

## 1Timothy, Chapter One, Lesson One

CORRECTING ERROR 1Timothy 1:1-5

### STIMULATE

\*\* Having just completed our series entitled “**Led by the Spirit**”, it was wonderful to realize that God’s will for our lives is for us to be **Saved, Spirit-filled, Sanctified, Submissive** and for us to be willing to experience **Suffering** for His name. What were the five commands given to us by David in Psalm 37:3-4 which would help us to understand the first principle of being “**Led by the Spirit**”?

We are to: 1) **Trust in the Lord**, 2) **Do good**, 3) **Dwell in the land**, 4) **Cultivate faithfulness** and 5) **Delight yourself in the Lord**.

\*\* What were the two principles from David which would ensure that we are living each day “**Led by the Spirit**”?

1) Do whatever you want! If all ten things listed above are true about your daily walk with the Lord, then the desires you have come from Him.

2) Keep moving! We should be continually available to our Lord to use our spiritual gifts as He directs for the advancement of the body and the building up of our fellow saints. cf. Psalm 37:23, 1Peter 4:10

### MOTIVATE

\*\* As we now return to our pattern of studying the Pauline epistles, we come to Paul’s first letter to Timothy. When we consider the title of this epistle, we are immediately confronted with a glaring difference in Paul’s thinking. He is no longer addressing entire congregations, like we saw in Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 and 2Thessalonians; but rather is writing an extremely personal letter to just one individual. Over the next month here in chapter one, we will see Paul address four critical issues in the life of a Christian. He is going to instruct Timothy regarding:

*CORRECTING ERROR* - 1Timothy 1:1-5

*CORRUPT ENVIRONMENT* - 1Timothy 1:6-11

*CHRIST’S EXAMPLE* - 1Timothy 1:12-17

*CONSCIENTIOUS EFFORT* - 1Timothy 1:18-20

As this marvelous epistle unfolds before us, we are privileged to look over the shoulder of the apostle Paul and to glean from his writings the very truths which he will share with Timothy which are designed to equip the young pastor for his role of “Correcting Error“ in the Ephesian church.

Read passage (V.1-5)

Opening Prayer

*Correcting Error*

### INVESTIGATE

\*\* To help us embrace all that Paul has to say to Timothy and to help us identify with the crisis at hand, let's spend a little time developing a fundamental understanding of this epistle. At what point in the life of Paul do we find the apostle as he pens this epistle?

After his release from his first Roman imprisonment. cf. Acts 28:16, 30-31

Around 62-64 A.D. Paul revisited some of the key churches in which he had ministered, including Ephesus. He then went on to Macedonia, including Philippi, from which he authored this letter and his letter to Titus.

We are now 30 years after Pentecost and 15 years after Acts 16:1-3 where Paul meets Timothy and takes him along on his second missionary journey.

Paul would be rearrested with the outbreak of Nero's persecution and write his final letter (2Timothy) from his second Roman imprisonment just prior to his execution in late 66 A.D. or early 67 A.D.

\*\* Because of its highly personal nature, Paul's letter carries with it some extremely important instructions to Timothy. Instructions which prove to be very helpful for us today in our battle against sin and Satan. What were some of Paul's main issues when writing this letter to his "true child in the faith"?

He instructed him regarding:

False Doctrine

Specific functions within the Church

False Teachers

Timothy's Pastoral Responsibilities

Standards for the man of God

**V. 1** \*\* So with that brief backdrop to help our understanding, let's get into our passage for today. Keeping in mind that Paul is about to call Timothy to the high position of "**Correcting Error**" among those in church leadership at Ephesus, by what authority does Paul communicate his instruction?

He was "an apostle of Christ Jesus". The verb *apostello*, from which the noun *apostolos* (apostle) derives, means "to send off on a commission".

\*\* This important term describes an extremely small group of individuals. The original twelve disciples (minus Judas and adding Matthias) and Paul. What made these men so unique, how is it that they had the authority to speak on behalf of Christ?

1) They were personally chosen by Christ. cf. Luke 6:13, Acts 9:15-16

2) They were personal witnesses to the words, deeds and resurrection of Christ.

cf. Acts 1:21-22

3) They were gifted by the Holy Spirit to receive and impart divine truth. cf. John 14:26

4) They had power to cast out demons and heal the sick, which were all signs of a true apostle. cf. 2Corinthians 12:12 and Hebrews 2:2-4

5) They became the foundation upon which the rest of the church was to be built.

cf. Ephesians 2:19-20 and Acts 2:42

\*\* What additional phrase does Paul use to illustrate his authority in writing to Timothy?

He was an apostle "according to the commandment of God our Savior".

cf. Psalm 25:5, Titus 2:10 and 3:4

\*\* Paul says that this commandment also came from Christ Jesus “who is our hope”, how does Christ working in concert with God our Savior bring about hope for Christians?

In doing the Father’s will, Christ died on the cross to bring about our only hope for salvation.  
cf. Colossians 1:27

**V. 2** \*\* So to whom is Paul writing according to verse two?

“to Timothy” - lit. “one who honors God”. He knew the Scriptures from his childhood (2Timothy 3:14-15) and was a frequent companion and servant to the apostle Paul

\*\* How did Paul feel about this young believer?

