

**1 Timothy 1: 15; “A Right View of Christ and Ourselves”, Sermon # 7 in  
the series – “Honoring God in the Church”, Delivered  
by Pastor Paul Rendall on March 30th, 2014,  
in the Afternoon Worship Service.**

If we can think back to what we have understood Paul as saying to us in this 1<sup>st</sup> Chapter we will better understand the verse that is under consideration this afternoon. Paul is concerned to communicate to Timothy the importance of sound doctrine and God-honoring practice being set up in every local church. Together we must be good stewards of God’s truth. We must not hold to strange or false doctrines. We must see the end of the commandment as being love from a pure heart, a good conscience and a sincere faith. Our doctrine must be lived out and fleshed out, by the enabling grace of Christ. What we need to see now, today, this afternoon, is that the gospel is the basis of all sound doctrine in the church, and it is worthy of our acceptance because the Bible through this means, faithfully represents God and man. The grace of God is found by our hearing and believing the gospel preached. And it requires the opening of the eyes of our mind and our heart to discern spiritual truth clearly. I wonder if you have ever met people who are very interested in doctrine and systematic theology, but they do not seem interested in the gospel? Or, perhaps we ourselves grow to think it will not do any harm to leave the gospel behind, as one leaves behind his childhood. And sometimes we even mistake the doctrines of grace for the gospel itself. So perhaps you have a question in your mind as you listen. You are thinking, “Why should we accept the gospel as being the basis of sound doctrine in the church? And I will answer you. We should accept the gospel as being the foundation of sound doctrine based on the following 3 considerations.

**1<sup>st</sup> – Because the gospel is based on the faithful sayings of Jesus, and Jesus is truth personified.**

One of the names which our Lord is called in the Scriptures, actually two names which are often put together, is Faithful and True. Never did a man speak like Jesus did. He was faithful to God and spoke the truth concerning God and man in every situation. Psalm 45, verse 1 says: “My heart is overflowing with a good theme; I recite my composition concerning the King; my tongue is the pen of a ready writer.” “You are fairer than the sons of men; grace is poured upon Your lips; therefore God has blessed You forever.” “Gird Your sword upon Your thigh, O Mighty One, with Your glory and Your majesty.” “And in Your majesty ride prosperously because of truth, humility, and righteousness; and Your right hand will teach You awesome things.” “Your arrows are sharp in the heart of the King’s enemies; the people fall under You.” The Lord Jesus is pictured here in metaphorical language as having grace in His speech; He always had a word for needy sinners in good season, and the reason for this was that He had no sin to pollute His speech. Every word which came from His lips had grace poured out upon it. The Lord Jesus came into the world on a mission. It was not to slay men with the sword that was girded on His thigh; it was to save men by His laying down His life for the sins of many. His glorious and majestic cause was to perfectly speak and display the truth of God in His words, and to humble Himself to become obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross, and thus He would fulfill all righteousness, and satisfy God’s justice. The arrows that He shoots from His bow are sharpened to penetrate into the heart of the King’s enemies; those who are sinners, some of them great sinners, in the sight of God. “The peoples,” it says, “fall under Him”. The arrows which penetrate the sinner’s heart are sharp to bring conviction and conversion to Christ.

The Apostle Paul probably had the most profound conversion of any man who ever lived. He was totally opposed to Christ; even violently opposed to thinking that he needed grace, and yet when Christ drew His bow on him, he fell under Him. Once the man Saul was changed by the

grace of Christ, he himself became a man who was completely devoted to His Lord, and his name was changed to Paul. "What would have me to do, Lord?" were almost the first words out of his mouth. The Lord would show him just how much he would have to suffer for His name's sake. But one of the main reasons that God chose Paul to be a chosen instrument of His, through Christ, was because He wanted Paul to write his epistles; those letters which would be so full of sound doctrine. The Lord knew that the Church in all generations would need these sound doctrines; especially the doctrines of grace, in order that God would be glorified for all that would be accomplished through the labors of the saints; all the glory would belong to Christ. And, too, we should realize that it is sound doctrine which is the bones of the spiritual body of Christ. It is the framework for the building of the Church so that the gates of hell will not prevail against it, and so that all true believers will grow up into holiness and Christlikeness in all of their speech and behavior. The writings of the Apostle Paul comprise a large portion of the New Testament Scriptures. And the faithful sayings of Jesus are written down in the four gospels. In these writings we find the foundation of all sound doctrine.

