

THE PASTORAL EPISTLES



Sound Teaching: 1 Timothy 1

T. M. Moore

A Scriptorium Study from The Fellowship of Ailbe

The Fellowship of Ailbe

The Pastoral Epistles: Sound Teaching: 1 Timothy 1
Copyright 2018 T. M. and Susie Moore
The Fellowship of Ailbe
www.ailbe.org

Except as indicated, Scripture taken from the New King James Version. © Copyright 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved. All psalms for singing adapted from The Ailbe Psalter. All quotations from Church Fathers from Ancient Christian Commentary Series, General Editor Thomas C. Oden (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2006). All psalms for singing are from The Ailbe Psalter (available by [clicking here](#)).

1 Timothy 1: Introduction

Paul's pastoral epistles – 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, and Philemon – are written to guide and encourage pastors. But they are also, if only by implication, filled with practical advice and doctrinal instruction for every believer.

In 1 Timothy 1, Paul insists that churches promote true teaching and learning. All instruction must be according to the truth of Scripture, and aimed at the whole person – soul and body. The goal of all Christian instruction is love. Anything short of that is not true instruction.

Paul and Timothy both had a charge from the Lord, and they were to be diligent in carrying out what God commanded. We also have a charge which God has commanded to us, and we must be faithful, following the example of Paul.

We are happy to provide *Scriptorium* studies in PDF format at no charge. We hope you will find them helpful and encouraging as you press on in your journey toward spiritual maturity with the Lord.

Please visit our website, www.ailbe.org, to discover the many other resources available to serve your needs. The Fellowship of Ailbe is a spiritual fellowship in the Celtic Christian tradition. Visit our website also to subscribe to our thrice-weekly devotional newsletter, *Crosfigell*, or our daily *Voices Together* devotional and prayer guide.

If you find these studies, or any of our other resources, helpful, we hope you will consider making a contribution to help support our work. You can do so by using the donate button at the website or by sending your gift to The Fellowship of Ailbe, 19 Tyler Dr., Essex Junction, VT 05452.

T. M. Moore, Principal
tmmoore@ailbe.org

1 Called and Commanded

Pray 116.12-15.

What shall I render to the LORD
For all His benefits toward me?
I will take up the cup of salvation,
And call upon the name of the LORD.
I will pay my vows to the LORD
Now in the presence of all His people.

Read and meditate on 1 Timothy 1.1, 2.

Preparation.

1. To what work was Paul called and commanded? What did that work entail?
2. Why did Paul seek “grace, mercy, *and* peace” for Timothy, and not something else?

Meditate.

As an apostle, Paul was chosen by the Lord and sent for the purpose of bringing the Gospel to the Gentiles (cf. Acts 9.1-19). He recognized that this calling was not merely an invitation to something he might find interesting or fulfilling. It wasn't an opportunity he could work at whenever he got around to it, or when it fit neatly within his schedule. His calling to go the Gentiles was a *commandment* from the Lord.

No wonder he said, “Woe is me” if he failed to carry out his calling (cf. 1 Cor. 9.16).

Timothy, “a true son in the faith”, also had a calling. Paul had left him in Ephesus as shepherd over the churches there (v. 3), to equip the believers for lives of ministry, and to help the Body of Christ grow in unity and maturity (Eph. 4.11-16). Paul's letters to this young pastor are rich with instructions and admonitions to help him fulfill his calling from the Lord.

Each of us has a calling from the Lord, first, to the Kingdom and glory of God (1 Thess. 2.12), and next to a particular calling or condition in which we serve the Lord (1 Cor. 7.17-20; 2 Cor. 10.13-18). Each of us is sent to the world as Jesus was sent (Jn. 20.21), to bear the Good News of Jesus as His witnesses (cf. Acts 1.8). While Paul was writing to a pastor in the churches at Ephesus, he was also writing to every believer, whatever our calling. We are all called and sent to a Personal Mission Field, where God and Christ command us to let our lights shine, seek the Kingdom and righteousness of God, and be witnesses for Christ (Matt. 5.13-16; Matt. 6.33; Acts 1.8).

