

(1 Tim. 1:17) – Having recalled the greatness of God’s free and sovereign mercy towards him in Christ, Paul now expresses a doxology of praise to God for saving him, the chief of sinners. When we who are truly saved by God’s grace in Christ Jesus realize what it took for God to save us, the gift of His only-begotten Son and the obedience unto death of His Son as our Surety, Substitute, and Redeemer, it will bring forth true worship from our hearts and in thanksgiving to Christ Who loves us and gave Himself for us (Eph. 2:4-10). Our God is the one living and true God, and He is **“the King eternal,”** the “Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty” (Rev. 1:8). He is the eternal King of nature, providence, and grace. His throne is forever, and of His kingdom and government, there is no end. Our God is **“immortal,”** for Christ is the living God, the living Redeemer; and though He died as man, He will die no more, but lives forever and ever as Godman, our Redeemer, Intercessor, Mediator, and King.

Our God is **“invisible”** in His divine nature and dwells in light inaccessible (1 Tim. 6:14-16). What we see and know of God, as opposed to all idols, is what He has revealed to us in the Person of Christ Who is Himself “Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us” (Matt. 1:23) and God “manifest in the flesh” (1 Tim. 3:16). And we see and know God by His Word as He reveals Himself to us by the Holy Spirit through the Gospel of His grace (Matt. 11:27; 2 Cor. 4:6). Our God is **“the only wise God”** (in opposition to all false deities); He is wisdom itself and the fountain of wisdom, especially as He reveals Himself as both just and Justifier of the ungodly by Jesus Christ and based upon Christ’s righteousness imputed to His people (1 Cor. 1:30-31). To Him be all honor and glory forever! (Jude 24-25).

(1 Tim. 1:18) – Paul repeats the charge he gave to Timothy in Verse 3, which was not only an order to charge others to teach no other doctrine than that of the true Gospel of God’s free and sovereign grace in Christ, but includes the charge of preaching it himself. Paul wrote of “sound doctrine,” i.e. the Gospel of God’s grace in Christ and the Word of God **“according to the prophecies which went before on thee.”** Apparently, God had spoken to Timothy by others through the gift of prophecy encouraging Timothy to stay strong in the truth. It may have been a description of Timothy’s future ministry; it may have been a warning against being timid in his work for God. Whatever it was, God wanted Timothy to draw strength from it in his present struggle with false brethren – **“that thou by them mightest war a good warfare.”** He tells Timothy, as a good soldier in the midst of the war with Satan, evil men, and false teachers, to be true to Christ (2 Cor. 10:3-4; Eph. 6:12; 1 Tim. 6:12).

(1 Tim. 1:19) – **“Holding faith”** – Faith here is the body of objective truth and doctrine that comprises the Gospel and the Word of God that identifies and distinguishes the true faith of

God's elect in Christ (1 Tim. 3:9). It is truth revealed to His people from Christ and by the Holy Spirit. It is truth on which we must agree, if we claim to be true believers and true children of God, as it refers to the most basic fundamentals of how God saves sinners by His free and sovereign grace through the glorious Person and finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ. If a professing believer strays from or denies this faith, he leaves the true Gospel and continues "not in the doctrine of Christ" (2 John 9).

"And a good conscience" – A "good" conscience is one in which the truth of Christ and His blood for the forgiveness of our sins and for righteousness before God has been applied by the Holy Spirit (Heb. 10:14-22). It also involves the sincerity and honesty of mind and heart towards God and men along with a real striving to live a life of obedience motivated by grace, love, and gratitude. It is not that a true minister of Christ is or must be a perfect person in himself. The only perfection that any of us have is our standing before God in Christ and His righteousness imputed. But he must be one who strives to be an honest and good steward of the grace of God in his preaching and in his life.

"Which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck" – Some preachers and teachers have failed in one or both, thereby making shipwreck of themselves and others. The term "shipwreck" is appropriate as it suggests that if we wish to arrive safely to harbor, we must continue on the course of grace, faith, and obedience and not wreck on the rocks of legalism, works, covetousness, and/or compromise with unbelievers to gain their favor (1 Tim. 6:8-11). The same idea is expressed in Hebrews 2:1 – "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip," meaning "lest we drift on by" or "drift away from it" like a ship that fails during a dangerous storm to set its anchor at the pier of safety. Our pier of safety during the storms of life is Christ crucified and risen from the dead, His blood as our complete propitiation, His righteousness imputed as our defense from all accusation, His love, goodness, and power to save and keep us safe from all harm (Rom. 8:28-39).

(1 Tim. 1:20) – "Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander" – We find additional reference to Hymenaeus in 2 Tim. 2:17-18. Alexander seems to be the same with Alexander the coppersmith, who did the apostle much evil, (2 Timothy 4:14), and it may be is the same with him who was at Ephesus when Paul was there (Acts 19:33-34). Their error had to do with denying the resurrection of the dead in the end. Paul deals with the seriousness of this heresy in 1 Corinthians 15:12-22. **"Whom I have delivered unto Satan"** – By apostolic authority, which is the authority of God's Word, not of the man or the office, Paul delivered these men into the hands of Satan as a token of God's displeasure (1 Cor. 5:4-5). **"That they may learn not to blaspheme"** – This is that they would be chastised, disciplined, corrected, and called to repentance (Gal. 6:1; Titus 3:10-11; James 5:19-20).