

## Man of God, p.2

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**Bible Text:** 1 Timothy 6:11  
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But now he's giving Timothy a very personal exhortation in contrast to the character and the evil of the false teachers that were so prominent and ever-present, or you might say ever-presently trying to find their way into the church. So in contrast to that background he says, um, 1 Timothy 6:11,

11 But flee from these things, you man of God, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance and gentleness.

Now we talked this morning about the phrase, first of all, man of God. We talked about how that was a very unique phrase. It's only used one other time in the New Testament. But again he's saying, "Timothy, that's what you are. You're a man of God," and it's, the, the, the spirit, the flow of what Paul's saying is, "Now Timothy, work at this. Be intentional about this. Commit yourself to these things. You be right the opposite of what those false teachers are like." And I told you before, I'll tell you again, that if you want to sum up a false teacher, he's a person who uses, he makes a sacrilege of the ministry. He uses it. He, he comes into it with evil motives so that he might earn the praise of men, so that he might get profit from men, and what was the third one? I forgot. Power over men. Thank you. Maybe y'all should be preaching and I should be out there. Praise, profit and power. That's what they're about. I mean, you can just sum it up. I don't care what they say or what they do. And, and so many of these guys are very humanly talented. They're very impressive and those who are not principally based and more emotionally swayed are easily drawn in by them. Uh, you'll remember Paul warns the unprincipled worldly women in the church that they are constantly chasing every wind of doctrine. They like this, they like that. They're, they follow after this teacher, then that teacher. Well, anyway, "Timothy, you're not like that. You need to commit yourself to truth things and true virtues of a true man of God."

Now we talked about righteousness and that's under II., by the way, the honorable fruit. Uh, he said, "Commit yourself to doing right in the eyes of God, in the eyes of man." Then godliness. He said that's a virtue you need to be committed to. It means God-likeness. And then perseverance and that's where we ended, and I told you there were two key words about this and that's don't quit. You may get down, you might be distraught, you may be anxiety ridden, you may be discouraged but two words, you don't quit. You can't stop what you didn't start. God saved you. God called you into his family. God put

you in his church. Now you do what God's told you to do. It's not about you. It's about the glory of God. And it is about your good and you've got to be wise enough and understand enough that what God's asked you to do is best for you. So don't quit. Persevere on through. Find out what's right and stay with it until you get home.

Now we ended right before we come to D in our outline, is it gonna be on the screen, fellas? There it is, gentleness. Gentleness. What an important word and what a word, um, for those who are in ministry and maybe from Paul's perspective been down the road a ways, been through some rough valleys, some dark nights. Matter of fact, this word that's translated from the Greek, it's the only time the word appears in the New Testament and scholars tell us the root word has the idea of suffering in it. I like to think that the idea here is that pastors who've pastored long and who have pastored well have suffered for the faith. There's no exception to that. Pastors who have pastored long and pastored well have suffered for the faith and there's a tendency if you're, if you're a born again child of God, when you go through suffering and difficulty, it makes you more gentle. It kinda hones off the rough edges.

Now what's true about those who don't know the Lord, those who trust in the world? Well, can I just give you a, a glaring mental vision of what they're like as they get old? They're raging feminists. Hard. Harsh. Bitter. Resentful. Vindictive. You see, if you don't know the Lord and you go through difficulties, you get angry and you, you get, uh, uh, envious and you, you get mad. But the man of God or the woman of God or any child of God as they go through life and storms come and trials come and difficulties come and God shows he's faithful and God reveals to them that, "I'm shapening you and I'm sharpening you and I'm, I'm showing you love in ways you don't even think I can love you," and you see God's hand so long and then a new gentleness comes in. So no wonder I believe the Apostle Paul was telling Timothy, "Timothy, work toward this concept of gentleness as you pastor the church."

Now when I said suffering here, I want you to know this is not the idea of fatalistic depression. It's being humbled to the trials of life and often the reality is for all of us humbled by our own weakness and our own sinfulness, and it helps us to therefore deal with others with gentleness. It's a, it's a blessed thing as a pastor to come to the place where there's not open animosities and there's not open and verbal opposition to the truth and there's a general tenor of sweetness and what I call Gospel humility in the church, and that's when the pastor could really guide his people with gentleness. You know, a pastor can't always be gentle. If, if a wolf comes in in sheep's clothing, he's gotta get tough. He's gotta deal with it. Paul told Titus, "If a factious man rises up, you reject him after two warnings." You don't go through the steps of Matthew 16, you, you deal with him right away. Why? Because the church matters and we can't let anybody harm the bride of Christ.

