



## BIBLE TEXT | 1 TIMOTHY 1:1-11

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**1** Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by command of God our Savior and of Christ Jesus our hope,

**2** To Timothy, my true child in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

**3** As I urged you when I was going to Macedonia, remain at Ephesus so that you may charge certain persons not to teach any different doctrine, **4** nor to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies, which promote speculations rather than the stewardship from God that is by faith. **5** The aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith. **6** Certain persons, by swerving from these, have wandered away into vain discussion, **7** desiring to be teachers of the law, without understanding either what they are saying or the things about which they make confident assertions.

**8** Now we know that the law is good, if one uses it lawfully, **9** understanding this, that the law is not laid down for the just but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who strike their fathers and mothers, for murderers, **10** the sexually immoral, men who practice homosexuality, enslavers, liars, perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine, **11** in accordance with the gospel of the glory of the blessed God with which I have been entrusted.

# A STUDY IN THE BOOK OF 1 TIMOTHY

## DEVOTIONAL FOR 1 TIMOTHY 1:1-11

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Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, wrote to Timothy as his son in the faith to encourage him and gently warn him to be on guard against false teachers who made it their aim to bring destruction to the flock of God in Ephesus (*Acts 20:27-31*). As the pastor of the Ephesian Church, Timothy was instructed to stay behind and shepherd the flock in humility, despite the challenges he faced. Timothy was charged with the task of keeping people from being tossed to and fro in their faith by upholding sound doctrine (*Ephesians 4:11-16*) and by not being led away by endless genealogies, useless fables, and silly myths (*verses 6-7*).

As Timothy and the Elders at Ephesus shepherded the Ephesian Church, they were to do so with a "pure heart, a good conscience, and a sincere faith" (verse 5). This could have been a difficult task due to the legalistic nature of Jews nearby that struggled with the biblical truth of salvation by faith alone in Christ alone. Legalism has a way of distorting God's goodness and can cause us to manipulate God's Word in ways that are not fruitful or life giving. Legalism teaches people to earn God's love through keeping the law and it prevents us from abiding in His grace and the finished work of Jesus on the cross. This struggle not only applies to many people today, but it also applied to the Ephesian church.

Paul addresses legalism head on in verses 8-11 by giving a clear understanding of Old Testament law. Paul asserts that the law is good if one uses it properly. Paul goes on to say that the law was never intended to be for the righteous, but instead for immoral sinners and people enslaved in their lustful desires (verses 9-10). This passage helps us understand that the law was never intended to save mankind, and that it is utterly powerless in rescuing people from their sin (*Romans 8:3; Galatians 3:21-22*). The law and its moral demands were not established to create sinless perfection in sinful people (*Galatians 3:10-12*), but it was a measure of pointing out sin in humanity until the fulfillment of Christ and his perfect life and death on Calvary's tree (*Galatians 3:19*) could reconcile people to our Heavenly Father (*2 Corinthians 5:17-21*). Seeking to observe the law on your own accord will prove to be fatal. It will cause you to bear a burden you were not designed to carry and it will leave you trusting in your own god-like qualities and pride as you seek to attain God's approval.

Instead, I urge you to put your trust in Jesus Christ. He kept the entire law. He never sinned. He is perfectly righteous and He was perfectly obedient to His father by giving of Himself to die in our place (*Philippians 2:5-8; Mark 10:45; 2 Corinthians 5:21*). Though we are powerless to control our own lives, Christ can manage them when we put our trust in Him. Once we trust Christ, we grow in maturity towards Him, and we keep His commands (law), but not out of a self-righteous obligation, but by a spirit-led obedience.

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## Questions:

1. In 1 Peter 5:1-5 and Hebrews 13:17, pastors and shepherds are called to give an account to the Lord for the flock as they keep watch over their souls. When is the last time that you took time to pray for those who help care for the flock, feed the flock, and nurture the flock? Take some time and do that now.
2. According to 1 Timothy 1:8-11, who is the law meant for? Why do you think Paul expounds on this thought with a long list of sinful people?
3. Would you consider yourself righteous enough to stand face to face before God on your own account? If so, take a few moments and realize what the scriptures say. If not, take a few moments and remind yourself of our need for Jesus Christ and His fulfillment of the law.

Use the following verses and use a couple of words to summarize your thoughts.

Romans 3:10 - \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 3:23 - \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 5:6, 8 - \_\_\_\_\_

Isaiah 53:4-6 - \_\_\_\_\_

Ephesians 2:8-9 - \_\_\_\_\_

Psalms 34:22 - \_\_\_\_\_

Hebrews 4:15 - \_\_\_\_\_

What are the key takeaways from these texts?