

I Timothy 1:12-20

Commentary: Paul's Thanksgiving to God 1:12-17

Paul begins this section with thanksgiving to God for “strengthening”(enabling) him to proclaim the gospel. Paul shares his personal testimony with Timothy, in order to encourage Timothy that Jesus can transform even the worst of sinners for the service of God. The situation Timothy faced in Ephesus with the false teachers was difficult, made even harder by Timothy's sickness (5:23), and youthfulness (4:12). Paul's testimony demonstrates the grace and mercy found in Jesus Christ and provides an illustration that the gospel, and not the useless elitist teachings of the false teachers, is the power of God unto salvation for sinners.

Instructions:

Carefully read through I Timothy 1:12-20 and then attempt to answer the questions which follow.

1. What is the first qualification for the service of Jesus Christ (v12)?
2. What makes Paul qualified to speak about the abundant grace of God to others (v13-15)?
3. What did Jesus demonstrate in extending mercy to Paul (v15-16)?
4. What does Paul's conversion tell you about God's grace?
5. What difference does it make in your life to know that Jesus extended mercy to Paul, the “chief” (v15) among sinners?
6. What characteristics of Jesus does Paul list (v17)?

Commentary: Paul's Charge to Timothy 1:18-20

After Paul's words of encouragement based on Paul's own experience of how God has dealt with him (v12-17), Paul further challenges Timothy to remain faithful to God and His

call in his service as minister of the gospel at Ephesus. Paul returns to the theme expressed in verses 3-7, the instruction of false teachers, in particular towards the two known by Paul, Hymenaeus and Alexander.

Read I Corinthians 7:1-9 in regards to Paul's marital status.

7. Paul refers to Timothy as "my son" (tekon= "child") in v18. Explain what Paul means by this term given what you have read in I Corinthians 7:1-9.

8. What phrase found in v18 affirms Timothy's call to ministry (to fight the good fight)?

9. What must Timothy (and all believers) demonstrate in "fighting the good fight" (v19)

To hand over to Satan (v20) does NOT mean to lose ones salvation, but instead to commit the disobedient believer to Satan's domain, which is the world. The outworking of this expression would be to exclude the believer from the protection afforded by the local church and all Christian fellowship.

10. For what purpose does Paul say this act serves (v20)?