

Wednesday Night BIBLE STUDY

Wednesday October 12, 2022 – First Baptist Church Buda
Midweek Prayer Meeting & Bible Study



HONORING GOD
“The Goal of Biblical Teaching”
1 Timothy 1:3-7

“¹Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the commandment of God our Savior and the Lord Jesus Christ, our hope, ²To Timothy, a true son in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord. ³As I urged you when I went into Macedonia—remain in Ephesus that you may charge some that they teach no other doctrine, ⁴nor give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which cause disputes rather than godly edification which is in faith. ⁵Now the purpose of the commandment is love from a pure heart, from a good conscience, and from sincere faith, ⁶from which some, having strayed, have turned aside to idle talk, ⁷desiring to be teachers of the law, understanding neither what they say nor the things which they affirm.” -1 Timothy 1:1-7 (NKJV)

We began our new study last week through the book of 1 Timothy, a New Testament book that is actually a letter and a different type of letter. It's a personal letter, not written to a particular church or group of people like most of the New Testament letters, but to an individual, and it has a personal word and truth for us as well... for our lives. Sometimes when a book of the Bible is titled with a personal name it indicates that the book is written by that person. For example in the Old Testament we have the book of Jeremiah written by the Prophet Jeremiah, or Isaiah written by Isaiah, or Daniel written by Daniel. In the New Testament we have the book of Matthew, written by Jesus' disciple Matthew, or John written by the beloved disciple John. But the book of Timothy is different. Timothy didn't write the book of Timothy. Rather the book is written to him, for him, and it's personal... for a reason. Here is a simple truth that we need to get our heads around even as we begin this study. God's inspired Word is personal and sometimes the word is personally directed to us. God inspired the writer of Timothy to write a personal letter to Timothy (2 of them to be exact), and it included in the canon of Holy Scripture, and Timothy is one of the only

individuals (Titus the other), to get a book of Bible written personally to Him. That is an incredible thought, and an important thought. It reminds us of how personal God desires to be in our lives, in directing our lives, in speaking into our lives, in helping us with our troubles and struggles, how much He cares what we are facing. If he cared enough about Timothy to, under inspiration of the Holy Spirit, have one of His men write a personal letter to him, He (God) surely cares for us in the same way. And it says we need to study this great personal book and grab hold of the truths it has for us.

The book of Timothy is a letter. This is the first of two inspired letters Paul wrote to his beloved son in the faith. Since the title of the book/letter bears the recipients name it might be good for us to get to know the letter's namesake... Timothy. The following are some facts about Timothy that will be helpful in our study.

Getting to Know Timothy Facts:

- (1) **The name Timothy means “one who honors God”** – Hence the name of our study “Honoring God.” Timothy received his name, which means “one who honors God,” from his mother (Eunice) and grandmother (Lois), devout Jews who became believers in the Lord Jesus Christ (2 Tim. 1:5) and taught Timothy the Old Testament Scriptures from his childhood (2 Tim. 3:15). His father was a Greek (Acts 16:1) who may have died before Timothy met Paul
- (2) **Timothy was from the town of Lystra** - Timothy was from Lystra (Acts 16:1-3), a city in the Roman province of Galatia (part of modern day Turkey).