All who, like Timothy, are true children of the faith will receive Paul's letter with open hearts and minds, and will take seriously his instructions for our calling. We will definitely need the grace, mercy, and peace of the Lord to fulfill our calling; happily, these are ever available to us through prayer (Heb. 4.16; Phil. 4.6, 7).

God, our Savior and Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, our hope, stand ready to equip us for the work to which we are sent each day – the work they *command* us to take up as followers and witnesses for Christ. Are we ready to obey?

Reflect.

1. Have you identified and begun working your Personal Mission Field? Watch this brief video ([click here](#)), then download the worksheet and get started today.

2. How would you explain each of the following to a new believer: grace, mercy, peace? Why are these so important? How can we secure them?

3. Why does Paul refer to God as *Savior* and Jesus Christ as *hope*? What does it mean to hope in Jesus Christ?

He calls God the Savior, a title which he is more frequently accustomed to assign to the Son; but it belongs to the Father also, because it is he who gave the Son to us. Justly, therefore, is the glory of our salvation ascribed to him. For how comes it that we are saved? It is because the Father loved us in such a manner that he determined to redeem and save us through the Son. John Calvin (1509-1564), Commentary on 1 Timothy 1.1

Heavenly Father and Lord Jesus Christ, You have called me and sent me as Your witness. Help me to be more consistent in this calling by...

Pray Psalm 116.

What shall we render to the Lord for all His benefits to us? Let His Spirit guide you as you pray and sing this psalm, and commit yourself afresh to the Lord and His calling for your life.

Sing Psalm 116.

Psalm 116.1-6 (*Mit Freuden Zart: All Praise to God Who Reigns Above*)

I love the Lord because He hears my cries and pleas for mercy.
Because He bends to me His ears, my prayers shall ever thus be.
The snares of death encompassed me; hell's grip could not unloosened be;
Distress and anguish pressed me.

I called to God, "O Lord, I pray, my soul redeem with favor!"
The Lord is gracious in His way, and righteous is our Savior.
His mercy to the simple flies; He lifted me up to the skies –
I rest in Him forever!

2 The Aim of Instruction

Pray 116.16-19.

O LORD, truly I *am* Your servant;
I *am* Your servant, the son of Your maidservant;
You have loosed my bonds.
I will offer to You the sacrifice of thanksgiving,
And will call upon the name of the LORD.
I will pay my vows to the LORD
Now in the presence of all His people,
In the courts of the LORD's house,
In the midst of you, O Jerusalem.
Praise the LORD!

Read and meditate on 1 Timothy 1.3-7.

Reflect.

1. What is the purpose of Christian instruction? How is that purpose realized?
2. How did Paul describe those who had “strayed” from sound instruction?

Meditate.

Right away, Paul gets to the point of his first epistle to Timothy: He charges Timothy to exercise vigilance over the teaching in Ephesus, that it be comprised of sound doctrine, focused for right impacts, and aimed to achieve right results.

Word had reached Paul – or perhaps it was already beginning when he left Ephesus – that certain teachers had become fixed on narrow, academic, and divisive matters – “fables and endless genealogies” (v. 4). Such teaching contributed nothing to the edification of believers or their churches, but it must have been impressive to some, especially those who fancied themselves “teachers of the law” (v. 7).

Teaching that is merely to impress, or merely proposes interesting but unedifying ideas, is not to be tolerated in the churches of the Lord. True teaching has one content: sound doctrine (v. 3). It aims to impact the souls of God's people, so that their minds, hearts, and consciences are shaped increasingly into the image of Christ (v. 5). And it strives to move people to the practice of true faith in acts of love, not merely some hypocritical mouthing of ideas (v. 5). Love – for God and neighbors – is the aim of all sound instruction. Timothy's job was to make sure all the teachers – and all the disciples at Ephesus – understood this, and that they would settle for nothing less.

It's easy for teachers to think more highly of themselves than they should, and to begin teaching more to impress than to edify. Teachers who do not aim at love, work for love, insist that their students practice love, and love God and others themselves, are merely clanging cymbals; they neither understand what they are teaching nor what they're trying to do (v. 7). Timothy's job was to help the teachers at Ephesus do theirs.

Our job is to learn love and to help others to learn it as well. If we love the Lord well, we'll show it by the way we love others.

