

Theme: Sound doctrine and godly conduct are essential to the proclamation of the gospel of truth and to our own preservation in that truth. The law of God is essential for both doctrine and life.

Introduction: There is a close relationship between moral failing and the undermining of faith.

I. The Apostle's Purpose

A. Guard the truth!

- A recurring theme in Timothy (1:3, 19; 6:20; 2 Timothy 1:14)

B. Live in the truth (1:5, 19; 3:15)

- Not "performance-based acceptance" but "acceptance-based performance"

C. Proclaim the truth/Gospel (1:15; 2:3,4; 4:16)

- Our audience cannot just be Christians!

II. The Problem of Apostasy

A. Its root

1. Moral failure

- Leads to clouded judgment

NOTE: How many false doctrines have been promoted because of the pride of the one who "discovered" the new revelation?

2. Doctrinal error

- Swerving from moral purity

- Wandering into error

NOTE: The battle for truth or sound doctrine isn't just a battle of the mind/head. It starts as a battle in the heart.

B. Its spread

1. It moves fast!

- They had Paul as their teacher

- But others quickly came in

2. And far!

- Prosperity Gospel has jumped the oceans

NOTE: Never more than a generation away from church falling into complete apostasy.

III. The Power of the Law

A. A means of grace (8)

1. The law is good!! (Romans 7:12)

- The law continues as a means of grace

- The Jews were never "saved" by the law

- They were saved by faith

2. The law is good - If used "lawfully"

B. The law is for sinners. (9)

1. Not for the "just/righteous"?

- Not for the self-righteous (Romans 13:8; Luke 5:32)

2. What sinners look like

a. The 1st half of the law – duties toward God (9a)

- Lawless and disobedient

- Ungodly and sinners

- Unholy and profane

b. The 2nd half of the law – duties toward man

- Parents – 5th Commandment

- Murderers – 6th
- Sexually immoral – 7th
- Enslavers – 8th
- Liars – 9th
- Perjurers – 9th

NOTE: Be careful not to use this list simply to judge others – for such were some of you.
(1 Corinthians 6:11)

C. Its three uses

1. A restraint

- This is an external use of the law (Romans 13:3,4)
- A public use to restrain wickedness

2. To convict of sin and drive us to Christ

- Reflecting God's righteousness and our sinfulness (Romans 3:20; Galatians 3:19-24; John 16:8)

3. A guide for the believer (Ephesians 2:10; Romans 8:13; 6:14)

NOTE: Paul may have all three in mind.

IV. The Power of Sound Doctrine

A. Faith-salvation of sinners!

B. Pure heart, good conscience, sincere faith

C. Love – for God – His word and law, for the body of Christ, for lost sinners

And what is "sound doctrine"? Whatever is in accordance with the glorious gospel of the blessed God!

The right use of the law is sound doctrine. Obedience to God's law is sound.

Sound doctrine leads to godly practice – which conforms to the Gospel of Christ.