Now turn over with me to Matthew 7: 13-29. "Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it." "Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it." "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves." "You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thorn bushes or figs from thistles?" "Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit." "A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit." "Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire." "Therefore by their fruits you will know them." "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven." "Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'" "Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock." "But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall." "And so it was, when Jesus had ended these sayings, that the people were astonished at His teaching, for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes."

Here in the sayings of Jesus we find the sound doctrine which teaches us what it means to be discerning on how to enter the kingdom of God. Here we also find the truth of how to discern false prophets. It is sound doctrine to understand that just because a person has spiritual gifts, it does not mean that he necessarily has saving grace. Then, in verse 24 we find Jesus saying, "Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine and does them I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock; and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on the house, and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock." Now here we see that Jesus' words lay for us the foundations in truth which we each must build upon. The gospel is the gospel of Jesus Christ. The words he speaks are the words of eternal life. Faith in His words will become the basis for everything that you will believe and everything that you will do, and everything that you will spiritually build with your life, for God. The sayings of Jesus are faithful sayings. And the teaching of the Apostle Paul and the other Apostles are doctrinal truths which are worthy of all acceptance. They are the foundation which all Christians build upon.

**2ndly – We should accept the gospel as being the foundation of all sound doctrine because it's basis is the faithful doings of Jesus Christ.**

Jesus Christ is God's wisdom personified and God's power personified. He is also God's love personified: "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." He is described as doing two major things: He came into the world, and He would do what it would take to save sinners. There is much sound doctrine in the Incarnation of Jesus Christ. If a person does not hold to the truths of Christ's eternal deity and Personhood, if a person does not hold to the Virgin Birth, he will not see the uniqueness of Christ in His Person. Christ came into the world fully God and fully man. He needed to be fully both of these natures of God and man in order to make satisfaction for our sins. Without His being fully God, His sufferings as a mere man would not be able to atone for all the sinners whom the Father was choosing to save. Without His being fully man, He could not obey the law on our behalf, or suffer on our behalf, to bear the dreadful curse to save our souls. The Son was sent by the Father for this very purpose. He came down as the Bread of heaven and gives life to the world. He is the Light which has come into the world, and He must needs shine, for men loved the darkness rather than the light, for their deeds were evil. All of us descended from Adam are from beneath; Jesus is from above. We are earthy and from this world; He is not from this world. He who comes from above is above all. The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Person of the Eternal Godhead took to Himself a true humanity, a real personality, a body with flesh and bones, a soul that might be tempted, emotions that might feel all that we feel. He would think thought that we would think and yet without a blush of sin in Him. Christ Jesus did all this when He came into the world.

His purpose was to save sinners. His purpose was to do what no man had ever done; to live as no man had ever lived. To save sinners He would have to love the Lord our God with all of His heart, soul, mind, and strength, and to love His neighbor as Himself. He would be the man of perfect integrity, honesty, purity, and goodness. His obedience to God's holy law would cause Him to be misunderstood, despised, and rejected of men; and especially the religious rulers and leaders of Israel. But His prayer for them when they condemned Him and cried for His crucifixion was, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do". He was a High-Priest of a different order than Aaron. He offered as a sacrifice, not the blood of bulls and goats, and the ashes of a heifer, but His own precious blood; He being a Divine Person, whose blood would be of infinite value, and so He would bring the remission of sins to all those trusting in Him. He became the Mediator of a new covenant. This is how He would save sinners and purchase their redemption.