- (3) **Timothy came to know Jesus through Paul during his first missionary journey** - Paul led Timothy to Christ (1 Timothy 1:2; 1 Corinthians 4:17; 2 Timothy 1:2), undoubtedly during his ministry in Lystra on his first missionary journey (Acts 14:6-23).
- (4) **Paul recruited Timothy to join his ministry team during Paul's second missionary journey** - When Paul revisited Lystra on his second missionary journey, Paul chose Timothy to accompany him (Acts 16:1-3).
- (5) **Timothy was likely a teenager when he first joined Paul's ministry team** - Although Timothy was very young (probably in his late teens or early twenties, since about 15 years later Paul referred to him as a young man, 1 Timothy 4:12), he had a reputation for godliness (Acts 16:2).
- (6) **Timothy was with Paul throughout the rest of Paul's life and ministry** - Timothy was to be Paul's disciple, friend, and co-laborer for the rest of the apostle's life, ministering with him in Berea (Acts 17:14), Athens (Acts 17:15), Corinth (Acts 18:5, 2 Corinthians 1:19), and accompanying him on his trip to Jerusalem (Acts 20:4). He was with Paul in his first Roman imprisonment and went to Philippi (Philippians 2:19-23) after Paul's release. In addition, Paul frequently mentions Timothy in his epistle (Romans 16:21; 2 Corinthians 1:1, Philippians 1:1, Colossians 1:1; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:1; Philemon 1).
- (7) **Timothy became the pastor of the church at Ephesus** - Paul often sent Timothy to churches as his representative (1 Corinthians 4:17; 1 Corinthians 16:10; Philippians 2:19; 1 Thessalonians 3:2), and 1 Timothy finds him on another assignment, serving as pastor of the church at Ephesus (1 Timothy 1:3).



(8) **Timothy was imprisoned for his faith** - According to Hebrews 13:23, Timothy was imprisoned somewhere and released. In Hebrews 13:23 the writer says, *“Know that our brother Timothy has been set free, with whom I shall see you if he comes shortly.”* This indicates that Timothy has been imprisoned and released. Interestingly, this statement has also led many to believe Paul the author of Hebrews, because of his close association with Timothy.

Those 8 facts give us a little more information about the one to whom this letter is written. These are just some things we know from Scripture itself, but they do give us something of a picture of the young man we are talking about here.

A story is told of an elderly man who ran a variety store. At one time it had been a prosperous business, but in recent years he had become obsessed with trying to keep the store neat and clean. He would spend hours arranging and rearranging the merchandise on the shelves, often refusing to unlock the doors for fear that the store would be thrown into disarray. The appearance of his store became the priority; selling merchandise became secondary.

That sounds crazy, but the same thing often happens among God’s people...

- We get diverted from the true goal of the Christian life and busy ourselves with lesser things.
- Listen to Jesus’ words in Matthew 22:37-39, *“³⁷ Jesus said to him, ‘You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ ³⁸ This is the first and great commandment. ³⁹ And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’”*
- What is the true goal of the Christian life that we should be busying ourselves with?
- Jesus clearly summed up the goal when He said that the two greatest commandments in God’s law were to love God with all our being and to love our neighbor as we do in fact love ourselves (Matt. 22:37-39). Genuine love for God and others is the goal of the Christian life.
- And yet we in the church often get caught up with the trivial and neglect the crucial.
- We strain the gnat and swallow the camel, to use Jesus’ phrase (Matt. 23:24).
- *What do you believe are the crucial things we (as the church and Christians) are to be doing?*
- *What are some of the things we often get caught up in that may cause us to neglect the crucial?*

4 things we can get up in that may cause us to neglect the essential:

- (1) We argue some abstruse point of theology but shred relationships.
- (2) We get caught up with church programs but neglect the people the programs are supposed to help.

- (3) We serve on committees but ignore the hurting person in our midst who needs our love.
- (4) We focus on knowing the Bible but forget that the goal is to change our lives, not to fill our heads.

The church at Ephesus was being diverted from the goal of the Christian life by some false teachers. They were promoting “strange doctrines” (1:3, lit., “other doctrines”) that is, non-apostolic doctrines. Apostolic doctrine, as contained in the New Testament (which includes the proper interpretation of the Old Testament), is the only truth for God’s people. But these teachers had turned aside to fruitless discussion centering on myths and speculations about genealogies. Paul had assigned Timothy the unenviable but necessary task of confronting these men and getting the church back on track. In **1 Timothy 1:3-7**, Paul makes the point that ...

KEY TAKE AWAY: *“The goal of Biblical teaching is love in line with God’s truth.”*

We need to navigate these waters carefully, because we can run aground on a number of extremes.

