

Union Bethel AME Church Bible Study

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Tuesday, December 22, 2020, 6:30 – 7:30 PM

1 Timothy 1:1-



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1 Timothy 1:1-2

1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the command of God our Savior and of Christ Jesus our hope, 2 To Timothy, my loyal child in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

Paul begins this letter with a particular emphasis on Timothy's status as Paul's spiritual son. It is important for each of us to have a spiritual parent. Also, if God's Holy Spirit gives us the skills, we are spiritual guides for someone else. This is not limited to friends and family or to ministers. We all need spiritual guidance from those who are stronger in faith than we are and from those who have completed training in the process of spiritual guidance.

Why is spiritual guidance needed and how do we connect with a spiritual guide?

1 Timothy 1:3-7

3 I urge you, as I did when I was on my way to Macedonia, to remain in Ephesus so that you may instruct certain people not to teach any different doctrine, 4 and not to occupy themselves with myths and endless genealogies that promote speculations rather than the divine training that is known by faith. 5 But the aim of such instruction is love that comes from a pure heart, a good conscience, and sincere faith. 6 Some people have deviated from these and turned to meaningless talk, 7 desiring to be teachers of the law, without understanding either what they are saying or the things about which they make assertions.

Paul urges Timothy to stay in place at Ephesus and not to evangelize out of town. There was an urgent need for the people to hear the truth of the Gospel and not a Gospel intertwined with Gnosticism. Paul also says training is needed that is divine by faith.

Does training by faith rule out training with formal instruction?

What type of training was Paul asking Timothy to do in Ephesus?

1 Timothy 1:8-11

8 Now we know that the law is good, if one uses it legitimately. 9 This means understanding that the law is laid down not for the innocent but for the lawless and disobedient, for the godless and sinful, for the unholy and profane, for those who kill their father or mother, for murderers, 10 fornicators, sodomites, slave traders, liars, perjurers, and

*whatever else is contrary to the sound teaching **11** that conforms to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which he entrusted to me.*

Paul asked Timothy to provide lawful guidance for the church in Ephesus to guide them from sinful ways. He calls out several specific sins that fall into the following categories: bodily harm, sexual sin, emotional/mental harm, sin against the spirit, and any sin against the gospel of Christ Jesus.

Why would these specific sins be important for Paul to highlight?

1 Timothy 1:12-17

***12** I am grateful to Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because he judged me faithful and appointed me to his service, **13** even though I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and a man of violence. But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief, **14** and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. **15** The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the foremost. **16** But for that very reason I received mercy, so that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display the utmost patience, making me an example to those who would come to believe in him for eternal life. **17** To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.*

Christ Jesus came to save all sinners, not just some sinners. Paul labels himself as one of the worse offenders even though he was acting out of ignorance. Yet, God through Christ Jesus allowed grace to flood over Paul's life and turn him away from persecuting those following Jesus. Paul's life story is one of privilege, abuse of power, humbling disability, acceptance of Christ Jesus, and renewed strength to serve God.

Have we done a full reflection on our own life story and God's grace toward us as Paul does in these verses?

For all of the faults that Paul lists, God does not condemn him. What should our expression of mercy be toward ourselves and toward others who hurt us?

1 Timothy 1:18-20

18 I am giving you these instructions, Timothy, my child, in accordance with the prophecies made earlier about you, so that by following them you may fight the good fight, 19 having faith and a good conscience. By rejecting conscience, certain persons have suffered shipwreck in the faith; 20 among them are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have turned over to Satan, so that they may learn not to blaspheme.

Evidently, there had been prophecies about Timothy that were told to Paul. Paul encourages and reiterates the tools Timothy needs to fight “the good fight”. This statement implies that there will be fight and it is good to engage in this battle.

What are some examples of when a good fight is necessary?

Paul also writes about two individuals who suffered “shipwreck in the faith”. He writes that he gave them over to Satan so that they may learn what not to do. This reminds us of Paul’s statement to remove from the church those who will not repent and stop sinning.

What does the imagery of shipwrecked, given to Satan convey?

How would giving someone over to Satan teach repentance?
