

1 Timothy 1:1–2

MPS: The family of God flourishes under His good authority and in the hope of Christ.

INTRO

- We have spent some time last year and this year leaning about the kingdom of God – that it is already but not yet.
- We spent most of that time discussing the ‘already’
- Though the kingdom and church go hand in hand, they are not the same thing...they are two different things, so what is the local church?
- 1Timothy is an amazing blueprint, as it were, of what the local church is and does.

OPEN

What is church? What does it mean to you?

Church is not an event to go to, but a family to belong to

The family of God flourishes under His good authority and in the hope of Christ.

- Just like any other book of the Bible, we need to understand a few things before we dive into it. We do this, not JUST because this is the proper way to study books of the Bible (and it is), but we are less likely to take things out of context, understand the original meaning much better and ultimately apply biblical truth to our lives.

1 Timothy 1:1–2 (ESV) *1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by command of God our Savior and of Christ Jesus our hope, 2 To Timothy, my true child in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.*

- Timothy was a young man, likely in his early thirties, whom Paul had led to faith and disciplined for years. He had traveled with Paul throughout most of the second and third missionary journeys. As Paul’s trusted son in the faith, Timothy served in Ephesus, where he was pastoring a large and influential church.
- In Phil 2, Paul says this about Timothy “For I have no one like him...”
- This was not a private note from mentor to student. It was written to be read aloud and received by the whole church. The final verse of the letter uses the plural “you,” showing that Paul had the entire congregation in view. And so, because this book is about the church, it has great relevance for everyone, and not just pastors. And because this is the Word of God, it is for our church as well.

- Ephesus receives a lot of attention in the New Testament. Paul spent more than two years there (Acts 19). He later wrote the letter we know as Ephesians to this same church. In Revelation 2 Jesus Himself addresses the church at Ephesus. And we have two letters written to its pastor—1 and 2 Timothy. In Acts 20, only a few years earlier (around AD 57), Paul had met with the Ephesian elders at Miletus and poured out his heart to them. His greatest emphasis that day was the urgent need to protect sound doctrine and guard the flock against false teachers.
- Paul most likely wrote 1 Timothy several years later, between his first Roman imprisonment (Acts 28) and a further period of ministry sometimes called his fourth missionary journey—roughly AD 62–64. It is one of the three Pastoral Epistles (along with 2 Timothy and Titus). While 2 Timothy is generally regarded as Paul’s final letter, 1 Timothy comes earlier in that closing season of his life.

Purpose of the letter:

1 Timothy 3:14–15 (ESV) *14 I hope to come to you soon, but I am writing these things to you so that, 15 if I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth.*

- A household IS a family
- Household = *oikos* in GK and is translated family in Titus: **Titus 1:11 (ESV)** *11 They must be silenced, since they are upsetting whole families by teaching for shameful gain what they ought not to teach.*
- The family of the living God flourishing under truth

The family of God flourishes under His good authority and in the hope of Christ.

1. Family that flourishes

- Not only do we see we are family through Paul’s purpose of writing - but we also see that show up in the greeting of the letter.

2 To Timothy, my true child in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

- Look at the familial language here... child and Father.

- It's throughout the letter:

1 Timothy 5:1–2 (ESV) *1 Do not rebuke an older man but encourage him as you would a father, younger men as brothers, 2 older women as mothers, younger women as sisters, in all purity.*

- The church is as a FAMILY is communicated in this letter. He doesn't say, "Hey, treat the church like a club, not something you just occasionally attend and pay your dues.
- Don't treat the family (church) like a restaurant – want great service, leave a tip and will come back if the service was great.
- Your identity is not only in Christ, but it's also in family. Your fundamental identity is that because you belong to GOD, you belong to a family called the church.
- We are really drawn to our identity being sons and daughters, but we are also brothers and sisters.
- We are adopted children of God: **1 John 3:1** *See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God.*
- Family often means doing things you don't want to do with people you wouldn't have chosen.
- The household of God is full of ordinary, messed up people who need grace and need each other. we need the family of God.
- Flourishing is not the church looking impressive. It is not the music, the style, the programs, or the vibe.
- Those things may be helpful, but they do not make the church the church, and they do not make the family flourish.
- A plant does not flourish because the pot is impressive. It flourishes when it is planted according to its design. The family of God is the same. Music and style may be the pot. Following His design is the soil.
- The family of God flourishes when we follow His design and gladly do what He has called us to do and to be—living as His household under **His good authority and hope in Christ.**

2. **Authority that is good**

Vs 1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by command of God our Savior and of Christ Jesus our hope,

Notice these two words:

- Apostle and Command (of God)

Apostle

Paul didn't become an apostle because he just thought it would be a great career move. No, he was commanded it.

- Apostles were given “Power of Attorney” by Jesus.
- Power of Attorney is “an authorization to represent or act on another's behalf in private affairs, business, or some other legal matter...”
- **Acts 2:42** *And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers*
- Apostles in the early church are seen to claim an authority equal to that of the Old Testament prophets, an authority to speak and write words that are God's very words.

Ephesians 2:20 (ESV) *built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone,*

Command

- The word behind “command” in 1 Timothy 1:1 is the GK *epitagē*. It is the kind of command that comes from a king, a deity, or someone who has the right to be obeyed.
- Paul uses the same word in Titus:

Titus 2:15 — Titus is told to speak, exhort, and rebuke “with all authority.” That word “authority” is the same word, *epitagē*.

