

# “Stick to the Job!”

## 1 Timothy 1:1-20

**Intro.** – J.D. Power Customer Satisfaction ratings come out each year. In the early 90’s the top 3 car-nameplates were as follows: Lexus, Infiniti and Saturn. It was of personal interest to me to see an American company do this well. I looked at the Saturn... and concluded then they were a well made car. I also did some reading research on these vehicles and found they were doing well. It gave me hope that the American car companies were getting back their competitive edge...

Things were looking up for Saturn UNTIL two of the three major car companies “sold their souls” to the government in the recent recession which eventually led to the demise of the Saturn nameplate...

My point is simple. I know I don’t know all the issues involved with the demise of this car and others like it, but this much I do know, that if more workers simply would *stick to the job* the job would get done and products like the Saturn nameplate would not come to a disappointing end.

God used Paul to write this epistle to a discouraged preacher named Timothy. The theme of this book is most familiar. Ever get discouraged in your Christian walk? Ever get frustrated at some of the pettiness that goes on in church work? Ever get so overwhelmed and disillusioned that you think about throwing in the towel? The epistle to Timothy is for all of us. God speaks through Paul and says: *Stick to the Job!*

*Purpose: to learn the importance as Christians to sticking to the job*

### I TEACH SOUND DOCTRINE (vv 1-11)

- one vital reason you and I must stick to the job is because of false teachers and their teachings...
- Paul gives a charge through which we learn the following:
  - A. *Legalism* is not Sound Doctrine (vv 3-7)
    - 1. Paul gives 2 purposes for this charge (vv 3-4)
      - a. dealt with the public proclamation of error – Timothy was to instruct certain ones not to teach their strange doctrines...
      - b. dealt with willful/mental acceptance of error – identified as fables/myths = Judaizers were using the Law to manufacture doctrines raising questions and giving no answers!
    - 2. Paul gives a goal to this charge (v 5) = love and not self or legalism:
      - a. love from a pure heart... a heart cleansed by nothing less than the blood of Christ...
      - b. love from a good conscience = i.e. one measures itself by the holiness/righteousness of God!
      - c. love from a sincere faith = without hypocrisy... unlike the Greek actors who pretended...
    - 3. Paul gives the identity of these false teachers (v 5-7)
      - a. those who were severed from positive moral virtues (v 5)
      - b. those who turned aside to *fruitless discussions* = purposeless words can’t satisfy soul’s need
      - c. wanted to be teachers of the Law – Why? Then as now, rules and regulations enable people to *appear holy* without actually being holy! I.e. their “Christianity” is a sham!
      - d. were ignorant = didn’t believe/or weren’t convicted in what they were saying even though they were convincing in their presentation... truth was relative and really didn’t matter!...

All the above applies to our present day world and situations...

### B. The Law is Sound Doctrine (vv 8-11)

- difference between legalism and the Law are given by Paul in our text:
  - 1. The use of the Law (vv 8-10) = four facts are given:
    - a. the Law is good not bad = reveals the holiness of God and sinfulness of Man (Ro 3:20; 7:7)
    - b. the Law has a proper use = to expose, restrain and convict of our lawlessness... Law was never intended to SAVE, simply to reveal our need for a Savior (Gal 3:24) = Law our tutor!
    - c. the Law not made for “righteous men = Romans 4:15 “...where no law, there is no sin.”
    - d. the Law meant for the sinner = 14 sinful groups listed here... not exhaustive list because it goes on to say “...whatever else contrary to sound doctrine.” = represents fact all accountable individuals have violated moral truth – i.e. all have sinned!

2. The Law and the Gospel (v 11)
  - a. Law and Gospel go together = Law without Gospel is diagnosis without the cure.
  - b. Gospel without the Law = Good news of salvation for people who don't know they need it!...
  - c. the Law is not the Gospel, BUT, the Gospel is not lawless = freedom from legalism is not freedom from law-keeping, but it is freedom from law depending! (Ed Fudge).
3. Application = the standard for *sound doctrine* = glorious Gospel of our blessed God = TEACH IT... every parent/grandparent... Bible School teachers... leaders... stick to the job!!

## II PROCLAIM THE *GOSPEL* (vv 12-17)

- Paul uses himself as *exhibit A* to prove Gospel really works and why we must then proclaim it:

### A. What Paul *Use to Be* (v 13a)

1. Blasphemer = denied the deity of Christ and forced others to do the same...
2. Persecutor (Acts 8 & 9) reveal Paul made havoc of Church...
3. Violent aggressor = modern day bully...
4. Cause behind such godless behavior = *ignorance* and *unbelief* – i.e. a proud, self-righteous legalist blinded from the Truth...

