



“THE GOOD GOSPEL”

1 Timothy 1:8-11

Theme: *The Gospel starts with the reality of sin and ends in the glory of God.*

Introduction: We’re in the midst of the heat of the political season as the Mid-terms loom large. We’re getting bombarded by political emails, texts, phone calls, TV ads, billboards, and every imaginable media all of which present candidates in the most positive light possible. Some of them are designed to soil the reputation of other politicians, but always for the purpose of making the accusing politician or party look better. Even flaws (and in some cases criminal activity) are masked, concealed, or spun so that they are overlooked or rationalized.

Sinners are the like the most despicable politicians – spending massive amounts of energy and resources to convince the most important voting bloc, their base, they are worthy = themselves. They work hard to convince themselves that they are righteous, worthy of eternal life, and able to expect things to work out. Yet, they need to realize that a vote for oneself always falls short. There is an opposing party that dominates – it’s not Republican, Democrat, or even Independent. When we distill it down, it isn’t even an election. Our worthiness for eternal life is crushed by the first sin we ever committed. As soon as you sin, you disqualify yourself from eternal life and cast yourself into a state of hostility with God.

False teachers are like campaign managers providing us with messaging consistent with the “party line” defending the scandals in our sin. Paul seeks to provide Timothy with the refutation of this false teaching by reminding him of the purpose of the Law.

The greatest gesture of mercy by God is His provision of the means by which we can understand our status before God. This means is His Law – given to provide us each with the ability to see our need to be reconciled to Him. The Law exists to provide you with a glimpse into the depravity that is seated in your soul – which makes you completely incompatible with God. His love moved Him to communicate with us through His Word the standards that are required for a relationship with Him - standards that none of us meet. Once we understand our need, God’s love then provides us with the knowledge of how we can be reconciled to Him through the removal of our sins through the blood of His Son, Jesus Christ. The true message of God, ***“the Gospel, starts with the reality of sin and ends in the glory of God.”***

I. THE CLARIFICATION OF THE LAW – 1:8-9a

A. The Assessment of the Law – v. 8

1. Paul, in exhorting Timothy to shut down the false teachers in the previous section, now seeks to clarify the message of the Gospel.
2. He had indicated that the false teachers *“wanted to be teachers of the*

Law, even they do not understand either what they are saying or the matters about which they make confident assertions.”

3. In contrast to the ignorance of the false teachers who grossly misused the Law for their personal advantage, Paul states: *“But we know that the Law is good ...”*
4. He doesn’t want his criticism of the false teachers to be perceived as a criticism of the Law which is *“good”* [καλός] – useful, able to contribute to the cause of Christ.
5. However, whether it is *“good”* or useful depends on *“if one uses it lawfully”* [νομίμως] – “according to normal procedures or rules” – cp. Romans 7:12.
6. If a person twists the Law to be used in a way for which it is not intended, it becomes injurious and damnable.
7. The essential way the Law is perverted is by seeking to use it to establish one’s righteousness instead of using it to expose one’s sinfulness – cp. Romans 7:16.
8. No one will ever achieve salvation by means of the Law, only the confirmation that they need to be saved – cp. Romans 3:20.

B. The Authority in the Law – v. 9a

1. Paul states the issue clearly: “... realizing the fact that law is not made for a righteous person, but for those who are lawless ...”
2. If a person is *“righteous”* [δίκαιος] – a person who is completely innocent and without violation of what is expected of them by God, the *“law is not made for [them] ...”*
3. *“made for”* [κεῖμαι] – literally means “laid down” or to impose upon – that is, God “lays down the law” not for people who are righteous already, but for those who are *“lawless”* and need to understand their guilty before Him.
4. Of course, we are told by God that *“there is none righteous not even one”* – Romans 3:10-12.
5. The issue is one of whether one has sinned, not how many sins or the severity of the sins one has committed that damns the sinner – cp. James 2:10.
6. Of course, for those who are in Christ Jesus, there is no condemnation through the Law for Christ has fulfilled the Law for us! – cp. Romans 8:1-4.

II. THE CONDEMNATION THROUGH THE LAW – 1:9b-10

A. The Exposure of Hostility toward God – v. 9b

THE EPISTLE OF 1 TIMOTHY

1. Paul provides us a list of examples of those for whom the Law is “laid down” so that they might recognize their sin and need for a Savior.
2. There are fourteen sins listed here divided into two sections – the first seven address the violation of the foremost commandment – [Matthew 22:36-38](#).
3. The lack of love for God is actually an aggressive enmity against God and illustrated with seven sins:

a) Sins against God's Dominion - “... for those who are lawless and rebellious”

- (1) **“lawless”** [ἄνομος] – without adherence to a moral code of any kind – “without law or standards” – such people are defiant and have a contempt for the law.
- (2) **“rebellious”** [ἀνυπότακτος] – not made subject, independently refusing to submit to authority and flagrantly breaking laws.

b) Sins against God's Dignity - “... for the ungodly and sinners”

- (1) **“ungodly”** [ἄσεβής] – violating norms for proper relation to deity, irreverent, disregard for what is sacred; irreligious.
- (2) **“sinners”** [ἁμαρτωλός] – behavior that does not measure up to standard moral or religious expectations and are therefore excluded from fellowship.

c) Sins against God's Decency - “... for the unholy and profane”

- (1) **“unholy”** [ἀνόσιος] – in opposition to God or revolting to God.
- (2) **“profane”** [βέβηλος] – comes from the word for threshold, meaning they'll trample on anything holy – there is no concern for what is holy, believing everything is devoid of significance, worthless and therefore the trample on what is sacred; worldly.

d) Sins against God's Designees - “... for those who kill their fathers or mothers ...” [πατρολώαις καὶ μητρολώαις] – a reference to “patricide” and “matricide” – the consummate rejection of divine authority vested in parents in the home – cp. [Exodus 20:12](#); [Leviticus 20:9](#).