He was his “true child in the faith”, Paul had given birth spiritually to Timothy and thus he had become Paul’s teknon (child) or offspring. He was dear to the heart of Paul and the apostle knew he could trust his valuable instruction to such a godly man. cf. 1Timothy 6:11

\*\* What three blessings or graces from God does Paul offer to the heart of this young spiritual leader?

Grace, mercy and peace - Timothy was about to deal with a very difficult situation there in Ephesus, and was going to need all three blessings from God if he hoped to be successful.

\*\* Since God alone is the author of these blessings, what is the significance behind Paul linking Jesus Christ to the Father and calling the Son, Lord?

Paul was committed to the deity of Jesus Christ and would frequently point that out when writing to churches or even to his own spiritual children. The church at Ephesus was being attacked with heresy, which in part rejected the deity of Christ.

**V. 3** \*\* As he was getting ready to leave for Macedonia, what is it that Paul wanted Timothy to do for him?

To “remain on at Ephesus”.

\*\* Was this a command from the apostle to Timothy?

No - He “urged” him to stay. *Parakaleo* can be translated as “to beg”, “beseech”, “entreat” or “implore”. Paul is pleading with Timothy to stay and be used by God for the purpose of “**Correcting Error**” there in Ephesus.

\*\* Why would Paul have to convince Timothy to stay and fight the battle for the truth?

Three possible reasons:

- 1) Timothy may have been “timid”. cf. 2Timothy 1:6-7
- 2) He may have been intimidated by those who looked down on him because of his youth. cf. 1Timothy 4:12
- 3) He might have become frightened by the pressure of persecution. cf. 2Timothy 1:8, 3:12

\*\* Timothy’s method for “**Correcting Error**” fell into two camps. What was the first thing he was to do?

“...instruct certain men not to teach strange doctrines...” Instruct translates the word *parangello* which means “to command”. cf. Titus 1:10-11, Acts 20:30

\*\* What does Paul mean by “strange doctrines”?

*Heterodidaskalein* - “to teach strange doctrines” Paul may have coined a new word here, from *heteros* (“of a different kind”) and *didaskalein* (“to teach”).

\*\* This first form of error can sound pious or religious, but has a demonic origin; even though it can be structured in thought and organization. Should we ever spend time “**Correcting Error**” like this?

Absolutely, we have been prepared with God’s precious truth and should be ready and able to defend it against all forms of demonic doctrine.(e.g. Mormonism and Jehovah Witness doctrines.) cf. 1Timothy 4:1, 2Timothy 2:24-25, Titus 1:9 and Jude 1:3

**V. 4** \*\* What does the second form of error look like according to Paul in verse four?

“...myths and endless genealogies...” We do not know the specifics of their heresy, but we do know something about those who would propagate this error.

cf. 1Timothy 1:7 - Teachers of the Law (They were Jewish)

1Timothy 4:3 - False Asceticism

2Timothy 2:16 - Worldly and empty chatter

2Timothy 2:17-18 - False teachers easily infect others with their Satanic lies, leading people “astray from the truth”.

\*\* Can you think of a modern day example of this foolish, worldly chatter which leads people away from the truth about Christ?

The New Age movement, or any other thought on man’s part which is based upon fairy tales or the mindless “philosophies of men”. cf. Colossians 2:8

\*\* What does Paul say that this type of error gives rise to among men?

“..to mere speculation..” Anything becomes possible, like “The Big Bang” theory, or mankind evolving from monkeys; which in turn evolved from slime in a pond.

\*\* Instead of wasting their lives in the pursuit of foolish speculations, what should men be doing with their lives?

Doing their part in “furthering the administration of God which is by faith”. Spreading the gospel!!

**V. 5** \*\* Paul now wraps up our first study in this marvelous letter by providing us with a Christ honoring contrast. Instead of leading men away from the truth with foolish speculation or demonic doctrine, how do we spend our lives for God’s glory?

By instructing men with the goal of showing them the love of God! cf. Matthew 22:37-39, John 13:35

\*\* How do we know that our instruction is truly different from that of the world? From where does it come?

“...from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.” cf. 2Timothy 1:5, Psalm 24:3-4 and Psalm 51:10

## **EXTRICATE**

\*\* What did Paul want Timothy to do in the midst of all the false teaching in Ephesus?

He “urged” him to remain and spend his days “**Correcting Error**” for the glory of God!

\*\* What should we do if we find ourselves in a difficult situation, brought about by others who do not obey God’s word?

We too should be willing “to remain” and be used by the Lord to correct the error around us.

## **DELINEATE**

\*\* What were the two forms or camps, from which error came in its attack upon the saints at Ephesus?

1) “strange doctrine” and 2) “myths and genealogies”

## **EVALUATE**

\*\* Are you prepared to stand for the truth, to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints?

You are, if you understand God’s word and remain committed to living it out each day of your life.

## **ACTIVATE**

\*\* Lord, please use us for “**Correcting Error**” when it comes across our path, that we might truly live for your glory.

Closing prayer