**Now 3<sup>rd</sup> – We should accept the gospel as being the foundation of all sound doctrine because it brings sinful men to a right view of themselves.**

Paul refers to himself as the chief of sinners; the foremost of sinners. He uses the word "chief" in the present tense – "I am chief". He doesn't mean by this that he was the worst sinner of all time, for he would then be worse than Judas and all those men who sinned against the Holy Spirit. Paul doesn't mean that he had not repented of his former sins and crimes; the blasphemy, the persecution, his sinning in vile arrogance. He is simply saying that the strength of his passionate, legalistic spirit was such that it took super-abounding grace to bring down his self-righteous pride. He needed super-abundant grace to make him over into the image of Christ; more than all other men. It took super-abounding grace to take a violent self-righteous persecutor and make him into an Apostle, a preacher, and a teacher of the Gentiles. As he was a super leader, a very chieftain in false zeal, yet he by God's mighty grace would become a super leader in the truth of the gospel. But it would not be in pride, but rather in humility. His name Paul means "small". Listen to 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 15: 8 and 9. "Then last of all Christ was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time." "For I am the least of the Apostles, who am not worthy to be called an Apostle because I persecuted the Church of God." And Ephesians 3: 8 – "I became a minister according to the gift of the grace of God given to me by the effective working of His

power.” “To me, who am less than the least of the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.”

The gospel is the foundation of sound doctrine because it shows us, through Christ’s grace, the sinfulness of our heart; how we would go indeed go back to what were before conversion if He did not continually supply us with His grace, and keep us on the path of righteousness. “He leads me in the paths of righteousness for His name’s sake.” He wants us to be reminded of the fact that when we find indwelling, remaining corruption in our hearts, that He died for this too. It is good for us to mourn over our sins, and confess them daily. But it is also good to exclaim with Paul in Romans 7 – “Thanks be to God, for our Lord Jesus Christ!” (Romans 7: 25) This keeps us humble, so that we will consider more carefully the truth of our continual need of grace. And therefore, by the Holy Spirit’s working, we will pray for grace to better keep our hearts. In closing, I would like to read to you a short section from David Brainerd’s diary, from February 7<sup>th</sup>, 1744. In doing this I am trying to show you that the more closely we attempt to walk by faith with Christ, we more that we will continue to see our own sinful self, trying to fight for its supposed life. But we should remember the reality of what the Apostle Paul said in Galatians 2: 20 – “I am crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.”

David Brainerd’s Diary -

“Tuesday, Feb. 7<sup>th</sup>, 1744.” “Was much engaged in some sweet meditations on the powers and affections of the godly soul in their pursuit of their beloved object: wrote something of the native language of spiritual sensation, in its soft and tender whispers; declaring, that it now feels and tastes that the Lord is gracious; that He is the supreme good, the only soul-satisfying happiness: that He is a complete, sufficient, and almighty portion: saying, ‘Whom have I in heaven but thee?’ “And there is none upon earth that I desire besides this blessed portion.” “O, I feel it is heaven to please Him, and to be just what He would have me to be!” “O that my soul were holy, as He is holy!” “O that it were pure, even as Christ is pure; and perfect, as my Father in heaven is perfect!” “These, I feel, are the sweetest commands in God’s book, comprising all others.” “And shall I break them!” “Must I break them!” “Am I under a necessity of it as long as I live in the world!” “O my soul, woe, woe is me that I am a sinner, because I now necessarily grieve and offend this blessed God, who is infinite in goodness and grace!” “Oh, methinks, if he would punish me for my sins, it would not wound my heart so deep to offend him: but though I sin continually, yet he continually repeats his kindness to me!” “Oh, methinks I could bear any sufferings; but how can I bear to grieve and dishonor this blessed God!” “How shall I yield ten thousand times more honor to him?” “What shall I do to glorify and worship this best of beings?” “O that I could consecrate myself, soul and body, to his service forever!” “O that I could give up myself to him, so as never more to attempt to be my own, or to have any will or affections that are not perfectly conformed to him!” “But, alas, alas, I find I cannot be thus entirely devoted to God; I cannot live, and not sin.” “O ye angels, do ye glorify Him incessantly; and if possible, prostrate yourselves lower before the blessed King of heaven?” “I long to bear a part with you; and, if it were possible, to help you.” “Oh, when we have done all that we can, to all eternity, we shall not be able to offer the ten thousandth part of the homage that the glorious God deserves!” “Felt something spiritual, devout, resigned, and mortified to the world, much of the day; and especially towards and in the evening.” “Blessed be God, that He enables me to love Him for Himself.”