

The Goal is Love

1 Timothy 1:5-17

4b, These promote empty speculations rather than God's plan, which operates by faith.

God's plan -> his work within his household. The gospel / the good news of Jesus known through faith.

vs. 5, Goal = love

Healthy and whole churches who are led and cared for by healthy and whole leaders understand the fullness of Jesus' words.

Matthew 22:37-40 He said to him, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. 38 This is the greatest and most important command. 39 The second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself. 40 All the Law and the Prophets depend on these two commands."

Which is a product of

- **A pure heart**

Psalm 51:10 God, create a clean heart for me and renew a steadfast spirit within me.

Matthew 5:8 Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

Two Aspects

1. Inner Holiness (opposite of external piety). Not just an outward sign, but an inward reality.
2. Freedom from double mindedness - move through life with sincerity not motivated by acclaim or compensation.

Those who are pure in heart see God. Our loyalties are no longer divided. Compromise is not part of our being.

- **A good conscience**

- The capacity, or seat, of moral consciousness, common to all people (Romans 2:15; 2 Corinthians 4:2).
- The conscience arbitrates one's own - and other's - actions (1 Corinthians 8-10).
- One's conscience can be informed by the flesh, the world, the enemy or by the presence of Jesus / the Holy Spirit.
- It can be good, pure, or seared (1 Timothy 4:2).

Bottom Line: What is informing your moral decision making?

- **Sincere faith**

Faith often appears along side love.

You either have faith, or love, or you don't.

Bottom line: Trust in God. Do you trust that God's love for you is greater than anything or anyone? Do you believe that God's purpose for you is to flourish and he gets to define what that means? No matter life's circumstances will I have a sincere faith? Will I remain faithful / steadfast / resilient? Or will I allow the deception of the flesh, world, or enemy to create deep, destructive, erosion?

vs. 6, Some have departed from these...

They have abandoned love for meaningless talk (fruitless discussion).

vs. 7, They want to be teachers of the law, although...

They don't understand what they are saying.

How would Paul know this?

- Begin study of the Scriptures at five.
- Study the interpretation and application of the Scriptures (the Mishnah) at ten.
- Study the Talmud (the scholars' interpretation of the Mishnah) at fifteen.

- Paul was a Pharisee. He was mentored by the great Rabbi Gamaliel.
- To achieve this status was highly regarded.

The Jewish people “give credit for wisdom to those alone who have an exact knowledge of the law and who are capable of interpreting the meaning of the Holy Scriptures. Though many have laboriously undertaken this training, scarcely two or three have succeeded.” ~ Josephus

vs. 8-11, Paul moves to give clarity to the purpose of the law (the Torah of Moses).

The law is designed by God to reveal to humanity their sins. The law is good.
But it is only good if one uses it according to its design.

Meaning -> The law is good if it is used lawfully!

2 Timothy 2:5 Also, if anyone competes as an athlete, he is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules.

One must practice the law through the lens of the gospel.

What is the essence of this lens?

Observing the law promotes gospel-formed **love**.

The law is not meant for a righteous person (vs. 9).

What makes a person righteous? (Simply following the law?)

No, righteousness takes place by grace through faith.

Ephesians 2:8-9 For you are saved by grace through faith, and this is not from yourselves; it is God's gift— **9** not from works, so that no one can boast.

The law is meant for the lawless and rebellious. It is for those who refuse the authority of God.

Paul's examples of lawlessness follow the pattern of the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:1-17).

1 Timothy

- Ungodly
- Sinful
- Unholy
- Irreverent
- Kill their fathers and mothers
- Murderers
- Sexually immoral
- Slave traders (stealers of people)
- Liars and perjurers

Ten Commandments (Exodus)

- Do not have other gods besides me (20:3)
- Worship idols (20:4-6)
- Do not misuse the name of the Lord your God (20:7)
- Remember the Sabbath (20:8-10)
- Do not honor parents (20:12)
- Do not murder (20:13)
- Do not commit adultery (20:14)
- Do not steal (20:15)
- Do not give false testimony (20:16)

Paul has described lawlessness in other letters (Romans 1:29-31 and Galatians 5:19-21).

vs. 10, Sexually immoral (*Porneia*) - broad term referring to any sexual activities done in a way not pleasing to God.

Arsenokoitēs (a specific term - males who have sex with males)

All sexual activity outside of marriage is outside of the boundaries that God has drawn in pleasant places (Psalm 16:6).

Both the Old and New Testament speak about this behavior as outside of God's plan for flourishing.

“The idea that the NT does not prohibit same-sex relations as long as the partners are in a committed relationship does not have any exegetical or historical merit.” ~ Osvaldo Padilla, *The Pastoral Epistles: An Introduction and Commentary*, ed. Eckhard J. Schnabel, vol. 14, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (London: InterVarsity Press, 2022), 62.

vs. 12-17, Paul understands lawlessness. Paul is exceedingly grateful!

Jesus has given Paul strength.

Jesus has given Paul a job (ministry).

Jesus has given Paul mercy (I was a blasphemer, a persecutor, and arrogant).

Jesus has extended grace -> which resulted in faith (trust) and renewed Paul's heart and conscience with love.

vs. 15-16, If Jesus rescued me (Paul), he can rescue anyone!

vs. 17, Paul can't help but praise God.

vs. 5, Now the goal of our instruction is love that comes from a pure heart, a good conscience, and a sincere faith.

Question: How are you cultivating this type of Jesus centered love?

How are you seeing renewal take place in real time through growth in purity of heart, goodness of conscience, and sincere faith?

What is your view of the law? How does Paul's teaching concerning the law change your mind about the law's purpose?

Does your life demonstrate that you believe God's desire and care for you is far superior to your desire and care for yourself?