

1 Timothy

I. Introduction

A. **1 Timothy 1:1-7** . . . Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus according to the commandment of God our Savior, and of Christ Jesus, who is our hope, [2] To Timothy, my true child in the faith: Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord. [3] As I urged you upon my departure for Macedonia, remain on at Ephesus so that you may instruct certain men not to teach strange doctrines, [4] nor to pay attention to myths and endless genealogies, which give rise to mere speculation rather than furthering the administration of God which is by faith. [5] But the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith. [6] For some men, straying from these things, have turned aside to fruitless discussion, [7] wanting to be teachers of the Law, even though they do not understand either what they are saying or the matters about which they make confident assertions.

B. Pray

II. Paul's Introduction

A. [1] Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus according to the commandment of God our Savior, and of Christ Jesus, who is our hope,

1. Notice – Paul identifies himself as an apostle of Christ Jesus according to or as a result of the commandment of God and Christ Jesus. Interestingly, Paul's introduction in 2 Timothy is slightly different from his introduction here in 1 Timothy.
 - a. Here in 1 Timothy, Paul says he is an apostle of Christ Jesus according to the **commandment of God**, while in 2 Timothy he says he is an apostle of Christ Jesus by the **will of God**.
 - b. Is there a difference between being called into some form of service by God's will verses by His commandment? And if so, what is the difference.
2. To answer these questions, I will begin by reading Luke's account of Paul's conversion found in **Acts 9:1-19** . . . Now Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest, [2] and asked for letters from him to the synagogues at Damascus, so that **if he** found any belonging to the Way, both men and women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem (*Deuteronomy*

6:13-15, “You shall fear only the LORD your God; and you shall worship Him and swear by His name. [14] You shall not follow other gods, any of the gods of the peoples who surround you, [15] for the LORD your God in the midst of you is a jealous God; otherwise the anger of the LORD your God will be kindled against you, and He will wipe you off the face of the earth.”). [3] As he was traveling, it happened that he was approaching Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him; [4] and he fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?’ [5] And [Paul] said, ‘Who are You, Lord?’ And He said, ‘I am Jesus whom you are persecuting, [6] but get up and enter the city, and it will be **told you what you must do.**’ [7] The men who traveled with [Paul] stood speechless, hearing the voice but seeing no one. [8] Saul got up from the ground, and though his eyes were open, he could see nothing; and leading him by the hand, they brought him into Damascus. [9] And he was three days without sight, and neither ate nor drank. [10] Now there was a disciple at Damascus named Ananias; and the Lord said to him in a vision, ‘Ananias.’ And he said, ‘Here I am, Lord.’ [11] And the Lord said to him, ‘Get up and go to the street called Straight, and inquire at the house of Judas for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for he is praying, [12] and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him, so that he might regain his sight.’ [13] But Ananias answered, ‘Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much harm he did to Your saints at Jerusalem; [14] and here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on Your name.’ [15] But the Lord said to him, ‘Go, for he is a chosen instrument of Mine, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel; [16] for **I will show him how much he must suffer for My name's sake.**’ [17] So Ananias departed and entered the house, and after laying his hands on him said, ‘Brother Saul, **the Lord Jesus**, who appeared to you on the road by which you were coming, **has sent me** so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.’ [18] And immediately there fell from his eyes something like scales, and he regained his sight, and he got up and was baptized; [19] and he took food and was strengthened.”

a. And we read in **Acts 13:1-3**, “Now there were at Antioch, in the church that was there, prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon, Lucius, Manaen (*MAN uh en*), and [Paul]. [2] While they

were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, ‘**Set apart for Me** Barnabas and [Paul] for the work to which I have called them.’ [3] Then, when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.”