But overall gentleness, kinda like what Galatians 6:1 tells us, "Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted." In other words, think of yourself, you're weak too. You're vulnerable. You could be here next week, the one

getting corrected. So correct with gentleness in your heart. Now again, there's balance. There's times when you have to be bold and firm. Uh, Paul tells Timothy over in 2 Timothy 4 he's got to reprove and rebuke and exhort with great patience and instruction because a time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine. But all that you can. Is that not a good word, not just for pastors is that not a good word for dads? Is that not a good word for moms?

I remember talking to a man one day and he's older than me, it's getting to where there's not as many people older than me as there used to be. Y'all keep dying, I'll be the oldest one around here before long. But I was talking to a man and he was older than me and he had the most splendid personality, the most likable personality and I asked him one day, I said, "How did you get like that?" He said, "I worked at it." He just said, "I worked at it." You know what? That changed my life. I had heard that and understood that, you know, you ever had people just bite your head off or they're just short or they're just irritable? "Well, that's just the way I am. That's just my person, that's just my disposition, that's just my personality." Well, so what? Change. Don't be like that no more. Stop it! Amen? And for Jeff Noblit, this is good for me to hear to be more, just work at it. You know what happens? If you work on it because it's right, pretty soon it becomes who you are. You're not to come into Christianity with your unique spin on it, you're to come into Christianity to conform to the image of Christ.

So I think the command here, "Timothy, strive toward this," gentleness is a good word for me, I think it's a good word for all of us. But there are times as parents, even as a husband, as head of the household, a pastor in the church, a business leader, remember Paul wrote to the Corinthian church and basically said, "Are y'all gonna do what I'm telling or am I gonna have to come and bring a rod when I show up?" Now maybe he's saying that figuratively but he was making a point. But always we handle people with gentleness whenever possible, and when there's a Gospel humility in the church and a Gospel humility in the pastor's heart, the man of God looks for a gentle avenue all that he can.

Well, let's go to III., and here we go from what I'm calling these virtuous fruits to more what I consider the virtuous roots. Now again, Paul doesn't state this but Paul teaches it thoroughly in the, the, the epistles that he wrote, and the, and the New Testament teaches this thoroughly. I don't have time to go into all of that but I think what the point I'm making is this was understood to Timothy that the two other virtues that I'm gonna point out are more the foundation stone, the roots that the others grow up off of and extend or flow from. Um, in one sense, though, I'd like to say that all of these are somewhat inseparable. You, we, we would like to organize and be little engineers and structure this thing just perfectly. God's truth just doesn't really do that. One bleeds over into the other and one intertwines with the other one, and we have to be real careful about that. It's like repentance and faith. Well, they're different things but you'd never have one without the other. And so they're intertwined. So there's intertwining but these are more the foundation stone.

Uh, someone once said, for example, righteousness is the fruit of faith and godliness is the fruit of love. I wouldn't disagree with that but I would add that gentleness and perseverance also are the fruits of faith and love. So we've seen those four fruits, now I want to talk about the two roots. The two root virtues. Let me say this about both faith and love until I get to breaking each one down. First of all, Christian faith and Christian love is not something we put on, it's something God produces in us, but secondly, it's something we must work toward and pursue and develop. Did you get both of those are true. Both of those are true. God by a gift of grace gives us faith, and God by the power of the Holy Spirit sheds abroad the love of God in our hearts, but nevertheless we are to, we are to strive and be disciplined and intentional to put those on in our lives.

Um, couple of thoughts on, on faith, for example, being foundational. Um, first of all in 1 Timothy 6:20 Paul tells Timothy, "guard what's been entrusted to you." I, I like the old translation where the word "entrusted" is translated "deposited." Guard what's been deposited in you. Now I'll get that Paul may be primarily talking about the great doctrines I've taught you, Timothy, they've been given over to you, they're deposited in you, but the word "deposit" I think would include also the work of God in you, because by the way, you can't receive the great doctrines Paul was telling Timothy if the Spirit wasn't already in there. If it was, if you had to have it deposited first before the doctrine sticks to your soul. So he says, "Now Timothy, these, these things were just given over to you. You didn't work for these. You didn't really obtain these. It was given to you by grace."

