

SUNDAY SCHOOL MATERIALS FOR ADULTS

LESSON 1



HOLD TO SOUND DOCTRINE

Scripture Text: 1 Timothy 1:1-20

This quarter we study into the close association of Paul and Timothy, a relationship which was never broken.

The Book of First Timothy was written by Paul to Timothy, a young minister of the Gospel of Christ. Paul wrote the letter for the purpose that Timothy would be encouraged and strengthened in holding to the sound doctrine of Christ as he had taught him. Paul, in stirring the spirit of Timothy, lays before each follower of Christ the truth that the work of the church must be done through the gifts of the Spirit. Leaders must be called of God and be examples of godly living.

Timothy had been called to the work of the ministry and had been given the necessary gift of the Spirit by which to carry it on. Paul's confidence in him was not disappointed. His letters to Timothy show affection, esteem, and trust. To the Philippians, he said of him, **I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state (Philippians 2:19-23)**. We must hold fast to the truth of Christ and refuse false teachings.

MEMORY VERSE: *I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.—3 John 4*

DAILY READINGS:

- Mon.—**Isaiah 55** Promise of salvation.
- Tue.—**John 6:26-51** Doctrine of Jesus.
- Wed.—**Hebrews 6:1-8** Danger of falling.
- Thu.—**Hebrews 12:1-15** Steadfastness.
- Fri.—**2 John** Abiding in the truth.

Devotional Reading: Colossians 2 —Be established in the truth.

The Relationship of Saints

1 Timothy 1:1-2 In the warm greeting of Paul to Timothy which opens this letter, we see that each occupied a genuine abiding place in the church, the body of Christ—Paul was **an apostle of Jesus Christ**, Timothy, **my own son in the faith**. Each entered his position by the spiritual act of God—Paul, **by the commandment of God**, Timothy, a son **in the faith**. And they were bound together in a close fellowship of love. These three characteristics are present in the Church of God.

The relationship of saints one to another is spiritual, and it is real. It is the closest union humans have with each other. Saints are related by the blood of Christ, born of the same Father, possessed of the same Spirit. They are branches growing on the same Vine. The world knows nothing of such. Clubs and so-called churches may have a business and social relationship, but no kinship, no spiritual fellowship, and no joy in one another such as the church has.

1 Timothy 1:3-4 Paul left Timothy at Ephesus while he went on to Macedonia. The Ephesian church was slipping from the state of purity they had when Paul wrote of his thankfulness for their **faith and love** and said they **trusted in Christ** and **were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise (Ephesians 1:12-16)**. They had begun to leave their first love, a state described by Christ in **Revelation 2:1-7**. False teachers and bad examples were among them. Timothy must teach them to hold to true doctrine. Some evils which had crept in were **fables**—groundless legends, traditions, and opinions and **genealogies**—tracings of ancestry back to Abraham and tribal leaders. These had no basis in Scripture or authority from God. Such **minister questions**—raise disputes, doubts, separations over opinions. The opposite of this is **godly edifying which is in faith**. Progress in godliness can come only by way of **faith**—believing in God's Word and obeying it.

SUNDAY SCHOOL MATERIALS FOR ADULTS

LESSON 1

A Program of Love

1 Timothy 1:5-10 Paul pointed Timothy to **the end of the commandment**—the goal of God's dealings with man. The purpose of God's relation to man shown in the Law and the Prophets and completed in the atoning work of Christ is **charity**—the love of God filling the heart of man. God IS love. This love radiates out. It comes out of a **pure heart**. Love comes out of a **good conscience**, made good when sin is forgiven. It comes out of **faith unfeigned**—unpretended, genuine—for faith is necessary to receive God or any of His gifts. Thus faith, a clear conscience, and a pure heart are steps to reaching the experience God plans for us. Some have missed it because they **have turned aside unto vain jangling**—useless words, arguing, contention, trying to teach things they do not understand. Paul names things that are contrary to sound doctrine in **verses 8-11**.

Paul's Testimony

1 Timothy 1:11-17 Being reminded of the glorious Gospel, Paul begins to testify of what that Gospel has meant to his life. (1) It was Christ, not Paul himself, who put him into his place of service. God filled him **with faith and love, that which is in Christ Jesus**. (2) Paul tells of his former life while in sin—**blasphemer . . . persecutor . . . injurious**. Paul owned to being the **chief** of sinners. (3) Paul **obtained mercy, because he did it ignorantly**. He thought he was doing right (**Acts 26:9**). As soon as Paul knew the truth, he obeyed it (**Acts 26:19**). (4) Christ's mission to the world was **to save sinners**. (5) Paul **obtained mercy** so that **Christ might shew forth all longsuffering**—might demonstrate His saving work—**for a pattern**, or example, **to them which should hereafter believe on him**—on Christ—**to life everlasting**. (6) Then Paul breaks forth in thanks and praise to the God Who had done all this. He calls Him **King eternal**—Ruler of all forever; **immortal**—deathless, incorruptible; **invisible**—not seen, yet He is strongly felt in His works; **only wise God**—none beside Him. Paul gave Him **honor and glory forever and ever**—endlessly.

A Charge to Timothy

1 Timothy 1:18-20 **This charge I commit unto thee**—the work for which Paul left Timothy in Ephesus, to teach the church to hold to true doctrine and avoid false teachings. Timothy was to carry it on **according to the prophecies**—according to the spiritual gift and the instructions for its use which God gave him (**1 Timothy 4:14; 2 Timothy 1:6-9**). Prophecies are Words from God. Timothy was to **war a good warfare**. He was to hold **faith, and a good conscience**. Others, neglecting to do so, **made shipwreck** of their souls. Two names of individuals who had done so are named here. The delivering **unto Satan** is a punishment for blasphemy against the leading of the Holy Spirit in their lives. **That they may learn**. What a tragic lesson! Are we treating sin too lightly when we think we can have forgiveness whenever we ask it, regardless of our previous knowledge?

JUST A THOUGHT

A lame man on the right road will beat a fast man on the wrong road.

This lesson is adapted from a lesson by Mary Lehmann.
It is revised and posted here with written permission from
(c) Bible Paths Publications, PO Box 299, Keithville, LA 71047