to Ephesus and Titus to Crete in order to develop those churches and raise up strong leaders.
- 1 Timothy 3:14-15 sums up Paul's purpose for writing.

1 Timothy 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.**

- A Military Dad calls his oldest Son: "*I may be deployed next week, if I am this is how I want you to handle the house. And Son, don't ever lose sight of our family standards.*"

Through this letter Paul will ENCOURAGE young Timothy and AFIRM the truths that are essential in preserving the health of the church and the testimony of Jesus Christ.

Paul will instruct young Timothy with regard to the following topics:

- What should be considered Sound and False Doctrine? (doctrine = teaching)
- The importance of prayer.
- Qualifications for elders and deacons
- What is the role of women in the New Testament church?
- How to identify false teachers.
- How the church should handle sinning members (church discipline)
- The proper care for widows in the church.
- A right view of treasure.

Some might ask: What gives Paul the right to impose his standards on the church?

- In our day of relative thinking, a day when society tells us there is NO such thing as absolute truth, what gives Paul the right to tell us what is true and false doctrine?
- In our day of sexual equality, what right does Paul have to dictate the role of women in the church?
- Why should Paul define the qualifications of an elder?
- (As I might say to my older sister when we were young) WHO DIED and left you boss?

Actually when it comes to the New Testament church, Jesus, died and rose from the dead and He declared, "**I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.**"

- It was the resurrected Jesus who revealed himself to Paul on the road to Damascus and appointed him as an Apostle to the Gentiles.
- Paul's apostleship gives him divine authority to write these guidelines for the church.

1 Timothy 1:1, Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by command of God our Savior and of Christ Jesus our hope,

- Paul was designated “*an Apostle*” by the command of God.
 - The use of this particular word “COMMANDMENT” (epitage) instead of the more usual word “WILL” (thelema) Paul emphasizes his apostolic authority.
 - He had a direct charge from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ to carry the Gospel to the Gentiles, before Kings and to the children of Israel.

Acts 9: 15 But the Lord said to him, “Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel.

- His call came by the risen Christ himself and was confirmed by a man named Ananias:

Acts 22: 14 (Ananias said to Paul) ‘The God of our fathers appointed you to know his will, to see the Righteous One and to hear a voice from his mouth; 15 for you will be a witness for him to everyone of what you have seen and heard.

We understand that the clear revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ was entrusted by God to those he designated Apostles and Prophets.

- Listen to what Paul wrote to the church at Ephesus:

Ephesians 3:4 When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, 5 which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit.

- The mystery of Christ, that which was in times past hidden or obscure but has now been revealed to the Apostles and Prophets.
- In light of God’s revelation the Apostles they serve as the foundation of the church.

Paul uses the metaphor of a building to express this to the church:

Ephesians 2:19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, 20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, 21 in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord.

Our citizenship in heaven, our membership in the household of God is established upon the strength of the foundation that God has built.

When you were a child you may have sang the song. “*The wise man built his house upon a rock.*”

- The song was born out of a parable that Jesus told of the wise and foolish builders; one who built on sand and one who built on a rock. The one who built on the rock was the one who heard the Word of the Lord and obeyed.

Matthew 7; 24 “Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock.”

Just this year, I grew in my appreciation of a firm foundation when I applied for a building permit to construct a roof over my porch.

- I had to dig footers 3 feet deep for the 4x4 supports that would hold my roof.
- The borough official was within his authority to define how I should build.
- In the same way the Apostles of Jesus Christ had the delegated authority of the Lord Jesus to establish a firm foundation for the church.

1 Corinthians 3:10 **According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building upon it. Let each one take care how he builds upon it. 11 For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.**

Why is the foundation so important? Because the whole weight of the structure rests upon the integrity of the foundation.

- The whole weight of my house is planted on a 3 foot wide rock foundation built in 1881.
- It is important that our faith be built on the TRUE GOSPEL as a firm foundation.

1 Corinthians 15: 3 **For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures,**

- It is through FAITH in Christ's death and resurrection that we are saved from the wrath of God that is decreed upon all who sin.
- God is just and right to punish all sin. (the wages of sin is death)
 - BUT God in his mercy sacrificed his one and only Son as a substitute for all who would believe.
 - Through faith in Christ's substitutionary death and resurrection all who repent of their sin and believe are placed in a right relationship with God.
- The foundation of our faith is the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Many times I have sat by the hospital bed of desperate individuals who had built their faith upon a faulty foundation. When that foundation is tested it provides no real security.

- Their eternal assurance rested upon the shifting sand of their own works (*Good deeds, church attendance, financial giving.*)
- Sadly, they faced a Holy God dressed in the filthy rags of their own works rather than the white robe of righteousness that is freely given to them which believe.
- Other's believed an over-simplified, watered down Gospel. Someone told them "God loves you and had a wonderful plan for your life."
 - Their response, "That's great, I love me and I have a wonderful plan for my life too."
 - They abandon their misdirected faith when the wonderful plan is interrupted.
- The TV preachers will tell you that Christians are little gods who have access to the "God kind of faith" which can be used to get virtually anything you want.
 - If you can visualize it, believe that it is yours, you can have it.
 - While these people are VERY careful with what comes out of their mouth (don't want any negative confessions) they sadly neglect what is going into their ears.
 - If you do not experience this blessed life it is because you are in sin or you are lacking sufficient faith.

Because Paul desires to sure up the churches firm foundation his first instruction to his dear son Timothy has to do with sound doctrine.

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,**

- We will dig into Paul's exhortation next week. Today allow me to stir your thinking:

Sound Doctrine is like a road map. One of those big old Rand McNalley road maps, the kind that didn't fit under the car seat.

You could open up that map and you could easily see where you WERE, where you ARE and your FINAL DESTINATION.

- The direction and road that you need to take are very clear. Rand McNalley faithfully updated their maps so that you could count on them to be accurate.
- BUT today many people rely on a GPS.

I was very excited the Christmas when Sharon bought me a GPS. I wouldn't have to take the time to study a map any more. I could plug in the GPS tell "LUCY" where I wanted to go and with a beautifully soft British accent she would would take me there.

That same winter we embarked on a family vacation to Main. I plugged the address into Lucy's brain and she took us on a scenic tour of New York. Elliott was just a baby and he screamed in the car for 10 hours straight. Without a map I had no idea where we were or how to get to a highway.

- That winter I learned the hard lesson that sometimes even the voice of what seems to be authority can lead you astray.
- The world in which we live is full of voices who speak with authority.
- HOW can we KNOW?

Just about everyone says that their teaching is "Bible Based?"

- Jehovah Witnesses, Mormons, Faith and Prosperity teachers on TV...

Sound Doctrine is our road map... It clearly marks our point of origin and our final destination. The path leading to that final destination is clearly marked.

- That is why we are committed to a verse by verse study of the Bible.
- Think of the preachers that you hear (even me) as voices to guide you along the way. They can be comforting BUT you need to check them with the MAP or you could be led astray.

HOW important is it to you that your faith in Christ is built upon a solid foundation?

How important is it to you that the truths that you hold firmly are the same truths that were "once delivered to the saints."

In our study of Paul's letter to Timothy we will inspect the foundation:

- Consider what is "Sound Doctrine." How do we recognize False teachers

- The importance of prayer.
- Qualifications for elders and deacons
- What is the role of women in the New Testament church?
- How the church should handle sinning members (church discipline)
- The proper care for widows in the church.
- A right view of MONEY