Reflect.

1. Is love really supposed to be the outcome of *all* Christian instruction? All preaching and teaching? Why?

2. How can we tell when we have really learned something? How should true learning affect our soul? Our daily life?

3. What can you do to make sure all your learning is helping you to grow in love for God and your neighbors?

Whoever ... thinks that he understands the divine Scriptures or any part of them so that it does not build the double love of God and of our neighbor does not understand it at all. Augustine (354-430 AD) On Christian Doctrine

Lord, teach me to love! In my times in Your Word, and as I pray, show me...

Pray Psalm 116.

How does this psalm lead us to show the love we have for God? Pray that God will give you more love for Him.

Sing Psalm 116.

Psalm 116.7-14 (*Mit Freuden Zart: All Praise to God Who Reigns Above*)

Full well the Lord has dealt with me; my soul from death He delivered.

My weeping eyes, my stumbling feet, He has redeemed forever.

Forever I before His face shall walk with those who know His grace,

And dwell with them forever.

Afflicted, I believe His Word, though lying men would undo me.

What shall I render to the Lord for all His blessings to me?

Salvation's cup I lift above and call upon the God of love

And pay my vows most truly.

3 The Law is Good. Really

Pray 116.5-7.

Gracious is the LORD, and righteous;
Yes, our God is merciful.
The LORD preserves the simple;
I was brought low, and He saved me.
Return to your rest, O my soul,
For the LORD has dealt bountifully with you.

Read and meditate on 1 Timothy 1.8-11.

Reflect.

1. What does Paul say about the Law of God? How should we use the Law?
2. For whom is the Law intended?

Meditate.

Paul transitions now to a few comments about the Law of God. By this he means not merely the Ten Commandments, but all the laws, precepts, statutes, judgments, and rules given by God to Moses. All this, he says, is good (v. 8), a point of view which is not shared by many in the evangelical world of our day.

He adds this here, because he has just spoken a word of admonition concerning those who desired to be teachers of the Law. By warning them, he did not want Timothy – or us – to think that teaching the Law was a bad idea. The Law is good, but one must use it “lawfully”.

What does that mean? The Law is used lawfully when it is used according to the will of the Law-giver. God’s intention in giving the Law is the same as Paul articulated for all Christian teaching, that it should promote the practice of love for God and neighbors (v. 5; cf. Matt. 22.34-40). We use the Law lawfully when we study, teach, and obey it to practice the love it defines and promotes.

The Law was not made for the righteous person (v. 9). But that’s not me, and I suspect it’s probably not you. We’re in that other category (vv. 9, 10) of sinful people who live “contrary to sound doctrine” and need to have our sins exposed and the path of righteousness clearly indicated every day of our lives (Rom. 7.7; 1 Jn. 2.1-6). The Law is for us, and it is used lawfully as we meditate on it daily (Ps. 1) and interpret it in line with the Gospel (v. 11). Then our use of the Law will be neither to impress nor bind, but to promote love.

Who could object to that? Well, apparently many, at least in our day; because the teaching of God’s Law is presently languishing in most of His churches. Some pastors and theologians even deny that the Law has any abiding validity for Christians. Paul insisted that Timothy should teach the Law as God intends and the Gospel demands. All pastors and shepherds should follow this clear instruction.

Note that final phrase in these verses: “the glorious gospel of the blessed God which was committed to my trust.” Paul sets himself as the final authority for interpreting the Gospel. Paul’s Gospel is Jesus’ Gospel; and unless our Gospel is theirs, our gospel is another gospel, and needs to be repaired – which may include bringing the lawful use of the Law back into our lives.

Sound Teaching: 1 Timothy 1

Reflect.

1. Why do you think the Law has begun to languish in churches in our day? Is this a good thing? According to Jesus (Matt. 24.12), what happens when the Law is neglected?
2. How would you explain what it means to use the Law “lawfully” and “according to the glorious Gospel of the blessed God”?
3. What would be some examples of the *unlawful* use of the Law? In Jesus’ day, who was guilty of this?

To use the law appropriately is to keep its purpose, that is, to lead one to Christ the Lord. Those who refrain from the sins that Paul mentions are living in conformity with the law. Theodoret of Cyr (393-466 AD), *Interpretation of the First Letter to Timothy*

Lord, You have given us Your Law to guide us into the life of love. I want to love You and my neighbors more consistently, so help me to...