2 Extremes for Caution:

- (1) **Extreme One = An overemphasis of love to the neglect of good theology – *What the problem with this?*** Many shipwreck by saying, “Doctrine just divides people and causes controversy. You can’t know for sure that you’re right. So forget about theology; love is all that matters.” But there is no such thing as biblical love apart from sound theology.
- (2) **Extreme Two = An overemphasis of theology to the neglect of love – *What the problem with this?*** Others run aground by assuming a cultural definition of love instead of a Biblical one. They think that love means being nice all the time, burying our differences and never criticizing or opposing anyone. But if that’s what Paul meant, he contradicts himself within this chapter.

To help us think clearly about the goal of Biblical teaching as set forth here by Paul, I want to develop three thoughts that we will look at individually in this study of 1 Timothy 1:3-7.

3 Thoughts from 1 Timothy 1:3-7 on Biblical Teaching:

- 1. **Biblical teaching has been entrusted by God to those who teach, thus they are not free to change the message -**
- 2. **The goal of biblical teaching is love, properly defined -**
- 3. **“Love” that is not in line with God’s truth is not love –** What does this say to so much of what we hear defined as “love” today in our world?

BIBLICAL TEACHING HAS BEEN ENTRUSTED BY GOD TO THOSE WHO TEACH AND THEY ARE NOT FREE TO CHANGE THE MESSAGE (1 Timothy 1:3-4)

³As I urged you when I went into Macedonia—remain in Ephesus that you may charge some that they teach no other doctrine, ⁴nor give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which cause disputes rather than godly edification which is in faith. -1 Timothy 1:3-4

These false teachers were making up their own message, supposedly based on Old Testament genealogies. No doubt they were interesting and entertaining stories. But Paul calls them “*fables*” (or *myths*) and contrasts them with “*godly edification which is in faith*” (v. 4).

- Most likely these men were teachers of Jewish background who would take names from Old Testament genealogies and make up stories that had no factual basis.
- Such fables were included in a portion of The Talmud known as Haggadah.
- Another example of this sort of Jewish myth (Titus 1:14) is The Book of Jubilees, written about 100 B.C., which takes the historical stories from Genesis and embellishes them with all sorts of fictional accounts (William Hendriksen, *New Testament Commentary*, “Exposition of The Pastoral Epistles” [Baker], p. 59).
- By way of contrast to these speculations, Paul asserts that “the administration of God” is “by faith” (v. 4). (The KJV and NKJV reading, “godly edification,” is based on a weak textual variant that must be rejected. The NIV “God’s work” misses the main nuance of the Greek word.)
- The Greek word for “administration” means stewardship or management (see 1 Cor. 9:17; Eph. 1:10; 3:2, 9; Col. 1:25).
- The idea is that the gospel message is a treasure entrusted by God to men who will give an account to Him on whether they managed or dispensed it faithfully (see 1 Tim. 1:11).
- Such a steward of the gospel isn’t free to modify the message or teach whatever he likes or dislikes or what he thinks his audience wants to hear.
- He is under orders (v. 3, “instruct” [NASB] = “a military command”) from God to proclaim what God has revealed and nothing else. This treasure of the gospel comes to people “by faith.”

In our day, as in every age, there are men who tamper with the apostolic message by all sorts of cultural myths to make it more palatable to people. Think of what we are seeing today... all sort of distortions of God’s Word and sound theology and doctrine. Much “false teaching” and lax doctrinal and theological insight has no doubt affected many of our church and pulpits today. Many Christians may not even notice it, but false teaching is creeping into our churches and some are perverting the gospel. Here are some examples of these false teaching that are subtly slipping into congregations around the world.

Some of the False Teaching Found in Churches Today:

- (1) **Easy Believism** - What is called “Easy Believism” often includes the fact that someone once prayed a prayer, or walked the isle, got baptized, or filled out a “decision card,” but often there is no visible change in their life (1 Cor 5:17; Gal 5:24). Instead of being a

new creation in Christ, they live like the old creation; the fallen creation where there are no fruits of the Holy Spirit (Gal 5:22-23); only fruits of the flesh (Gal 5:19-21). Most Christians know it's not easy at all to live the Christian life.

