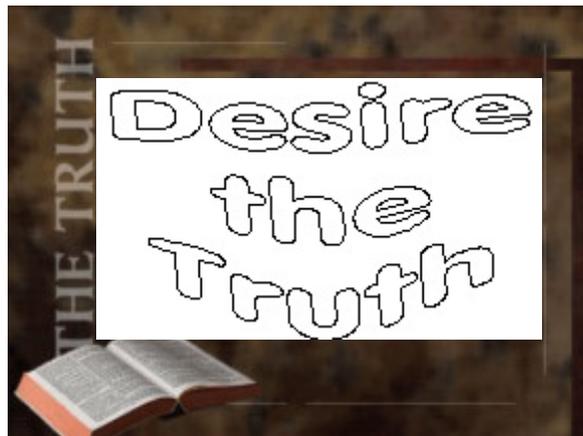


LESSON 6



Scripture Texts: 1 Timothy 1:1-7; 12-20

We must hold fast to the truth of Christ and refuse false teachings. God's work must be done by spiritual gifts. For one to have normal spiritual growth, he must always be loyal to the doctrine of Christ, faithful to the call of God, and a true example of the believers. He has to walk in the light of the Gospel as God leads him. In this day of apostasy, there is a greater need than ever for sound doctrine and obedient living.

Buy the truth. Love the truth. Live the truth. This is the recipe for spiritual good health.

MEMORY VERSE: *And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*

— John 8:32

Paul's Thankfulness

First Timothy 1:1-4. **Charge some that they teach no other doctrine.** The Ephesian church was slipping from the level of truth they had been living in when Paul wrote of his thankfulness for their "faith" and "love" (Ephesians 1:15-16). Timothy was the pastor of this congregation. Paul could see they were beginning to leave their first love. False teachers and bad examples were among them as they are among us. See 2 John 4-7. Timothy must teach them to hold to true doctrine. Some errors which had crept in were **fables**—groundless legends, traditions, opinions, and **genealogies**—tracing of ancestry back to Abraham and tribal leaders. These had no basis in Scripture or authority from God. Such **minister questions**—raise disputes, doubts, and cause separations over opinions. The opposite of this is **godly edifying which is in faith**. Progress in godliness comes only by faith—believing in God's Word and obeying Him. His Word is truth.

Second John 4-7 shows the great rejoicing when the children of God walk in the truth. Verse 7 speaks of "deceivers" already entered into the world, "an antichrist." The church has needed the true teachings in all of its history, but never more than now. Present decay of moral standards, lukewarmness, and paganism in much of the religious world, and the moving of evil forces point out the need for our hearing, believing, and living the truth. We must be bound together in a close fellowship and love and stand firmly on the truth of God's Word.

Paul's Admonition

First Timothy 1:5-7. **The end of the commandment . . .** To weigh them in the light of eternity is the goal of God's dealings with man. The purpose of all of God's relation to man, shown in the Law and the Prophets, and completed in the atoning work of Christ is **charity [love] out of a pure heart**. Out of a **good conscience**, made good when sins are forgiven. It comes out of **faith unfeigned**—not pretended—genuine. Faith is necessary to receive God or any of His gifts (read Hebrews 11:6). Thus faith, a clear conscience, and a pure heart are steps to reaching the height of experience God has for us. Some have missed it because they **have turned aside unto vain jangling**—useless words, arguing, contention, trying to teach

without the Spirit leading.

Paul's Testimony

First Timothy 1:12-17. **He counted me faithful . . .** Being reminded of what the Gospel has done for him (verse 11), Paul begins to testify of what that Gospel has meant in his life. (1) It was Christ Jesus, not Paul himself, who put him in his place of service. The Lord counted Paul faithful and placed him there. It takes more than the natural, carnal love to place us in the truth. It takes faith and love, which is in Christ, to learn it, love it, and walk in it from the heart. See 1 John 3:18-20. (2) This was a most remarkable testimony because of Paul's former sins—**blasphemer . . . persecutor . . . injurious**. See Acts 22:19-20; 26:10-11. Paul owned to being the chief of sinners. His sins were far reaching. (3) Paul **obtained mercy, because he did it ignorantly**. In Acts 26:9 Paul thought he was doing right .

As soon as Paul knew the truth, he obeyed it (read Acts 26:19). (4) Paul **obtained mercy** so that **Christ might shew forth all long-suffering**—might demonstrate His saving work—for a **pattern**, or example, **to them which should hereafter believe on him**—on Christ—**to life everlasting**. We owe much to the saints of the past who, through much effort and suffering, passed on to us the glorious truth we are privileged to enjoy in our day, that all people to the end of time may learn what God will do for them if they repent and believe. Short of learning and coming to a knowledge of the truth, there is no hope of spiritual growth; only tragedy will result. See 2 Timothy 3:7. (5) Paul brings forth praise to God who had done all this. He calls Him **King**—Ruler of all; **eternal**—forever has lived and forever will live; **immortal**—deathless, incorruptible, incapable of decomposition; **invisible**—not seen, yet He is strongly felt in His works; **only wise God**—none beside Him. Paul gives to Him **honour and glory for ever and ever**—endlessly.

First Timothy 1:19-20. **Holding faith**. Here we find Paul encouraging Timothy to hold fast the faith he has been put in charge of. He tells the sad end of some who put away or laid aside the truth. Paul said that they **have made shipwreck**. What is your attitude toward the Gospel of Christ, the truth?

JUST A THOUGHT

**A lie is a poor substitute for the truth,
but the only one so far discovered.**

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