B. The Exposure of Hostility to Others – vv. 9c-10

1. The second great commandment is to “love your neighbor as yourself” – cp. [Matthew 22:39-40](#).
2. The second set of sins listed by Paul address the violation of this commandment and exposes the lack of love for others:

a) Sin against the Image of God - “... for murderers” [ἀνδροφόνος] – “man-killers” – it includes homicide, suicide, infanticide (including abortion), and genocide – cp. [Exodus 20:13](#).

b) Sin against Innocence - “... and immoral men and homosexuals” – cp. [Exodus 20:14](#).

- (1) **“immoral men”** [πόρνος] – a person given to sexual immorality; a hedonist

who seeks pleasure outside the bounds of marital love and monogamous commitment to meeting the needs of another.

- (2) *“homosexuals”* [ἀρσενικοίτης] – a person who engages in sexual activity with a person of his own gender; a man with a man or a woman with a woman – a reference to the sin of sodomy.

c) *Sin against Integrity - “... and kidnappers and liars and perjurers”*

- (1) *“kidnappers”* [ἀνδραποδιστής] – lit. a slave-dealer or as ESV states: “enslavers” – one who takes possession of someone, treating them as they would an animal.¹ – Exodus 20:15.
- (2) *“liars”* [ψεύστης] – where we get the word “pseudo” or “false” and speaks of the attempt to mislead others by saying something other than what is true. – Exodus 20:16.
- (3) *“perjurers”* [ἐπίορκος] – taking false oaths – swearing to something but not following through.

d) *Sin against the Intentions of God - “... and whatever else is contrary to sound teaching ...” – a reference to anything that is “unclean” – “sound” [ὕγιαίνω] - from where we get the term “hygiene” and refers to what is healthy and wholesome.*

3. The Law is “laid down” for the purpose of confronting such sin – and serves as an initial expression of mercy by a God who desires to bring Himself glory by delivering such sinners from the clutches of their sin – Romans 7:7-8.

III. THE COMPLETION OF THE LAW – *1:11*

A. The Success of the Gospel

1. Essentially, verses 9-10 are a series of couplets that indicate the Law’s purpose and application to bring conviction of sin.
2. You could jump directly from verse 8 to 11 – *“But we know that the Law is good, if one uses it lawfully ... according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God ...”*
3. The fact that the *“gospel”* [εὐαγγέλιον] – or “good news” is *“glorious”* [δόξα] is because it is not something that is of human origin or execution but is the work of *“God.”*
4. It is *“glorious”* because it takes a sinner from depraved and decadent - completely transforming him into the very image of Christ Jesus, the end to which those who believe have been predestined.
5. A *“gospel”* that fails to incorporate the emphasis of our sinfulness, allowing the Law of God to bring conviction to convince a person of how hopeless, miserable, and offensive they are to God, fails to bring the level of glory to Jesus for the accomplishment of redeeming us from such a

¹ “The word andrapodon was offensive to the Greeks because of its likeness to tetrapoda, which referred to a quadruped; the implication was that slaves differed from animals only in the number of their feet.” (John Phillips, Exploring the Pastoral Epistles, p. 41).

state of depravity – cp. [2 Corinthians 4:4](#).

6. The way that we are convinced that God is “*blessed*” [μακάριος] – is to be convinced that what He has done for us through His Son, Christ Jesus, is magnificent and miraculous, an accomplishment only possible through His work on our behalf, bringing Him satisfaction and pleasure.

B. The Stewardship of the Gospel

1. It is this “*gospel*” that must remain the *kerygma* – or the core message of the Church.
2. Paul reminds Timothy (and the rest of the church) it is this “*gospel ... with which I have been entrusted*” – this is the stewardship we must maintain.
3. “*entrusted*” [πιστεύω] – comes from the word “faith” and in the *passive form* refers to the trust given to him by the Lord to maintain the purity of the message.
4. Hence, the Gospel is not something we are free to tweak or edit to our own satisfaction or advantage.
5. Our duty is to proclaim the Word of God in a way that is faithful to what is written and submissive to its authority as it is given – cp. [2 Timothy 4:1-5](#)!

So What?

1. The Law was never given for the purpose of making you righteous – but only to reveal your sinfulness.
2. Your love for God is revealed in how obedient from the heart you are to the Law of God.
3. Gratifying yourself at the expense of others exposes the hostility of ungodliness.
4. Embrace what the Law reveals about you in order that you might be delivered from your sin by turning by faith to the only One who can help you – Jesus Christ.

The Gospel starts with the reality of sin and ends in the glory of God.