- (2) **Legalism** - Many now believe that there is no authentic salvation without baptism or without dipping the person backwards 3 times (not forward), or forward 3 times, etc.! But what about the thief on the cross who was certainly not able to be baptized! There are far too many churches which believe they are the only one, and only true church, and all others are apostates. And if you're not baptized in their church, then you're lost and headed to hell. However, this begs the question. Isn't that only creating an equation for salvation? Much like: Baptism + Jesus = Salvation. Others stress tithing, observing a Saturday Sabbath, dietary restrictions, and even tithing as being required today.
- (3) **I'm Not a Sinner** - I'm not sure how this all got started, but now people...even saved people, declare they are no longer sinners, but wasn't it the Apostle Paul, even after conversion, saying he was the chief of sinners (1 Tim 1:15)? Scripture tells us that "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom 3:23), and not just a little short. This is not like playing horseshoes and somehow, we can get close to God's glory. No, just the opposite is true. I'd say we all fall infinitely short of God's glory; a gap so large as to be humanly bridgeable. But to the person who feels they're not a sinner anymore and stop calling them a sinner, is calling God a liar (1 John 1:8, 10). None are good and all sin (Rom 3:10-12; Psalm 51:5; Eccl 7:20...etc.). I would ask the person who says they're not a sinner anymore, "Have you completely stopped sinning? If so, *"Why are you not in heaven? How many times do you sin now? Once a day? A week? If a bank robber robbed a bank only once a week, wouldn't we still call him a bank robber?"*
- (4) **Salvation thru Sacraments** - These include baptism, the Lord's Supper, penance, foot washing, or other such things they add. Some of these beliefs could include baptism, Speaking in Tongues, "the Second Blessing," etc.
- (5) **Universalism** - Jesus died for all. It's the false idea of the *"Brother of man and the universal Fatherhood of God...."* I have a Greek word for that. Bologna! They believe all people will eventually be reconciled to God, despite judgment coming after death (Heb 9:27; Rev 20:12-15). But will God really save someone against their own will? Does that mean Satan will be saved too? Scripture says otherwise (Rev 20:10-15). Jesus said many are called, few are chosen and many will say to Him, **"Lord, Lord,"** but these same *"many"* will be turned away forever (Matt 7:21-23). Once the door is shut, it cannot be opened (Matt 25:11; Luke 13:25).
- (6) **Progressive Christianity** - Progressive Christians represent a more contemporary, diverse expression of Mainline Protestantism, and include a broad spectrum of interpretations of scripture, salvation, the person of Jesus, and the role of Christianity in the world. From Progressive Christianity itself we get these 8 points of Progressive Christianity:
 1. Believe that following the path and teachings of Jesus can lead to an awareness and experience of the Sacred and the Oneness and Unity of all life;

2. Affirm that the teachings of Jesus provide but one of many ways to experience the Sacredness and Oneness of life, and that we can draw from diverse sources of wisdom in our spiritual journey;
3. Seek community that is inclusive of ALL people, including but not limited to:
 - Conventional Christians and questioning skeptics,
 - Believers and agnostics,
 - Women and men,
 - Those of all sexual orientations and gender identities,
 - Those of all classes and abilities;
4. Know that the way we behave towards one another is the fullest expression of what we believe;
5. Find grace in the search for understanding and believe there is more value in questioning than in absolutes;
6. Strive for peace and justice among all people;
7. Strive to protect and restore the integrity of our Earth;
8. Commit to a path of life-long learning, compassion, and selfless love.