### B. How Paul Was *Forgiven* (vv 13b-15)

1. How could holy God forgive/save a legalistic, self-righteous sinner like Saul?
2. Answer found in two words in our text:
  - a. MERCY = God withholding from us what we deserve...
    - Illus. – Judge Kaufman presided at the trial of the Russian spies, the Rosenbergs. They were charged and convicted of treason against the United States. They were sentenced to death. In his summation at the end of the long/bitter trial, the lawyer for the Rosenbergs said emphatically, “Your Honor, what my clients ask for is justice.” Judge Kaufman replied, “The court has given what you asked – justice! What you really want is mercy. But that is something this court has no right to give.”
  - b. GRACE = God giving us what isn't deserved...
    - Illus. – Jonathan Edwards, third president of Princeton and considered one of America's greatest thinker, had a daughter with an ungovernable temper. But, as is so often the case, this trait was not known to the outside world. A worthy young man fell in love with this daughter and sought her hand. “You can't have her,” was the abrupt answer of Jonathan Edwards. “But I love her and she loves me,” replied the young suitor. “You can't have her,” said Edwards again. “Why?” said the young man. “Because she is not worthy of you.” “But,” he asked, “She is a Christian, is she not?” “Yes, she is a Christian, but the grace of God can live with some people with whom no one else could ever live.”
  - c. note: took *abundant grace* (*hyper* = where we get our word “hyper”) to save Saul!
3. Point – if God can save Saul “chief of sinners” He can save “whosoever will” who seeks Him on His terms...

### C. What Paul *Became*

1. Grace = turned a persecutor to preacher/ murder to a missionary...
2. So dramatic was this change, the Church had a hard time accepting...
3. Paul became Apostle to Gentiles and what a life he lived...

Nothing has, can or will affect us like the Gospel.... We need to stick to the job! = Proclaim the Gospel!

## III DEFEND THE *FAITH* (vv 18-20)

### A. Fight the *Good Fight*

1. Literally means “war a good warfare” = our word *strategy* comes from this Greek term.
2. Emphasizes lifetime ward as opposed to isolated battle.
3. The war we're in is in the realm of the spiritual = Truth vs Error, Light vs Dark, Christ vs Satan, Life vs Death...
4. Our *strategy* must rest on Word of God... to be successful in this warfare must know armor/weapons...!

### B. Use the Right *Weapons*

1. “Keeping the Faith” = confidence in God and His Word alone!
2. “Keeping a good conscience” = do God’s will in spite of who is or isn’t watching...
3. All aspects of ministry must be done without reproach = above board = integrity as unto the Lord!

C. Examples of the *Enemy* (False Teachers)

1. Their sin = putting away a good conscience...
2. Hymenaeus and Alexander (here and 2 Timothy 2:18; 4:14)
3. Their discipline = *delivered to Satan* = corrective and not punitive... restoring not destroying...!
  - a. put outside the fellowship and protection of the local church family...
  - b. when brothers/sisters refuse to repent, discipline necessary to restore...
4. Point: not enough for the local church to teach sound doctrine, and proclaim the Gospel – church must also defend the Truth!

**Conclusion:** I suppose one word could be used to summarize this text – *persistence*. Our God wants you and me to persist – to stick to the job. Let me illustrate further what I mean.

Barbara Peters nagged her boy friend David Logan. Barbara nagged him about getting married, buying a house and having a family. But David isn’t complaining. Recently while practicing for a motorcycle race, David Logan had an accident and was in a coma for days. It was then Barbara Peters went into action. For 17 nonstop days of nagging, David finally came out. Doctors told David that had it not been for Barbara’s persistent nagging he probably would never had regained consciousness.

Here is another illustration of persistence. A lady who never spoke ill of anybody was told by an amazed admirer that, “I believe you would say something good even of Satan.” “Well,” said the woman, “you certainly do have to admire his persistence.”

Imagine the encouragement Timothy, this young preacher received when he read this first section of this letter! We too must be nonetheless encouraged. Our task is not to run all over Eaton and the surrounding area and be busy with everything that is good. God has called/equipped us to *win the lost and build the won*. The only way this can and will be accomplished is by sticking to the job! Pettiness, differences of opinions on matters of opinion all must be put aside. Sticking to the job, brethren means *teaching* sound doctrine... *proclaiming* the Gospel... *defending* the faith...!