

1 Tim 1:12-20

Intro

This letter is one of the Pastoral Letters

1 & 2 Timothy and 1 Titus

As these are the only letters that are on the one hand:

Addressed to an Individual

Meant to be read out in public

And contain instructions on how to be 'Church'

This letter is to give Timothy instructions how to lead his church

And in the same way telling the church that Timothy was standards they can expect from him

Paul also speaks very highly of himself in this letter

One reason may be that he does this to highlight his credentials

That he is authorised to give this charge

But Timothy would not need that

He knows Paul well

It is the church in Ephesus that Timothy is that needs to hear that

Maybe they were doubting if Timothy was a

good leader

Or they were doubting his teaching

Paul with this letter gives Timothy credibility
as well as encouragement

Reading Structure

1. Paul's testimony

A. Paul's sinful state & redemption

B. The reason why Paul received mercy

C. Praise to God

2. Paul's Charge and Warning

1. Paul's testimony

A. Paul is thankful to Christ

that he deemed him faithful and fit for
service

Despite Paul's former behaviour

Paul is very honest about his past

He sees himself clearly who he was
before his conversion

And he is thankful that he received
mercy

Even though he does give himself an excuse

And excuse that his readers would not have

That they did not know who Christ was!

But his transformation is all due to
Christ

the grace of the Lord overflowed for me
with the faith and the love that are in Christ

. Jesus

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^ v14

B. This statement then leads to the centre of this passage

The reason that he received grace from Christ

"Christ came into the world to save sinners"

^ v15

And Paul recognises that he was a sinner

C. Praise

In the first reading of this it is a classical Old Testament description of God

Of all ages, immortal, invisible, the only God

But: "**King** of the ages"?

This is not something that Yahweh was attributed with in the Old Testament

In the OT testament Kings were human, appointed by God

So is Paul addressing Jesus as the King of Kings?

Recognising that he is the same as God?

2. Paul's charge to Timothy and Warning

The second part introduces the reason for the letter

To give instructions or charge to Timothy

Reminding the readers that Timothy is in his role due to a prophecy

I.e. God has appointed/commissioned him

He also encourages Timothy not to give up

He could easily go somewhere else

Where he is perhaps more valued

But Paul tells them to fight to good fight

Against what?

Not against people, but

Having faith and a good conscience

This is echoed from v5

⁵ But the aim of such instruction is love that comes from a pure heart, a good conscience, and sincere faith.

Without conscience, i.e. that we are sure that our behaviour is according to our faith, faith is nothing

Negative examples of a good conscience

Paul gives then two examples of people who have suffered a shipwreck in faith

Persumably because they did not live according to their faith

And therefore they would not have a

clean conscience

At least according to Paul!

Hymeneaus

is mentioned in 2 Tim 2:17-18

¹⁶ Avoid profane chatter, for it will lead people into more and more impiety, ¹⁷ and their talk will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, ¹⁸ who have swerved from the truth by claiming that the resurrection has already taken place. They are upsetting the faith of some.

What this means exactly is unclear, but it can be inferred that there was not future resurrection to look forward to

Therefore dismissing one of the tenants of our Christian faith

Alexander

An Alexander is mentioned in 2 Tim 4:14

¹⁴ Alexander the metalworker did me a great deal of harm. The Lord will repay him for what he has done.

First of all it is unsure if this is the same Alexander

And we do not know in what way the second Alexander has harmed Paul

So his demeanor has been lost in time

Turned over to Satan

Similar to 1 Cor 5:5

Where a man is accused of sleeping with his father's wife

Turning over to Satan may be a phrase to

mean excommunications

To give them a chance to repent

1 Cor 5:5: so that his spirit may be saved on the day of the Lord

1 Tim 1: 20: so that they may not learn to blaspheme

Both indicate that there was still a way forward for these people

despite that they will be excluded from the community, for now

End notes

1. Paul uses his own testimony

To give thanks and glory to Jesus

But also to establish his own standing as a Christian Leader

Do we use our testimonies to convince people of the saving grace of Jesus Christ?

C.f.:

¹⁰ For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved.

[^] Rom 10:10

For Paul we cannot be saved if we do not speak about our faith!

2. The dependency between faith and conscience

For Paul if we do not live according to our faith, our faith is 'shipwrecked' or dead

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If we have a clear conscience, tested against our faith and those who set an example

Our faith is alive

3. We are examples to other Christians

Do we see ourselves as examples to non-Christians, or young Christians

Do we realise that we are?

And take that seriously?

Paul was aware of his own responsibility to proclaim the Gospel of Christ

Do we realise what our responsibilities are and calling is in that respect?

Amen