

Study 2- 1 Timothy

Read 1 Timothy 1:12-17

“It’s all About Grace”

Paul refers to himself as an example of one whom God enabled, by grace, to serve effectively. The word “ministry” in vs. 12 is diakonia in the Greek from which we get our English word “deacon,” meaning “a servant.” Timothy was disturbed because he thought he was too young and lacked the necessary qualifications for the ministry. “Look at me!” says the apostle. “I was a blasphemer and murderer before God saved me! If the grace of God can make a missionary out of a murderer, then it can make a success out of you!” Paul was always careful to give God the glory for his life and ministry. Anyone who serves the Lord (and all believers ought to be servants) needs to depend on the grace of God. We are saved by grace, but we also serve through grace (Rom. 12:3–6). In vs. 14, Paul lists the three motivating forces in his life: grace, faith, and love. His love for Christ and for lost sinners compelled him to labor; his faith in Christ empowered him, and the grace of God worked in his life, enabling him to serve God.

Paul considered his salvation a pattern of what God would do for lost sinners, especially his beloved Israel. Unbelievers today are not saved in just the fashion Paul was, that is, by seeing a light and hearing a voice; but we are saved by grace, through faith, in spite of our sins. The people of Israel will be saved one day in the future as Paul was saved on the Damascus Road: they will see Christ, repent, believe, and be changed. In vs. 15, we have the first of several “faithful sayings” that Paul quotes. These are thought to be sayings of the New Testament prophets in the early church that summarized important teachings. Early Christians had no written Bible to refer to; they quoted these “sayings” as authoritative statements of the faith.

Read 1 Timothy 1:12-13 and answer the following questions.

Paul never got over the fact that at one time he had been determined to destroy God’s church. Yet to him, the memory was not an occasion to revisit guilt, but one of great thankfulness to the merciful God who transformed him from a persecutor of Christ’s body to an apostle of the church. The apostle knew very well that his experience was not a solitary one. God flooded His divine mercy and grace upon him in order to demonstrate what he longed to do for others. Perhaps one reason Paul wrote of his own experience at the beginning of this letter was to remind Timothy that the same grace and power God used to transform Paul was also available to him.

1. Note that Paul calls Jesus “our Lord” in 1:12. What does he mean by this?

2. What was Paul’s condition prior to receiving Christ? What kind of people in today’s world would be comparable to Paul?

3. Do you consciously depend on God’s strength to make it through your day? If so, how? If not, why not? What strategies do you use to consciously depend on God’s strength and not your own?

Read 1 Timothy 1:14-15 and answer the following questions.

4. Paul says three things were “poured out” on him in Christ Jesus. What are these three things, and what significance does each have?

5. “Faith” and “Love” are often paired together in the New Testament, as they are in 1 Timothy 1:14. Why do you suppose this is so? How are they related?

6. Why did Paul say that he was the “chief of sinners”?

7. Do you think this was true, that his sins really were worse than that of others? Why or Why not?

Read 1 Timothy 1:16-17 and answer the following questions.

8. What reason did Paul give in verse 16 why Jesus saved him? What does Paul want us to learn from this?

9. How did Jesus display His “longsuffering” in Paul’s life? In what way do we see the message of the Gospel in 1:16?

10. What does each of the following words found in 1:17 add to your understanding of God?

King

Eternal

Immortal

Invisible

Who Alone is Wise

11. What does it mean to give God “honor and glory” forever and ever? Since He already has these things, how can we give them to Him?

Great Insight from Jon Courson

The closer Paul drew to the Lord, the more he understood the extent of his sin. But the Good News is that sinners are the very people Jesus came to seek and to save. Ever the Good Shepherd, Jesus specializes in finding the one in the back row, on the fringe, out to lunch, off the wall. This gives me great comfort and real hope. I must accept acceptance courageously. I must accept grace graciously. Jesus Christ came to save guys like me—and to keep saving me daily!

Definition of God's "GRACE"

God's Riches At Christ's Expense Grace (from the Greek New Testament word charis) is God's unmerited favor. It is kindness from God that we don't deserve. There is nothing we have done, or can do to earn this favor. It is a gift from God. Grace is divine assistance given to humans. Webster defines Grace this way: "The unmerited love and favor of God toward human beings, divine influence acting in a person to make the person pure, morally strong, the condition of a person brought to God's favor through this influence, a special virtue, gift, or help given to a person by God."

Examples of God's Grace from the Word

"And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace. For the law was given through Moses but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ" John 1:16-17

"For all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" Romans 3:23-24

"For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under the law but under grace" Romans 6:14

"For by grace you have been saved through faith and that not of yourselves, it is a gift from God" Ephesians 2:8

"For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men" Titus 2:11