Pray Psalm 116.1-10

As you pray, remember when you came to saving faith, and thank God for all the people who were involved, and for the gift of salvation. Now we are alive in Him; commit this day to living full for His glory.

Sing Psalm 116.1-9.

Psalm 116.1-9 (*Mit Freuden Zart: All Praise to God Who Reigns Above*)

I love the Lord because He hears my cries and pleas for mercy.
Because He bends to me His ears, my prayers shall ever thus be.
The snares of death encompassed me; hell’s grip could not unloosened be;
distress and anguish pressed me.

I called to God, “O Lord, I pray, my soul redeem with favor!”
The Lord is gracious in His way, and righteous is our Savior.
His mercy to the simple flies; He lifted me up to the skies –
I rest in Him forever!

Full well the Lord has dealt with me; my soul from death He delivered.
My weeping eyes, my stumbling feet, He has redeemed forever.
Forever I before His face shall walk with those who know His grace,
and dwell with them forever..

4 Christ Who Is Able

Pray 116.12-14.

What shall I render to the LORD
For all His benefits toward me?
I will take up the cup of salvation,
And call upon the name of the LORD.
I will pay my vows to the LORD
Now in the presence of all His people.

Read and meditate on 1 Timothy 1.12, 13.

Reflect.

1. For what did Christ enable Paul? For what does He enable you?
2. How had the Lord changed Paul? How has He changed you?

Meditate.

Paul says that Christ “enabled” (literally, “empowered”) him. But for what? To fulfill the calling He had commanded him (v. 1), the “ministry” he carried out all those years. God intends for all who believe in Him to be equipped with love for the work of ministry in their own Personal Mission Field (cf. Eph. 4.11, 12; 2 Cor. 10.13-18; Matt. 28.18-20). But that’s not going to happen until we first identify the field to which the Lord sends us each day (Jn. 20.21), and go there, in faith and obedience, with the intention of making disciples. The Lord will enable us just as He enabled Paul, and we can fulfill our appointed calling in His power and for His glory.

You may say, “I could never do that. I’m just not up to it. I haven’t been a good disciple.” Paul could have said the same (v. 13). But he knew he had been called, and he looked to the Lord for the power to do the work appointed for him. The Lord was faithful to His promise (1 Thess. 5.24), and Paul’s amazing ministry was the result.

The question is not whether God will be faithful to empower us to do what He commands. The question is whether *we* will be faithful – as Paul was (v. 12) – to put our past behind us, prepare each day for the Lord’s calling, and go in obedience to His Word, to show the love of Christ to all the people we meet.

Every day, God will put you into places where you can fulfill your ministry (v. 12). And he will empower you as you believe and obey Him (v. 13). Don’t let past failings or reluctances keep you from knowing the power of the Lord for serving others with His love! If you miss this, you’ll miss the whole of what salvation is about.

Reflect.

1. What are the obstacles you need to overcome each day, so that you go into your ministry ready to show the love of Christ to others?
2. How can you prepare more faithfully each day to carry out the ministry the Lord has commanded?
3. How can believers encourage one another to be more faithful to God in their callings?

He now introduces the mention of another act of the kindness of Christ, that he strengthened him, or "made him powerful." By this expression he does not only mean that he was at first formed" by the hand of God, so as to be well qualified for his office, but

Sound Teaching: 1 Timothy 1

he likewise includes the continued bestowal of grace. For it would not have been enough that he was once declared to be faithful, if Christ had not strengthened him by the uninterrupted communication of aid. John Calvin (1509-1564), Commentary on 1 Timothy 1.12

Lord, I need Your power to be at work in me today. I know You will be faithful. Help me to be faithful as I...

Pray Psalm 116.10-19.

What will you render to the Lord today, for all His kindness to you? How will you be refreshed by the cup of salvation today?

Sing Psalm 116.10-19.

Psalm 116.10-19 *(Mit Freuden Zart: All Praise to God Who Reigns Above)*

Afflicted, I believe His Word, though lying men would undo me.

