

1 Timothy, Chapter One, Lesson Three

CHRIST'S EXAMPLE 1 Timothy 1:12-17

STIMULATE

** What environment did Paul portray before us last week as our mission field, in which we are to be ready to share God's glorious gospel?

The "**Corrupt Environment**" of this fallen world.

** Do we need to clean up the lives of men, before they can become saved?

Absolutely not - It is those sinners living within our world's "**Corrupt Environment**" that the gospel of Christ is designed to reach. We simply must be faithful to proclaim His truth and then ask the Lord to grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth.
cf. 2 Timothy 2:24-25

** What were the three distinct signs of a false teacher?

- 1) "wanting to be teachers of the Law"
- 2) "they do not understand" Scripture
- 3) They do not use God's word "lawfully", rather they leave lost sinners in the grasp of the "**Corrupt Environment**" by failing to share God's truth accurately.

** As stewards of God's wonderful saving truth, we need to be faithful in our sharing of His gospel. Have you been more aware of your opportunities to share the truth of God's Word with others this past week?

Hopefully we will recognize the serious call of God to proclaim His truth, of which He has made us stewards.
cf. 1 Corinthians 4:1-2

MOTIVATE

** Throughout the course of our studies together, the subject of being a good example has been repeatedly addressed; as well as the subject of following a good example. Today we have the privilege of looking closely at "**Christ's Example**", not so much the example He lived before us; but rather the example Christ Himself used as a model for those who might become saved. The passage before us is going to bless your hearts and cause you to be very thankful for the common salvation we all share in Christ Jesus.

Read passage (V.12-14) (V.15-17)

Opening Prayer

Christ's Example

INVESTIGATE

V.12 ** With which attitude does Paul open our passage for today?

Paul begins his comments by expressing an attitude of gratitude, which was the typical expression of his heart.
cf. Romans 1:8, 1 Corinthians 1:4, Philippians 1:3, Philemon 1:4

** To whom does Paul direct his thankfulness?

To “Christ Jesus **our** Lord”. Remember this is a personal letter to a young man named Timothy and Paul is identifying with him by referring to their common salvation through faith in the same Lord, Jesus.

** What two things had Jesus Christ done for the apostle Paul, for which he is now expressing his thankfulness?

1) Jesus Christ “has strengthened” Paul!

cf. 2Corinthians 9:8, 2Timothy 4:16-17 and Philippians 4:13

2) Jesus Christ put Paul “into service”.

cf. Acts 9:1-8, Acts 9:15-16, Acts 26:15-18

** Our Lord graciously chose Paul and put him into service on behalf of the gospel and the Kingdom of God; according to the middle of verse 12, why did Jesus Christ do that?

“...because He considered [Paul] faithful...”

** What does that say about how God evaluates man’s heart potential verses how we might do the same?

Paul was a murderer and was set against Christ, God and the gospel; yet Christ knew the potential of his heart and saved him by God’s grace to then suffer for the cause of Christ. cf. 1Samuel 16:7, Hebrews 4:12

V.13 ** So how bad was it, how does Paul describe his life prior to his salvation?

He was formerly a:

1)blasphemer - one who slanders God, who overtly speaks evil of Him. And all of this while he was pursuing his own righteousness by trying to keep the Law through religious effort. cf. Philippians 3:5-6

2)persecutor - Paul was relentless in his role of a ferocious persecutor of Christians.

cf. Acts 7:59-8:3, Acts 26:10

3)violent aggressor - an individual with no normal concern for human kindness. *Hubristes* denotes a person driven by violence and contempt for others.

cf. Acts 9:13-14

** What nearly unbelievable observation does Paul make about the treatment he received from a gracious God?

“**And yet** (or in spite of who I am) I was shown mercy”. The grace of God removes the guilt of our sin, granting us salvation. God’s mercy takes away the misery caused by our sin.

cf. Hebrews 4:14-16

** Why was Paul so fortunate? Why did he receive God’s mercy and grace in salvation through Jesus Christ?

“...because [he] acted ignorantly in unbelief” cf. Sinning willfully after having a full knowledge of the truth. (Hebrews 10:26-27)

Living as a sinner, devoid of the truth. (Luke 12:42-48, Luke 23:33-34, Acts 3:14-19)

Again, it is important for us to realize that God reads the heart of man. We should be extremely thankful for God's saving grace which has granted us salvation in the name of Jesus Christ and that we did not continue in our ignorance to the point of becoming hardened against the truth.

V.14 ** How adequate is the grace of God in our salvation?

It is "...more than abundant..."