- b. What we see in these two accounts is that God was in charge of and directly involved in Paul’s conversion, type of service, and his being sent out by the church to do the work he was either called, or commanded, or willed by God to do.
3. According to Webster's 1913 Unabridged English Dictionary, a **commandment** – in relation to serving the one who gives the command – is an order or an official mandate given to one under authority. Webster’s defines a **person’s will**, or in this case **God’s will**, as a decree or command by an authority.
 - a. When we put Luke’s accounts in **Acts 9** and **Acts 13** together with Webster’s definitions, we find that the will of God and the commandment of God are essentially two ways of saying the same thing.
 - b. However, according to our use of language, the phrase “the commandment of God” is commonly understood as a stronger way telling us what we must do in contrast to the phrase, “the will of God.”
 4. **But why?** Why is it our tendency to treat God’s will as something He would like or desire, while treating God’s commandments as something He demands or requires? I don’t know, yet we do. And to show you how often we do it, I’ll give you two examples from my own experiences with fellow believers.
 5. My **first example** has to do with various forms of Christian service.
 - a. Now bear in mind that the form of Christian service God calls or wills or commands you to do will affect the way you live your life, and the effect can be costly. Because of this not everyone wants to do what God has called or willed or commanded them to do.
 - b. To help Christians feel better, or at least less guilty about not doing what God called them to do, it became popular to speak of God’s perfect will and His permissive will.
 - c. God’s perfect will is spoken of as God’s first choice for the form of Christian service He wants you to do, while God’s permissive will is treated as a form of Christian service God accepts if you say know to His perfect will and do something other than His perfect will.

- d. Those who separate God's will into these two categories do so on the basis of knowing, acknowledging, and believing certain things.
 - (1) **First**, they know, or at least have a sense of what God's perfect will is for their lives.
 - (2) **Second**, they acknowledge that living in God's permissive will is not as good as fulfilling His perfect will.
 - (3) **Third**, though having settled into God's permissive will, they believe God is still pleased with them since they are involved in some form of Christian service.
 - e. In my opinion, this kind of reasoning ends up treating God's will as something He desires rather than requires, thus making it an option rather than an obligation or duty. And yet, for Paul and Webster, the only difference between God's commands and His will is the choice of words used to make the demand.
6. The **second example** has to do with God's will regarding the believer's sanctification. As you may recall, **1 Thessalonians 4:3a** says, "For this is the will of God, your sanctification."
- a. It is my observation that many Christians treat faith in Christ as a requirement for salvation, and sanctification as an optional addition to salvation.
 - (1) I know that those who maintain this view support it with various scriptures. However, they ignore the scriptures that contradict this view, such as **Hebrews 12:14** which says, "Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord."
 - (2) Yet because **1 Thess. 4:3** presents sanctification as what God wills rather than commands, they feel safe in treating sanctification as something God desires rather than requires.
 - b. Yet once again I want to remind you that for Paul and Webster, the only difference between God's commands and His will is the choice of words used to make the demand.
7. The point of all this is that we are wise to treat God's commands and His will as what God requires even though He is merciful and gracious when we treat His will as something He desires.

B. Returning to **vs 1**, Paul describes God as our Savior and Christ Jesus as our hope.

- 1. We are accustomed to speaking of Jesus as being our Savior. However, the phrase "God our Savior" appears six times in the NT.