What is the clear and present danger of these false teachings? They will produce false Converts; they will create many who are still-borns and not born again believers (John 3). They will create those who will believe they are saved, but really aren't, but they'll also create those who are saved, but create doubts in their minds as to whether they're saved at all. It's more dangerous to believe you're saved when you are not saved at all. Those who are thinking they're saved but aren't, and those who are saved but doubt they are, are all casualties of those who bring a false gospel, which is really no gospel at all. Let them be accursed, so said the Apostle Paul (Gal 1:8-9).

So you've got to be on guard so that you aren't led astray by those who claim to be evangelical and who claim to base their message on Scripture, but they're merely using the Bible as a springboard to make up their own message. Biblical teachers must be faithful to the biblical text.

THE GOAL OF BIBLICAL TEACHING IS LOVE, PROPERLY DEFINED (1 Timothy 1:5)

Perhaps someone is thinking, "Bro. Buddy, You not be very loving toward some of these other group who have ideas or beliefs other than ours!" That precisely is the kind of cultural definition of love that we must avoid, that love means being nice to everyone and not criticizing anyone or their teaching. If that is love, Paul contradicts himself by telling Timothy to confront these false teachers and by his criticism of Hymenaeus and Alexander down in verse 20 of 1 Timothy 1. Our definition of love must encompass all of what Paul (and Jesus) did and taught, not just when they were nice!

Think on this: *Is it loving to tell people a lie that condemns them to Hell?"*

Notice verse 5 of our passage (1 Timothy 1:5), *“⁵ Now the purpose of the commandment is love from a pure heart, from a good conscience, and from sincere faith.”*

When Paul states, *“The goal of the commandment is love”* (1:5, lit.) it may refer to the commandment to Timothy to tell these men to stop teaching false doctrine (1:3). But in light of Paul’s discussion of the Law (1:8-11), and the fact that the Law is summed up in the two great commands, to love God and others, Paul is probably extending the meaning of *“commandment”* to refer to the whole of biblical teaching. Thus he is reminding Timothy that the goal of God’s commands as contained in Scripture is that we would love God and others. If these false teachers really knew what God’s law was all about, they would be teaching toward that aim, rather than entertaining people with fruitless speculations and discussions.

Paul qualifies or defines “love” in three ways...

What genuine love really looks like:

- (1) **Biblical love stems from a pure heart** - God, who alone can see what is in every heart, weighs motives. If we act in an outwardly loving way toward someone, but our inner motive is to get something back for ourselves or to use the person for our own selfish pleasure or fulfillment, or to manipulate the person for our own ultimate gain, we’re not loving from a pure heart. *Love from a pure heart is love that has been cleansed from all self-centeredness, love that truly seeks the glory of God by seeking His highest good for the person, even if it means personal sacrifice and loss for us.* The only way we can be freed from our innate selfishness to love in that manner is to be inwardly cleansed by God through the cross of Christ, where God’s sacrificial love was supremely demonstrated; and, then, to die to self daily by denying self and walking continually in light of the cross (Luke 9:23). To love from a pure heart requires that we deal with our sin, especially our selfishness and pride, on the thought level. When God’s Spirit through His Word confronts our sinful, selfish motives, we must confess and turn from our sin rather than deny or excuse it by blaming others. We call out to Him for the selfless, pure love that truly seeks the highest good of the other person.
- (2) **Biblical love stems from a good conscience** - The Greek word for *“conscience”* comes from two words meaning *“knowing together”* and refers to that knowledge of ourselves that we share together with God alone. Apart from ourselves, only God knows our thoughts and the things we do when no one else is looking. Everyone stands guilty before God because every person, whether religious or pagan, has violated his own conscience (Rom. 2:14-16). The only way we can have a good conscience is to ask God to cleanse us, based on faith in Jesus Christ who died for our sins and was raised so that we might be right before God (1 Pet. 3:21; Heb. 9:14; 10:22). Then, having been made right with God through faith in Christ, we live each day by maintaining a clear conscience both before God and before people (Acts 24:16). We do this by confessing all sin, even sins of thought, to God; and by asking forgiveness of those we have wronged. If there is anyone

you have sinned against and have not sought his (or her) forgiveness, then you aren't able sincerely to love that person as God commands. Even if the other person started the problem by sinning against you, and even if he or she has continued to sin against you and has never sought your forgiveness, you cannot be obedient to God's command to love until you go to this person and clear your conscience by asking his or her forgiveness. Love must stem from a pure heart and a good conscience.