** What if we do not become Christians until a time later in life? What if we have abounded in sin all our lives?

God's grace is so abundant that it completely overcomes the condemning aspects of sin for the one who responds to the saving message of the gospel. cf. Romans 5:20-21, Romans 8:1-2

** According to Paul, what comes with God's abundant grace which can only be found "in Christ Jesus"?

"...the faith and love which are found in Christ Jesus." Not only does God's grace overpower the condemning power of sin, and His mercy take away the misery of our sin, but His grace gives us the faith to believe in Him and puts God's love in our hearts for Christ. cf. Ephesians 2:8, Romans 5:5-6

** What is significant about faith and love being mentioned in connection with salvation through Christ?

True saving faith is always accompanied by love. The love of God, love for God and love for our brothers and sisters in Christ; all serve as verification to the genuineness of our salvation. cf. Ephesians 1:15, Colossians 1:3-4, 2Thessalonians 1:3, 1John 3:14

V.15 ** How do you know that Paul really wants Timothy to pay attention to what he is about to say here in verse fifteen?

Paul says, "It is a trustworthy statement..." This unique phrase is used only here in the pastoral epistles and is indicating the established doctrine of which he was about to address. Timothy and Titus knew they could take these truths "to the bank". cf. 1Timothy 3:1, 4:9, 2Timothy 2:11 and Titus 3:8

** How does Paul add emphasis to what he is about to say?

By adding "...deserving full acceptance..."! We do not want to miss this message. Everyone needs to hear and understand what Paul is about to say.

** What short statement (only eight words in the original Greek) does Paul offer to present the gospel?

"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners"! We should be just as bold, direct and to the point when we are sharing God's saving truth with the lost around us.

** Let's break that brief statement down to learn the rich theology it contains.

Christ Jesus - Christ, Messiah, the anointed King and promised One, is non-other than Jesus.

came into the world - this is the Incarnation of Jesus, God becoming a man. cf. Philippians 2:5-6, John 1:1, 14, John 11:25-27, John 16:28, John 18:37

to save - Men must be saved from their own sinfulness, they cannot solve the problem themselves. cf. Matthew 1:21 and Luke 19:9-10

sinner - While this term was used by the Jews of Christ's day to describe Gentiles, our Lord is using it to refer to all of fallen mankind. cf. Matthew 9:12-13, Romans 3:21-23

** This great, brief statement presents the gospel as it portrays man's sinful, helpless condition. How did Paul feel about his own ranking among the sinners of the world?

"Among" them all, he thought he was the worst! Paul was not concerned with building up a strong self-esteem, but rather was quick to acknowledge his total dependency upon God's saving grace. cf. Ephesians 3:8 and Galatians 2:20

V.16 ** Verse sixteen begins with a reflective voice, looking back to Paul's amazing statement about being the worse sinner of his day. So what was the reason for Paul receiving mercy from our gracious Lord?

"...in order that in [Paul] as the foremost, Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience. The term used here for "patience" is our familiar *makrothumia*, indicating patience with people.

** So how had Paul become "**Christ's Example**" of the type of people who can be saved?

By showing grace and mercy to Paul, by granting him salvation, by putting him into service; Jesus was showing us that all of "those who would believe in Him for eternal life" will be saved!

This is extremely exciting news for sinners who think that their life is hopeless and has been a total waste. They can yet be saved and used for God's glory! cf. Matthew 19:23-26

V.17 ** What kind of response should we have to this amazing news? How should we respond to Jesus Christ for His grace and mercy which has given us so much to enjoy for all of eternity?

Just like Paul does here in verse seventeen. Our hearts should break forth in a doxology (or praise saying) which is designed to exalt the greatness of our Lord and God.

His description: "the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God.

His doxology: "be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen"

EXTRICATE

** How did Paul open our passage for today? What attitude should accompany our daily walk with the Lord when we consider all that He has accomplished on our behalf?

He displayed his "attitude of gratitude" and so should we in everything we do; out of our loving, thankful hearts toward the Lord.

DELINEATE

** How bad off was Paul before he was saved?

He was a "**blasphemer, persecutor and violent aggressor**" against Jesus Christ and any who believed on His name for salvation.

EVALUATE

**** Who was “Christ’s Example” today which showed us the openness of the gospel in its ability to save sinners?**

The apostle Paul himself, in his murderous, sinful lifestyle. He could be saved, so anyone can be!

ACTIVATE

**** How will learning about “Christ’s Example” better prepare you to share the good news of the gospel with the sinners who cross your path?**

No matter what they have done, or how badly they feel about themselves; if they will repent and call out to Christ for forgiveness, they too can be saved.

Closing prayer