- Here's the thing about authority: a lot of people don't like it, and this is not a new thing, right? This is as old as the garden. Adam and Eve. Did God really say that? They questioned the authority of God.
- Some despise authority because it has been abused and caused hurt or harm... which is very understandable. (pastor here)

- However, we can't just reject something based on how others abused it, especially when God want us to embrace it.
 - We don't embrace abused authority – we embrace authority that reflects God's good authority.
 - God's authority has three characteristics: the right to command, intended for human flourishing, and designed to be delegated.
- a. **The right to command**
 - Authority begins with the legitimate right to require obedience.
 - Because God is the Creator and Owner of all things, He alone possesses ultimate authority.
 - Every lesser authority is valid only as it rests on His.
 - Submission to that right is not optional nor is it oppressive; it is the proper response of creatures to their Creator and of children to their Father.
 - b. **Intended for human flourishing**
 - God's authority is never raw power for its own sake.
 - Because the One who commands is perfectly good, righteous, and fatherly, His commands are always for our life, protection, order, and good.
 - Authority that reflects Him produces flourishing rather than harm.
 - The cultural suspicion of authority often arises from seeing it abused, yet the abuse of a good thing does not make the thing itself bad.
 - In the household of God, living under His authority is the path to true freedom and health—individually and together as a family. That is why the letter exists: so that we may know how to conduct ourselves in a way that leads to flourishing under the living God.
 - c. **Designed to be delegated**
 - God does not keep His authority locked away; He deliberately shares and delegates it.
 - The chain in these opening verses is clear: the command of God and of Christ Jesus → the apostle Paul (writing under the inspiration of the Spirit) → Timothy the pastor → the church in Ephesus (and us).

- Delegated authority remains good only as it stays under the ultimate authority of God and serves the flourishing of His household.
- When we recognize this design, we can gladly receive both the authority of this letter and the proper exercise of authority within the family of God.
- Everyone is under authority and often today it is either My feelings, My experience or My culture – but it always need to be God’s Word.
- To become a Christian is to gladly submit to the authority of Jesus.
 - "What do you say about the church? That's what I want to obey.
 - What you say about my marriage? That's what I want to do.
 - What you say about finances?
- We believe Jesus is infinitely good and infinitely wise in what you tell us is for our good, and to reject it would be folly.

3. **Hope that is certain**

1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by command of God our Savior and of Christ Jesus our hope,

- Paul does not say we have a hopeful feeling. He says we have a Person: “Christ Jesus our hope.”
- Biblical hope is not the same as we use the word ‘hope’ today. (I hope it doesn’t rain, I hope she doesn’t break up with me, I hope the Bama gets back on top of CF...good luck)
- No. Hope is certain. Hope is faith in a promise. Hope is banking on things to occur like banking on the sun to rise in the morning – It will.
- Biblical hope is, He will – he will never forsake me (Heb 13:5), He will provide for me (Phil 4:19), He will comfort me (2Cor 1), He will come back again to establish the NOT YET Kingdom (Acts 1:11), He will give me a glorified body (Phil 3:21), He will wipe away every tear (Rev 21:4).

Go back to 3:15 to see this hope come alive

1 Timothy 3:14–15 (ESV) *15 if I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth.*

- It is the living God’s church.
- There is a hope that is certain because God is alive. We too are made alive as we turn from sin and self and turn to Jesus. Just like those baptisms symbolized.

- And all of that is possible because of our Savior. Our hope is not in politicians, prosperity, retirement, good investments, luck, or any other fragile thing. Our hope for the future is Christ. Our hope for the present is Christ. The living God infuses His family with hope because our hope is a Person: “Christ Jesus our hope.”
- Some of you walked in hopeless. Not dramatic about it. Just tired. Tired of pretending the family is fine. Tired of authority that has been used against you. Tired of hoping in things that keep collapsing.
- Hear this: The Scripture does not point you to a better mood. He points you to a living God and a risen Savior. “Christ Jesus our hope” means your hope is not in whether this week gets easier.
- So the family of God flourishes under His good authority and in the hope of Christ—because this is the living God’s church, and Christ Jesus is our hope.
- On the road to Emmaus, two disciples said the most hopeless sentence in the Gospels: “We had hoped.” **Luke 24:21 (ESV) 21** *But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things happened.*
- They had hoped Jesus was the One. Then they watched Him die. So they walked away from Jerusalem with heavy feet and a dead future. Their problem was not that they wanted hope. Their problem was that their hope had been in an outcome—and the outcome was a sealed tomb.
- Then a stranger began to walk with them. He opened the Scriptures. He sat at their table. And when He broke the bread, they saw Him. Not an idea. Not a memory. The living Jesus.
- **Luke 24:32 (ESV) 32** *They said to each other, “Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?”*
- That is the difference. “We had hoped” is what you say when hope is a result. “Christ Jesus our hope” is what you say when hope is a Person.
- Do not put your hope in what can die. Put it in the One who lives.

The family of God flourishes under His good authority because Christ Jesus is our hope.

QUESTIONS FOR GROUPS:

1. Where do you most naturally treat the church like a club or a restaurant rather than a family—and what would it look like this week to live as a brother or sister in the household of God?
2. Where have you been living in “we had hoped” instead of “Christ Jesus our hope”? What would change if your hope was a Person rather than an outcome?