- Five of the times it is Paul using this phrase, and the sixth time it is Jude. On the other hand, Paul speaks of Jesus as our Savior only six times in his epistles.
- a. In other words, Paul almost evenly splits who he identifies as our Savior between God (*5 times*) and Jesus (*6 times*).
 - b. And why does this matter? I'm not sure there is a definitive, biblically supported reason.
 - (1) However, for me, identifying both God and Jesus as our Savior paints a marvelous picture of God, because it tells me that the God who ruled that eternal death would be the price we must pay for sinning, is the same God who paid that price on our behalf so we could live with Him forever.
 - (2) Imagine being totally sinless and the supreme authority, and deciding that because sin is so heinous and so destructive to all that is loving and good, that committing it would bring eternal death – and then, sinless as you are, stepping in to pay that price on behalf of those who have committed sin.
 - (3) For me, this is both an amazing and a reassuring example of God's love, mercy, wisdom, and grace.
2. Paul goes on to refer to Christ Jesus as our hope. The Greek word which our Bibles translate as hope infers a certainty that we are going to obtain or experience something good.
- a. Here in **vs 1**, the reason for the certainty or confident assurance of our hope is Christ Jesus. He is the guarantee of our hope.
 - b. This is different from our use of the word hope which we use to convey a desire for something good coupled with a belief in the possibility of obtaining or experiencing it.
 - c. In other words, the Biblical use of the word hope is based on the certainty of something happening, while our use of the word hope is based on the possibility of something happening.
3. Therefore, Paul is affirming that Christ Jesus is the reason or cause or the guarantee who gives certainty to our hope.
- a. He says the same thing about God in **Romans 15:13**, "Now may the God of hope (*or the God who is the reason for our hope*) fill you with all joy and peace in believing (*which is the experiential outcome of hope*), so that you will abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."
 - b. In other words, our hope of salvation, of eternal life, of the return of Christ, of the resurrection from the dead, of God fulfilling His promises, of one day being glorified with God, of being given the

Holy Spirit, of Christ dwelling in us, and of becoming holy as God is holy, is not a hoped for possibility, but a certainty because God and Jesus Christ are the assurance or guarantee that all these things either have already or will come to pass.

- c. Therefore, confidently trust in Christ Jesus as your immovable and unchangeable basis or assurance for biblical hope.
- C. [2] To Timothy, my true child in the faith: Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.
1. To Timothy, **my true child** in the faith.... Paul speaks of Timothy in similar ways in
 - a. **2 Timothy 1:2**, “To Timothy, **my beloved son.**”
 - b. **1 Corinthians 4:17**, “For this reason I have sent to you Timothy, who is **my beloved and faithful child in the Lord**, and he will remind you of my ways which are in Christ, just as I teach everywhere in every church.”
 - c. **Philippians 2:19–22**, “But I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, so that I also may be encouraged when I learn of your condition. [20] For I have **no one else** of kindred spirit who will genuinely be concerned for your welfare. [21] For they all seek after their own interests, not those of Christ Jesus. [22] But you know of **his proven worth**, that he served with me in the furtherance of the gospel like a child serving his father.”
 - d. Based on these scriptures we can see that Timothy’s relationship with Paul was such that it resulted in a loving and meaningful father and son type relationship.
 - e. It is amazing to me that the Christian life, when lived among other Christians who take their faith seriously, results in the kind of love for one another that makes you feel like being with your church family is like being part of a loving, caring home.
 - (1) In other words, in such a setting, your church family can become as near and dear to you as your earthly family ought to be or actually is.
 - (2) Such love and the sense of belonging that comes with such love is especially meaningful for believers who come from dysfunctional homes, or abusive homes, or broken homes, or homes that reject family members for becoming Christians.
 - f. Without question, this is the kind of love we are to feed and nurture and protect and practice with one another. And to the measure that we do this already, I commend every one of you.

However, let us not settle in to where we are in loving one another. Rather, let us value and protect and increase this kind of love among us so that it continues on as an identifying mark of our Christianity, and as a secure, loving home for those needing a secure, loving family.

2. The final statement in Paul's introduction is "Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord." With this statement, Paul is doing two things that should be part of our thinking and speaking.
 - a. **First**, Paul is expressing a desire for Timothy to experience good things – which in this case is grace, mercy and peace. In like manner, may we have this same desire for each other and for believers beyond these four walls.
 - b. **Second**, Paul is affirming that the only source for this quality and quantity of grace, mercy and peace is God. Therefore, may we grow in knowledge and in faith to the point of being convinced that God is the only source of every good and perfect thing – regardless of how it comes or through whom it comes.