So the new birth and all of its blessings including Paul's teaching to, to Timothy were, were a part of the things that are involved here in these foundational things. But one thing is clear, faith and love precede all other virtues in the Christian life. I believe they are the twin towers of our Christian profession. Faith and love are the twin towers, you could say pillars of our Christian profession. So we're to pursue, the Bible says, uh, righteousness, godliness, perseverance and gentleness but all of these flow out of the new birth. It's a, it's in the power of the Spirit to transform the heart that causes faith and love to come alive in a man. These are not natural in man, they cannot be created or worked up in any way or summoned out of the material that makes up the natural man. They come from the new birth.

Now while Timothy's conduct as a man of God gives us conviction as to his status as such, in every real sense Timothy was made a man of God before he was charged and made to act like this. Just like the word "saints" again, I, I said that to you this morning, the Bible says you're all saints, "To the saints at this city. To the saints at that city. Holy ones." Well, no, you're not holy ones in perfect, um, execution right now for sure, but you stand as a holy one before God. And so basically when God challenges Christians and commands Christians and instructs Christians to live a certain way, he's saying live out what you are. Well, Timothy had a little unique role being called to full-time ministry, being appointed by the apostle to oversee this church, so he was termed the man of God in this situation. Now, "Man of God, Timothy, live out what you are. God saved you. God called you. You're the man of God. Now Timothy, live it out."

So my point is that this faith that is in Timothy and love that is in Timothy that he is to cultivate and live out began as the deposits of God's grace in his heart at conversion. One thing is for certain concerning saving faith: Timothy did not convert himself and you did not convert yourself. You cannot make yourself be born again, only the Spirit of God can do that. Let's remind ourselves of John 3:6-8, Jesus said, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be amazed that I said to you, 'You must be born again.'" Well, how does this happen? Jesus said, "Well, it's a mystery." Verse 8, "The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit." You can't figure it out. You can't put your finger on it. Evangelicals and Baptists for, have for a couple of centuries or more tried to package this thing in a little fleshly hoop-jump system. If we can just get a system down to get men born again. And, uh, you know what we've done? We've packed churches full of men who jump through the hoop but don't know God.

Well, we can't convert ourselves. The faith that saves us is, in effect, a gift from God. This is kind of background information that I'm building behind faith, that virtue that I say is a root, a foundation for the others. Now Ephesians 2:4-5, "But God," what a, what a great conjunctive. I wish I had time to go back to verses 1 through 3 and tell you why "But God" is so important there because you are dead in your trespasses and sins, and Satan was your father, and there's no good in you whatsoever, and you were by nature a child of wrath, "But God." In that status, God acted towards you. Why? The next phrase, because "being rich in mercy." God has no limit on the amount of great mercy he shows to the most undeserving. And by the way, mercy has the idea that God feels a compassion or a pity, not just that he acts in good ways toward you because you need the relief. It's both, he feels it and he acts. God's rich in mercy "because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions," notice this, "made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)." It's grace that made you alive when you were dead in your trespasses and sins.

I'll never forget it, it's just, you know, I've told you many times there are those little reference points in your spiritual pilgrimage where somebody said something and it just stuck with you. I'll never forget Dr. Jimmy Milikin in my Systematic Theology class at Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary exhorting us on this passage and he said, said, "There it is, you were dead in your trespasses and sins but you were made alive." Then he'd ask this question and I'm gonna ask you this question. Do you remember what it is? "How dead were you?" How dead were you? Kinda halfway dead? Kinda 90% dead? About 50% dead? No, you're either dead or you're alive. You go down to the funeral home and see if they're dead or alive. They're dead and we were dead spiritually. We couldn't, we couldn't make ourselves alive. God made us alive with Christ.

Uh, Romans 9:15-16, "But He says to Moses, 'I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.'" Now what about that? What you gonna do about that? How you gonna slice that up? God said, "I think I'll be God on this, is that okay with you Baptists? I think I'll be God on this, is that okay with you Presbyterians? Is that okay with you Methodists? I think I'll just be God about

this, how about that? I'll, I'll have mercy when I want to have mercy. I'll have compassion when I wanna have compassion, on whom I want to have compassion."

