

Lesson 2 – THE END OF THE LAW

1 TIMOTHY 1:4-7

(1 Tim. 1:4) – Some men at Ephesus had begun to teach doctrines contrary to the Gospel of God’s free and sovereign grace in and by the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul tells Timothy to command these men not to teach such heresies. **“Neither give heed to fables”** – Myths of imagination, falsehoods that come from human reasoning and not the Scriptures.

“And endless genealogies, which minister questions,” – Jewish genealogies that caused people to get caught up in tracing their Old Testament heritage in the nation Israel (cf. Matt. 3:7-9). Paul had already taught that all distinctions of nation and heritage were totally removed in the Gospel economy (cf. Rom. 2:28-29; Gal. 3:26-29; Php. 3:5-8; Col. 3:9-11). Any teaching that is outside the Scriptures, or any teaching that would promote any notion that a believing Jew was more saved or more entitled to Heaven because he is a Jew is contrary to sound doctrine and opposed to the Gospel. The Gospel teaches that all who are in Christ, clothed in His righteousness, are equally justified, equally sanctified, equally fit, and equally entitled to all of Heaven based on His righteousness alone.

“Rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do” – Edification has to do with establishing the hearts of God’s people with grace. It involves growth in grace and in the knowledge of Christ as believers are more and more convinced that Christ’s righteousness alone entitles them to all of Heaven. It involves encouragements in the Gospel so as to motivate believers to godliness and obedience and dedication without legalism or mysticism. This is consistent with sound doctrine, the Gospel.

(1 Tim. 1:5) – **“Now the end of the commandment”** – **“End”** here means finishing as in a goal one means to reach (cf. Rom. 10:4). What specifically is **“the commandment”** here? Is it the whole law of God (His Word; His revealed will) summarized in love God perfectly and love our neighbor as ourselves? Is it the Gospel which is a command? The context shows us that when the Apostle Paul instructed Timothy to command “some that they teach no other doctrine” (1:3), he had a goal in mind. It was **“charity”** (1) **“out of a pure heart”**; (2) **“and of a good conscience”**; (3) **“and of faith unfeigned.”** This **“charity”** must be defined by God’s Word, not by our culture and not by our feelings. Paul wrote about it in 1 Corinthians 13. John wrote about it 1 John 3-4. This is true Godly love which no person has by nature. It is love that is given to us as we are born again by the Holy Spirit and brought to see the awesome salvation that God fully and freely gives us by His grace in and through the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. 5:5-8). It is the unconditional love of God towards those whom He chose to save (John 3:16; 1 John 4:8-10). It is our love to Christ, His truth, and His people (our brethren in the faith and doctrine of Christ, the Gospel). The Lord connected this love with the true doctrine of Christ (Matt. 15:7-9). This charity is:

(1) **“Out of a pure heart”** – The heart is the mind, affections, and wills. God’s Word tells us that our natural hearts are “deceitful above all things, and desperately

wicked: who can know it?” (Jer. 17:9). Christ told His disciples that our sins proceed out of our hearts. So, what is a pure heart, and how do we have such a heart? It is the new heart given to us by the Holy Spirit in the new birth by which He convicts of sin and drives to Christ for cleansing, forgiveness, and righteousness. It is a heart cleansed by the blood of Christ as revealed to us in the Gospel and as we are given faith to believe in Him and to repent of dead works and idolatry (Rom. 2:28-29; 6:17-18; 1 Pet. 1:18-25).

(2) **“And of a good conscience”** – The conscience is the seat of judgment in our hearts by which we judge good and evil. By nature, our consciences are defiled so as to be ignorant of God’s standard of goodness, righteousness, and holiness, as well as sin, evil, and pride. It takes the Holy Spirit’s work in the hearts of God’s people to make the conscience “good” according to God’s standard of “good.” So, a good conscience is one that is made so by the application of the blood of Christ whereby we see that His blood alone, without any contribution from us, has paid our sin-debt and made us righteous in God’s sight. To look to ourselves for this blessing is the product of an evil conscience. To look to Christ alone for this blessing is a good conscience (Heb. 10:19-22).

(3) **“And of faith unfeigned”** – This is God-given, sincere faith that looks to and rests in Christ for all salvation by God’s grace with all blessings and benefits freely given to us based on the glory of HIS Person (God manifest in the flesh) and the power and success of His obedience unto death as our Surety, Substitute, Redeemer, and Preserver (Heb. 12:2). It is not insincere or hypocritical faith as one who claims to be saved but who does not live by faith in Christ, who avoids the issues of true repentance of dead works and idolatry, and who does not seek to obey the Lord as motivated by grace, love, and gratitude (Rom. 7:4-6).

(1 Tim. 1:6-7) – Apparently, some of the teachers at Ephesus had **“swerved”** (strayed) from the truth and **“turned aside unto vain jangling”** (empty talk). Paul tells us exactly what these empty talkers were talking about – **“Desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm.”** We will see from the next verses that they were trying to teach the law of God but unlawfully (in a wrong way). These may have been Jews who claimed to have faith in Christ but who prided themselves on being experts in the law. They boasted of having the law on their side and were teachers and guardians of the law. Paul says the law gives them no support, but rather opposes them; for the end and design, the sum and substance of the law is, first, to drive sinners to Christ for righteousness and life (Rom. 10:4). Then it commands love to God and love to one another (Matt. 22:36-39; Gal. 5:13-14). This love is not possible from a natural man, but springs from a pure heart (regenerated and sanctified by the Spirit of God), from a good or a clear conscience (purged from dead works, idolatry, and pride), and sincere faith.