

# A GOOD PERSPECTIVE ON SERVING

## 1 Timothy 1:12-20

Timothy had a tough assignment charged as he was by the Apostle Paul to stop the false teachers and to restore biblical teaching in the Ephesian church. In our passage this week, *Paul encourages Timothy to be grateful he has been appointed to serve and to serve with confidence knowing he's been equipped to accomplish his ministry.*

Paul ended the previous segment by stating that he had been entrusted with the gospel (1:11). I believe that being entrusted with the gospel and being appointed to service are essentially one and the same. Jesus appointed Paul to declare and defend the gospel which at its core is this: *Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.* This has been Paul's life work for thirty plus years and as we will see in verse 12, Paul is grateful Jesus appointed him to His service.

**1 Timothy 1:12-14** For what was Paul thankful? Paul was thankful that Jesus judged him *faithful*, (trustworthy, dependable) which led Jesus to appoint Paul to His service. Paul was particularly grateful to be appointed to serve given his past as we see in verse 13.

Prior to his conversion, Paul did everything in his power to oppose Jesus. As Paul reflects in verse 13, Jesus had every reason to reject Paul who *...was a blasphemer, persecutor and insolent opponent.* It is no exaggeration to say that Paul of Tarsus was Jesus' greatest human enemy. Paul hated Jesus with every fiber of his being. Prior to his conversion, Paul was the least likely person to become a servant of Jesus. But a servant of Jesus he became because as he writes in verse 14

The *faith and love that are in Christ Jesus* are the faith and love that came from Jesus to Paul. Not only did Jesus love Paul, He also had faith in Paul such that He appointed Paul to His service as we see in verse 12. Jesus had so much confidence in Paul's trustworthiness, Jesus entrusted Paul with His most important work – to spread His story to the world so that sinners might be saved. This is how incredible God's grace is - Paul went from being mortal enemy number one to being Jesus' greatest servant of the Gospel. No wonder Paul was grateful to be appointed to serve.

In sharing his story, Paul was encouraging Timothy to be grateful that he had been appointed to serve Jesus there in Ephesus. Even though it was a tough assignment, it was a privilege to serve Jesus in the most important work in the world – helping people come to saving faith in Jesus.

It still is a privilege to serve Jesus in the most important work in the world – helping people come to saving faith in Jesus. Like Paul and Timothy, each and every one of us should be grateful that Jesus believes in each of us so much He has appointed us to serve Him. We serve Him by telling His story and by using our spiritual gifts to strengthen His Church.

**1 Timothy 1:15-17** The core of our ministry as for Paul and Timothy is found in verse 15. It is this truth that needed to be restored in Ephesus: *Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.* It is this truth that is illustrated by Paul's story (1:16).

Paul's story is a powerful example of Christ Jesus coming into the world to save sinners. Through Paul's story, all sinners are assured that if they come to Jesus in faith, Jesus will lavish His grace and mercy upon them as He did his greatest enemy, Paul. It seems likely that whenever Paul shared the Gospel, he shared his testimony as an assurance that no one is too sinful to be saved. Perhaps we, too, should share Paul's story

when we have the opportunity to share the Gospel. And certainly, it is very appropriate for us to share our testimony of how Jesus saved us.

Reflecting on the grace and mercy of Jesus filled Paul's heart to overflowing (1:17). We, too, should continually be overflowing with gratitude and worship to God for sending Christ Jesus into the world to save us and for giving us the privilege of serving Jesus.

**1 Timothy 1:18-20** Having encouraged Timothy to be grateful he's been appointed to serve Jesus, Paul next sought to strengthen Timothy by reminding him he has been divinely equipped to serve Jesus there in Ephesus. In verse 18, Paul is entrusting a charge to Timothy; what is that charge? In context, it is the charge to stop the false teachers and restore gospel-centered teaching in the Ephesian church (1:3-5). And although this is a tough assignment, Paul reminds Timothy in verses 18-19 that Timothy has been divinely equipped to accomplish this charge.

We don't have any information on the when, where, who, or what of these prophecies. Whatever they were, they revealed that the Holy Spirit had equipped Timothy to win this war in Ephesus. The one caveat was that Timothy needed to wage this war in a godly manner – trusting in the power of the Holy Spirit and taking up the full armor of God fighting this war with truth, righteousness, the Gospel, faith, the Word of God and prayer (Eph. 6:10-20). He was not to battle in the way of the world using politics, manipulation, intimidation etc. If he does, he'll end up like Hymenaeus and Alexander (1:19-20).

We, too, have been divinely equipped to serve Jesus. Each one of us has received at least one *charismata*, one grace-gift to serve Jesus. We are to serve in the same way as Timothy, in faith in the Holy Spirit to work through us and in the full armor of God, not in the way of the world. Power politics, manipulation, intimidation, etc. have no place in serving Jesus.

In our passage this week, Paul encouraged Timothy to be grateful he had been appointed to serve and to serve with confidence knowing he had been equipped to accomplish his ministry.

We, too, should be grateful and confident Jesus has appointed us and the Spirit has equipped us to serve well.

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## ***GRACE NEWS AND NEEDS***

***- Today! Please tie a knot on Leon's quilt and pray for his encouragement in the Lord!***

***- Today! Missions Team Meeting, 11:30a, Modular, all are welcome!***

***- Family Desert Trip. ReScheduled!***

Mar. 31 – Apr. 2 @ Ocotillo Wells. Dinner will be provided Saturday night.

***- VOM Needs for February: 1) Twin flat sheets, 2) Toothbrushes***