What shall I render to the Lord for all His blessings to me?

Salvation's cup I lift above and call upon the God of love,

and pay my vows most truly.

How sweet to Him when saints depart – save me, Your servant, Savior!

From sin You loosed my wand'ring heart; I praise Your Name forever!

On You I call, my vows to pay; here in Your presence I would stay

Your praise to offer ever.

5 Grace to Sinners

Pray 116.1, 2.

I love the LORD, because He has heard
My voice *and* my supplications.
Because He has inclined His ear to me,
Therefore I will call *upon Him* as long as I live.

Read and meditate on 1 Timothy 1.14, 15.

Reflect.

1. How did Paul describe himself? What did he mean by that?
2. How did the grace of God affect Paul?

Meditate.

Paul celebrates the grace of God, which he understood very well from experience. I wonder if we understand it as well as Paul did?

We can think of grace as having three aspects. First, grace is a *disposition* in God, whereby He looks favorably on us. Second, grace is an *act of communication* by which God informs us of that disposition. This He does by His Word, as it breaks through the scales that cover our eyes and shows us the love of God in Christ Jesus. Finally, grace is *divine power* that transforms us from the inside-out. We do not truly know grace unless we know it in all three of these aspects.

Paul knew grace this way. Jesus had met him with overwhelming love on that Damascus road, calling him to stop resisting His prodding, and to get about the business of obedience. At his baptism, grace gave birth to faith, as scales fell from his eyes, signifying Paul's emergence into a new life and a new calling. Finally, grace empowered Paul, in love for God and lost sinners, to begin his work immediately, as he preached Jesus in the city of Damascus (cf. Acts 9.1-25).

Paul knew grace, and he knew that he did not deserve any of all the grace Christ had shown him. Grace has power to save – and not just to *justify*, but to *sanctify* us, making us more like Jesus and empowering us to serve Him in our own callings. Not even Paul's continuing sinfulness – note the present tense verb and the emphatic construction: εἶμι ἐγώ, *eimi ego: I am, I myself* – could quench the power of grace to enable him for his calling. Grace transformed the chief of sinners; surely it can do as much for us.

By the grace of God, Christ has come into the world to save sinners like Paul, and like you and me (v. 15). Either we know the grace of our Lord as His love, effectively communicated and powerful to save and transform, or we merely talk about grace. Grace is working in our lives when, in spite of our continuing sinfulness, we know the love of Christ, and are moved to obey and serve Him as Paul did. When we know grace like Paul did, the people to whom we are sent each day will see that grace working in us as witnesses for Christ.

Reflect.

1. How do you experience the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ?
2. Even though we are sinners, grace can move us to obedience in serving Christ. How does that work?
3. Being sinful – or weak, or ill-prepared, or afraid – is no excuse for not serving the Lord in our Personal

Mission Field. Explain.

There was no reason for Christ the Lord to come, except to save sinners. Eliminate diseases, eliminate wounds, and there is no call for medicine. If a great doctor has come down from heaven, a great invalid must have been lying very sick throughout the whole wide world. This invalid is the whole human race. Augustine (354-430), Sermons 175.1

Lord, I need grace each day, so that I might know more of Your salvation and...

Pray Psalm 116.1-9.

Why do you love the Lord? How does knowing He loves you make you want to serve Him today?

Sing Psalm 116.1-9.

Psalm 116.1-9 *(Mit Freuden Zart: All Praise to God Who Reigns Above)*

I love the Lord because He hears my cries and pleas for mercy.

Because He bends to me His ears, my prayers shall ever thus be.

The snares of death encompassed me; hell's grip could not unloosened be;
distress and anguish pressed me.

I called to God, "O Lord, I pray, my soul redeem with favor!"

The Lord is gracious in His way, and righteous is our Savior.

His mercy to the simple flies; He lifted me up to the skies –

I rest in Him forever!

Full well the Lord has dealt with me; my soul from death He delivered.

My weeping eyes, my stumbling feet, He has redeemed forever.

Forever I before His face shall walk with those who know His grace,
and dwell with them forever.

T. M. Moore

6 Pattern and Charge

Pray 116.16-19.