(3) **Biblical love stems from a sincere faith** - The original phrase means "faith without hypocrisy or play-acting." The word "sincere" means "without wax" (sun-sheer = cracked clay pot disguised with wax). Again, this term goes below the outward appearance and looks at the heart. Sincere faith is directed toward Jesus Christ and results in loving others because you want to please Christ. Hypocritical faith plays to the audience, ignoring or forgetting that God is watching. You can put on an outward show of faith that looks pious to everyone, but your heart is self-serving. You can act loving to a person's face, but then run him down behind his back.

True biblical love stems from a pure heart, a good conscience, and a sincere faith.

- That means that at its core, biblical love stems from a right relationship with God and the motive of seeking to please and glorify Him.
- It means that Biblical love has the courage to confront someone who is in error or sin, because such a person is not pleasing God and is not helping others to please God.
- Thus biblical love, which is the proper goal of biblical teaching, does not mean being sweet and nice to everyone.
- It means doing whatever you can to help people get right with God through genuine faith in Jesus Christ.
- Biblical love stems from a pure heart, a good conscience, and a sincere faith.

We've seen that biblical teaching has been entrusted by God to those who teach, which means that they aren't free to make up their own stuff. The goal of their teaching must be love, properly defined.

"LOVE" THAT IS NOT IN LINE WITH GOD'S TRUTH IS NOT LOVE (1 Timothy 1:6-7)

"⁶ From which some, having strayed, have turned aside to idle talk, ⁷ desiring to be teachers of the law, understanding neither what they say nor the things which they affirm."

False teachers often emphasize love and unity at the expense of truth because invariably false teachers don't want their own sin confronted by God's Word. They will say, "We need to love everyone and not divide over anything." They're tolerant of everyone except the man who confronts sin and serious theological error. They accuse such men of being judgmental and unloving. But sound doctrine always confronts sin because God is holy and He calls His people to holiness. So-called "love" that tolerates sin that God's Word plainly confronts is not biblical love, no matter how nice it is, because it is not in line with God's truth.

Since it's easy to be deceived by false teachers who seem loving, but who don't love in line with God's truth, how can we spot them? Much more could be said, but from our text alone, here are five marks of a false teacher:

Five Marks of a False Teacher:

- (1) **False teachers are often motivated by pride** - Note verse 7, *"desiring to be teachers of the law."* They love a following. They're filled with so-called "knowledge." But as Paul states (1 Cor. 8:1), *"Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up."* It would be a false conclusion, in opposition to all that Paul wrote, to thus discard knowledge. The point is not to be ignorant and sweet! The point is that knowledge of God's truth must always result in a change in our thinking and behavior. But false teachers often have an air of pride and they appeal to the pride of their followers: "If you learn from me, you'll be in the know!"
- (2) **False teachers promote "new" insights supposedly, but not truly, based on God's Word** - God has revealed Himself in history and in His Word of truth that is based on history. Furthermore, His Word is propositional, that is, it makes statements that can and must be taken in their plain sense. But false teachers come up with "new" insights based on a subjective approach or on reading some supposed secular wisdom back into Scripture, even though it's unrelated to the meaning of Scripture in its context. These false teachers were taking the historically accurate genealogical lists in Scripture and making all sorts of fanciful applications from them.
- (3) **False teachers may use, but misuse, the Bible** – This is how Satan leads God's people astray. If someone was using the Koran or Book of Mormon, true Christians would immediately put up their defenses. But when someone cites the Bible, it sounds good, especially when the things they say make sense and seem to help you cope with your problems. That's how all the unbiblical teaching about self-esteem has flooded into the church. Others begin with the unbiblical assumption that low self-worth is at the heart of most of our emotional problems and then read this back into the Bible as if the Bible taught it. Like these spinners of genealogical yarns in Paul's day, modern false teachers love to use stories to substantiate their teaching. I've read about a pastor's wife who was suicidal. She had tried to trust and obey God, but that "didn't work." Then she went to the experts, and they got her in touch with her deepest feelings, and now she's a happy, well-adjusted woman. It sounds marvelous, but it doesn't prove a thing, because their counsel is not based on God's truth.
- (4) **False teachers are dogmatic about their speculations** – Paul calls their teaching "speculations" (v. 4), but then says that they "make confident assertions" (v. 7). It's possible to sound biblical and to speak confidently, but to be dead wrong. I get book catalogs that invariably market some of the modern false teachers by portraying them as the expert authorities on complex problems: "The doctors give you professional help with their proven program." *Christianity Today* contributed to this unbiblical nonsense when they wrote (2/10/92, p. 28): "Myth: A pastor is competent to counsel his parishioners.