Verse 16 of Romans 9, put it back up there, guys. Verse 16, "So then it does not depend," it does not depend, it does not depend "on the man who wills or the man who runs, but on God who has mercy." I don't know about you, I think God's sovereign, including salvation. Most Baptists think God's sovereign up to salvation then man takes over, then man's sovereign over his own eternal soul.

Romans 9:18, "So then He has mercy on whom He desires, and He hardens whom He desires." Whoa. Lash that on a little bit. Here's my point: the faith that saves you came to you as a gift of God, for by grace are you saved through faith, that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not by works that any man should boast. It is the gift of God so there's no boasting.

So now let's balance this out. I don't want my Arminian friends to be completely upset with me tonight. Everyone, absolutely everyone, absolutely everyone who repents of their sin and trusts Jesus Christ will be saved. Everyone. Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord in repentance and faith will be saved. That's a wonderful truth. They become a child of God. Yet here's what the Bible refuses to let up on and that is that yet back of their saving faith is the sovereign hand of God. So my point is Timothy's faith was a grace gift but now he must work to pursue faith, not to find it, he must work to follow it. He must work to live it out. That's why he's commanding this here and it is a foundational, it's a root virtue that others come from.

When you have faith in Jesus Christ, you know then all of a sudden you'll find righteousness increasing in your life. You'll find godliness increasing in your life. You'll find persevering increasing in your life. Perseverance. And you'll find gentleness increasing in your life. Hey, that's what he just got through talking about. But you grow in faith, those start flowing more and more. That's why I call them the root or a root in our lives. Faith means I love Christ, I embrace Christ, and I desire to honor his wisdom and his wisdom says live righteously, his wisdom says live godly in godliness, his wisdom says to persevere and keep on going, and his wisdom says in all that you possibly can function in gentleness. Do this, man of God.

Well, that's faith, let's go to love now for just a moment. That's the other virtue mentioned in verse 11 that I consider a root virtue that others grow out of. Matter of fact, is it not true in Galatians 5:22 the, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience. Why is love mentioned first? I don't think that's a coincidence. It's sort of the foundation stone that the others flow out of. It's true that only Christians can love with godly love. Only Christians can know and express this kind of love. This love is not natural to us. This love and the capacity to love as God commands and expects Christians to love is not, uh, or rather does not come from the fallen natural flesh. It comes from God.

What's the Bible tells us, tell us in Romans 5:5? "And hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was

given to us." Now I think that includes both God's love for us is very real in our hearts, but also the capacity to love, the agape factor, I call it sometimes, is a gift from God. "Now but you're responsible, Timothy. Be a man of God and, and follow after this and pursue it and put it on and walk in it." Now the love of God really changes our, our hearts. The love of God really effects our lives that we love all people better when God's put his love in our hearts, but we especially love the church, our brothers and sisters.

So there's God's love for us, there's God's love through us, and then John says it's, or Jesus actually said it and John wrote it, that it's God's love that identifies us as a child of God. "All men will know you're My disciples by the love you have one for another." So we must embrace this love and then we are to pursue it, we get into the word, we pray that we'd be more loving, we repent when we're not loving like this, we repent when we don't feel that love for our brothers and sisters as we know we ought to. We pursue it and we persevere to have it, and then when this love is abiding in us and we're trying to walk in the flow of it, then we naturally are more righteous than we were before, we have more godliness than we did before, we will persevere, and we will have more gentleness. That's why these are all intertwined but faith and love are real foundation stones that the rest of these grow out of.

Well, here's my final word to you tonight. Just do it. That's what he's saying to Timothy, "Timothy, I know you don't feel like it, just do it. Do what's right." Are you discouraged tonight? Are you depressed? Are you anxiety ridden? Then you find out what your Lord's told you to do next and you do it. You, you grab yourself by the nape of the neck and you do what God's told you to do and it gets real easy if you're under somebody's authority because God tells you if you're an employee, you're to work for your employer like working unto the Lord. Then you say, "I'm gonna go to work. I'm gonna do everything that woman tells me to do with joy in my heart as doing it unto the Lord." You're a wife, you honor your husband. Do the next thing you're supposed to do. You're a church member, you honor your elders, do the next thing you're supposed to do. Young people, it's just super easily for y'all, you obey mom and dad. That's the next thing you do. That's righteous. That's being godly. Now persevere in it and all that you can, be gentle.

"Man of God, Timothy, do these things. Be determined and work at it."