O LORD, truly I *am* Your servant;
I *am* Your servant, the son of Your maidservant;
You have loosed my bonds.
I will offer to You the sacrifice of thanksgiving,
And will call upon the name of the LORD.
I will pay my vows to the LORD
Now in the presence of all His people,
In the courts of the LORD's house,
In the midst of you, O Jerusalem.
Praise the Lord!

Read and meditate on 1 Timothy 1.16-20.

Reflect.

1. For whom is Paul's life a "pattern"? A "pattern" of what?
2. What "charge" (literally, *commandment*) did Paul commit to Timothy?

Meditate.

Paul says his experience of grace should be regarded as a "pattern to those who are going to believe on Him for everlasting life" (v. 16). That includes us. What's the pattern?

God seeks us when we are lost in sin, and brings His grace to bear upon us for salvation – for the "full cup" of salvation envisioned in Psalm 116, that "great salvation" the writer of Hebrews mentioned (Heb. 2.3), the drunk-with-the-Spirit salvation of Ephesians 5.18-21. By grace, we are forgiven of our sins (justification); by grace we are launched and sustained by God's Word and Spirit into a life of being transformed into the image of Christ (sanctification); and by grace we are charged (*commanded*, v. 1) to seek the Kingdom and glory of God in everything we do (vocation: 1 Thess. 2.12; 1 Cor. 10.31). The pattern of grace that was at work in Paul, we should seek for ourselves. The more we experience grace in this way, the more we will honor and glorify God in all we do (v. 17).

As Paul's charge came to him as a "commandment", so he commanded (NKJV: "charged") Timothy. This is what the Word of God required of Timothy, and what had been preached concerning him (v. 18); and Paul reminded him that his call, as much as Paul's, was a commandment from God, to be carried out according to His Word.

The same is true for us, who have experienced the grace of God as Paul did, and are charged, like Paul, to take up our calling to follow Jesus in our own Personal Mission Field. It's a tough slog, to be sure – a "warfare" in fact (v. 18). But, if we have faith, and if we keep our consciences clear of sin, and of whatever false teaching might distract us from our calling (v. 19), we'll be able to go forward and realize the power of grace, issuing in love, to all the people we see each day.

Meanwhile, those who try to use faith and God's Word for their own purposes, rather than His, are playing into the hands of the devil (v. 20). Let's make sure we don't fall into that snare.

Sound Teaching: 1 Timothy 1

Reflect.

1. Briefly summarize how you see the grace of God working in your life, according to the pattern established in Paul's experience:
2. Have you received your calling/charge from the Lord as a commandment (v. 1)? How does that work out in your daily life?
3. We must guard against trying to use God's grace to our own advantage – like the two men mentioned in verse 20. How can we recognize when we might be doing this? What should we do then?

The Apostle's meaning is, that, from the very beginning, God held out such a pattern as might be visible from a conspicuous and lofty platform, that no one might doubt that he would obtain pardon, provided that he approached to Christ by faith. And, indeed, the distrust entertained by all of us is counteracted, when we thus behold in Paul a visible model of that grace which we desire to see. John Calvin (1509-1564), Commentary on 1 Timothy 1.16

Lord, refresh the pattern of Your grace in my life today, so that I...

Pray Psalm 116.15-19.

Use this portion of Psalm 116 to renew your commitment to the Lord, including any vows you have taken as His servant.

Sing Psalm 116.15-19.

Psalm 116.15-19 (*Mit Freuden Zart: All Praise to God Who Reigns Above*)

How sweet to God when saints depart – save me, Your servant, Savior!
From sin You loosed my wand'ring heart; I praise Your Name forever!
On You I call, my vows to pay; here in Your presence I would stay,
Your praise to offer ever.

7 True Teaching and Learning

Pray 116.12-14.

What shall I render to the LORD
For all His benefits toward me?
I will take up the cup of salvation,
And call upon the name of the LORD.
I will pay my vows to the LORD
Now in the presence of all His people.

Review 1 Timothy 1.

Reflect.

1. Paul, Timothy, and you and I are all “charged”. With what?
2. How did Paul understand the nature of true teaching and learning?

Meditate.