Fact: Most pastors are armed with only a meager knowledge of behavioral therapies. A pastor's calling is, primarily, a spiritual one, helping people to find strength in God's presence and a sense of divine direction in the midst of difficulty." They go on to say that pastors need to link up with professionals who can deal with psychological matters. They're dogmatic that pastors, armed with the Bible, can't give expert help; but those who dispense the world's speculations have the answers for your deepest problems!

(5) False teachers love arguments but avoid Biblical obedience - These men in Ephesus loved to discuss their speculations, but they didn't want to confront the sin in their lives (v. 19). Paul calls their discussions "fruitless," because they didn't result in more godly lives. False teaching is closely connected with sinful living, because God's Word of truth is the only source that confronts our sin to make us holy. The word "sound" which Paul repeatedly affixes to "teaching" (1:10) or "doctrine" (4:6) means "healthy," that is, doctrine that produces spiritually healthy Christians. Sound doctrine results in sound believers. Speculations that don't result in godliness are worthless.

CONCLUSION

Some of you, no doubt, are thinking, "Bro. Buddy, that didn't sound like a loving message! You were so critical and negative!" I only ask you to critique me by asking, "Did my teaching accurately explain and apply the biblical text?" I'm not free to change the message, even if it comes across as critical. If Paul was critical of these false teachers, then I must be critical of modern false teachers who promote cultural myths as if they were biblical truths. Love must be in line with God's truth or it is not biblical love, no matter how nice it sounds. Biblical love from a pure heart, a good conscience, and a sincere faith must be the goal of our commandment. Let's not be distracted from it!

"³ As I urged you when I went into Macedonia—remain in Ephesus that you may charge some that they teach no other doctrine, ⁴ nor give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which cause disputes rather than godly edification which is in faith. ⁵ Now the purpose of the commandment is love from a pure heart, from a good conscience, and from sincere faith, ⁶ from which some, having strayed, have turned aside to idle talk, ⁷ desiring to be teachers of the law, understanding neither what they say nor the things which they affirm."
– 1 Timothy 1:3-7

4 Closing Reminders:

- (1) We must remain true to God's Word, sound doctrine and good theology (v.3)**
- (2) We must reject those teachings and ideologies outside of God's Word as false (v.4)**
- (3) We must recognize that this is a true picture of what love looks like (v.5) – Again, how loving is it to teach or preach a life and thereby condemn others to Hell**
- (4) We must remember that false teachers and false teaching will reveal itself (vv.6-7)**

Discussion Questions

1. How can we properly emphasize biblical truth without becoming puffed up with "knowledge"?

2. Note Acts 13:9-10. Was Paul being loving or was he acting in the flesh? How was this “love”?
3. How can we know which truths are worth fighting about and which ones we need to tolerate differences on?
4. Is loving the same as liking? How can we love someone we don’t like?