



Green Pastures

Devotions for You & Your Family

Grounded in the Gospel

1 Timothy 1:12-20

May 13, 2012

MON. 1Tim. 1:12-13 - Thanking God

Paul was thanking God showing his extreme gratefulness and humility. What a contrast to the Pharisees of his day. God gave him strength and judged him faithful though formerly he murdered God's people before coming to faith in Christ. God forgave Paul and used him mightily to give the gospel to the gentiles. People can feel so guilt-ridden by their past that they think God could never forgive and accept them. No matter how shameful your past, God also can forgive and use you. Paul admits he was a blasphemer, persecutor and insolent opponent but he acted in unbelief. God knows our heart and he took Paul knowing his heart and how strong he was in his persecution and knew if he could change him with His mercy that he would be just as strong in proclaiming the gospel truth. If we have a willing heart to go God's way and will put every effort into following what God has planned for us then God will place us where He can use us in a way that will glorify Him. Thank God today for His mercy and forgiveness and know you can be used mightily for God.

APPLICATION - 1. How is God using you today no matter what your past?

TUE. 1Tim. 1:14-15 - The Grace of God

Paul realized that the grace of God (God's unmerited favor for us) overflowed for him. In Christ Jesus he was given the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. We may feel that our faith in God and our love for Christ and others is not very strong. But when we are in Christ our faith and love grow as our relationship with Him deepens. Jesus came into the world to save sinners. Paul announced that he was chief of sinners. He knew he was living proof that God can save anyone. Paul here summarizes the Good News. Jesus didn't come just to show us how to live a better life or to be better people. He came to offer us salvation and show us how to have eternal life. The more Paul understood God's grace, the more he was aware of his own sinfulness. We, today, must be like Paul and in humility and thankfulness be aware that God's grace is for us also. We are sinners that are saved by grace. Someone said, "The beginning of greatness is to be little; it increases as we become less and is perfect when we become nothing." Until we realize our sinful condition and cannot be accepted by a holy God, we must run to the Savior who will give us His righteousness when we accept His forgiveness. "He died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day." (1 Cor. 15:3-4) That is the gospel. Have you accepted His offer?

APPLICATION - 1. How has the grace of God overflowed for you?

WED. 1Tim. 1:16-17 - The Mercy of God

Paul said next, "for this reason I obtained mercy." It was because Jesus came into the world to save sinners and the mercy of God that could look at Paul, the chief of sinners, and save him. Paul related that from his life, Jesus Christ would show His longsuffering and God could display to everyone His gracious and merciful patience with the most wretched sinner. Paul was proof that God could save anyone even the most vial sinner where Paul placed himself. Then Paul gave God all the praise for sovereignly saving him. He said, "To the King of Ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen." Can you express your praise of God like Paul did? Paul broke out with this great doxology to remind us of the long-suffering of God and suffering of the Savior to cause us to praise God with all our heart.

APPLICATION - 1. How much do you praise God for His grace and mercy to you?

THURS. 1Tim. 1:18-19a - Timothy's Charge

Timothy's charge ought to be our charge too. Prophecies earlier were made about Timothy. He had been set apart for ministry when elders laid their hands on him.(4:14). Paul looked to him as his true son in the faith. Now Timothy encouraged by these prophecies was charged to wage the good warfare. You mean we could be involved in warfare too? Paul was always warning about false teaching. Even today more than ever we need to be warned. War has been declared by our enemy and therefore we are always engaged in warfare. Timothy was to hold onto his faith and a good conscience. Holding on to his faith means that he must continue to hold on to the truth. We also must not deviate from the truth. If anyone tries to tell us things not in the Bible we are to stay away from them and not listen to them. A good conscience steers the believer through the struggles of sin and detecting error. Some need to listen for that still small voice. It can only be kept clear by judging ourselves and confessing sin. It must not be seared (4:2) or we could be capable of committing gross sin.

APPLICATION - 1. How are you keeping your conscience clear to the truth? 2. How do you handle warfare?

FRI. 1Tim. 1:19b-20 - Do Not Reject the Warning

Paul is telling us that some have rejected the warning about warfare. They have gone away from the truth and their consciences have been seared. Paul says they have been shipwrecked. That means they have wrecked their faith. Paul even mentions their names and that they have been handed over to Satan so they learn not to blaspheme. Hymeneus's error we read later on was that the resurrection had already occurred. Paul removed him from the church. Deliberate sin should be responded to quickly and sternly in our churches to prevent the entire congregation from being affected. But the discipline should be done in a way that brings the offender back to Christ and into the church. Most of us understand the need to confront error. Yet we sometimes find confrontation difficult. It seems Timothy thought so too, but Paul encouraged him. That is why we need the fellowship of other believers. Interdependence is necessary when we are called to battle evil. So be sure to meet regularly with other Christians and develop friendships that involve mutual accountability.

APPLICATION - 1. How do you keep yourself from becoming shipwrecked?