Paul’s overarching concern in this first epistle to Timothy is that the sound doctrine he taught while in Ephesus should be kept pure by all the teachers there. Since Timothy had the oversight of all the churches in Ephesus, it was his job to help make sure that only sound doctrine was being taught, and that no one was using the teaching office for personal whim or advantage, but only to edify the believers in love.

Love is the true measure of both teaching and learning. If we have heard God speaking in His Word, then we have seen Jesus, and we understand the requirements of love as these come to us through Him. We teach others because we love them, and we teach them so that they will love God, one another, and their neighbors. True teaching, teaching that derives from and aims at love, knows how to engage the mind, the heart, and the conscience, so that true learning (“sincere” or “unhypocritical” faith) brings forth love in those who hear us.

We must not misuse the Law, either by making it an oppressive yoke, or by flaunting our knowledge of it, to impress others and achieve some recognition for ourselves. All teaching and learning are for the glory of God and the praise of Jesus Christ. Any teaching or learning that falls short of this has not fulfilled the expectations of the apostle Paul or our eternal King.

True teaching and learning issues in sinners transformed for the glory of God, who live in the “faith and love which are in Christ Jesus” (v. 14). All our reading and study of Scripture must aim at this, so that faith working by love shows the transforming presence of Jesus throughout our soul and into our Personal Mission Field.

Reflect.

1. How can we use the Law of God lawfully, so as to promote love for God and neighbors?
2. How did the Word of God work in Paul’s life? Since his experience is a “pattern” for us, what should we expect in our own lives?
3. How would you explain the “charge” which God has “commanded” you?

Faith, hope and charity, those three virtues for whose building up is mounted all the scaffolding of the Bible, are only in the soul that believes what it does not yet see, and hopes and loves what it believes. Augustine (354-430), On the Trinity 8.4.6

Increase my love for Your Word, O Lord, and enrich my time in it, so that I...

Pray Psalm 116.

Use this psalm to praise God for His saving mercy, and to renew your commitment to obey and serve Him in your Personal Mission Field.

Sing Psalm 116.

Psalm 116.1-19 (*Mit Freuden Zart: All Praise to God Who Reigns Above*)

I love the Lord because He hears my cries and pleas for mercy.
Because He bends to me His ears, my prayers shall ever thus be.
The snares of death encompassed me; hell's grip could not unloosened be;
distress and anguish pressed me.

I called to God, "O Lord, I pray, my soul redeem with favor!"
The Lord is gracious in His way, and righteous is our Savior.
His mercy to the simple flies; He lifted me up to the skies –
I rest in Him forever!

Full well the Lord has dealt with me; my soul from death He delivered.
My weeping eyes, my stumbling feet, He has redeemed forever.
Forever I before His face shall walk with those who know His grace,
and dwell with them forever.

Afflicted, I believe His Word, though lying men would undo me.
What shall I render to the Lord for all His blessings to me?
Salvation's cup I lift above and call upon the God of love
and pay my vows most truly.

How sweet to God when saints depart – save me, Your servant, Savior!
From sin You loosed my wand'ring heart; I praise Your Name forever!
On You I call, my vows to pay; here in Your presence I would stay,
Your praise to offer ever.

Sound Teaching: 1 Timothy 1

Questions for reflection or discussion

1. What is the role of each of the following in true learning: the mind, the heart, the conscience?
2. Why is love the final measure of true teaching and learning?
3. How can we recognize someone who is using the teaching office more for personal gain than for building others up in love?
4. What does it mean to use the Law of God “lawfully”?
5. What’s the most important lesson you’ve learned from 1 Timothy 1? How are you putting that lesson to work in your Personal Mission Field?

For prayer:

The Fellowship of Ailbe

The Fellowship of Ailbe is a spiritual fellowship in the Celtic Christian tradition. Our goal is to promote revival, renewal, and awakening, following the teaching of Scripture and the example and heritage of our forebears in the faith.

The Fellowship of Ailbe offers many opportunities for training, prayer, personal growth, and ministry. Visit our website at www.ailbe.org to learn more.

We hope you found this study helpful. If so, please consider making a gift to The Fellowship. You can contribute to our ministry by using the donate button at the website, or by sending your gift to The Fellowship of Ailbe, 19 Tyler Dr., Essex Junction, VT 05452.

Thank you.