

Pastoral Epistles: Apostolic Instruction for Pastoral Leaders and Their Followers

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Session 2: 1 Timothy 1

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Abstract

Dr. Robert Yarbrough presents an exposition of 1 Timothy 1 utilizing a "see and say" hermeneutical method that combines careful text observation with faithful contemporary application. He highlights Paul's covenantal and relational language to demonstrate that Christian ministry is rooted in personal fellowship with God and fellow believers, contrasting sound doctrine with speculative false teachings. Yarbrough explores the proper three-fold use of the moral law, emphasizing that while keeping the law cannot justify, divine grace powerfully transforms violent opposers into messengers of hope. Finally, the lecture underscores the solemn charge laid upon Timothy to maintain faith and a good conscience while confronting internal opposition and apostasy in Ephesus.

Outline

I. Introduction to Hermeneutical Method and Textual Greeting (1 Tim 1:1–2)

A. The "See and Say" Method

1. Step 1 ("See"): Rigorous text observation over personal opinion or sentiment
 - a. Difficulty of observing original intent behind English translations
 - b. Technical factors and historical context required for proper interpretation
2. Step 2 ("Say"): Stating conclusions faithful to the "then and there" for the "here and now"
3. Color-coding pedagogical framework (Green headings, Yellow key terms, Red commands, Boxed conclusions)

B. Divine Authority and Covenantal Relationships

1. Primacy of God and Christ in Paul's pastoral counsel
2. Soft affirmation of Christ's divinity via single preposition "from"
3. Covenant language ("true son", "our Lord", "God the Father")
 - a. God as personal, relational, and covenant-making versus an impersonal force
 - b. Vertical fellowship (with God) enabling horizontal fellowship (with believers)

C. Nature of Paul's Apostleship and Hope

1. Apostle defined: One under derived authority and command (kata), not free-agent power

2. Christ Jesus as our living Hope for weary ministers
3. Christ (Messianic fulfillment) Jesus (historical Savior of Nazareth)
4. Benediction of Grace, Mercy, and Peace

II. The Charge to Guard Sound Doctrine Against Speculative Error (1 Tim 1:3–11)

A. Timothy's Mandate in Ephesus

1. Instruction to remain in Ephesus and command against false doctrines
2. Nature of false teaching: Myths, endless genealogies, and speculative controversy
3. Misdirection from God's oikonomia (household administration and redemptive plan)

B. The Goal and Spirit of the Apostolic Command

1. Purpose of the charge: Love issuing from a pure heart, good conscience, and sincere faith
2. Deviation into meaningless talk and self-righteous desire to be law-teachers
3. The danger of trained minds without upright souls (Masefield poem illustration)

C. The Proper Function and Uses of the Law

1. Moral law validated as good when used lawfully
2. Three uses of the law:
 - a. Civil/Social use: Standard for societal justice and civil order
 - b. Pedagogical/Evangelical use: Convicting lawbreakers of sin and pointing to Christ
 - c. Guide for Christian living: Instructive direction for disciples
3. Misuse of the law: Presenting rule-keeping as a means of justification or manipulation of God
4. Lawful alignment with the glorious gospel entrusted to Paul

III. The Transforming Power of Sovereign Grace (1 Tim 1:12–17)

A. Paul's Personal Testimony of Transformation

1. Thanksgiving to Christ for strength, trust, and appointment to service (diakonia)
2. Former state: Blasphemer, persecutor, and violent man acting in ignorance
3. Overflowing grace, faith, and love poured out in Christ Jesus

B. The Faithful Saying and Divine Purpose

1. Core gospel declaration: "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners"
2. Paul as the "foremost" (worst) sinner and Exhibit A of God's immense patience
3. Gospel hope for seemingly hopeless sinners

C. Doxology of Praise (1 Tim 1:17)

1. Worship offered to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God
2. Reinforcement of divine sovereignty and hope in ministry

IV. Solemn Charge, Ministry Realities, and Confronting Apostasy (1 Tim 1:18–20)

A. Renewal of the Apostolic Command

1. Timothy addressed as "my son" in alignment with prior prophecies
2. Ministry as an active fight ("fight the good fight")

3. Essential imperative: Holding fast to faith and a good conscience

B. Realities of Ministry and Spiritual Resistance

1. Role of calling and track record in sustaining perseverance
2. Realistic assessment of the cost, friction, and bruising nature of discipleship
3. The tragic reality of convert attrition, betrayal, and spiritual shipwreck

C. Severe Discipline of Hymenaeus and Alexander

1. Specific identification of apostate individuals
2. "Handed over to Satan": Cessation of prayer protection and exposure to sifting
3. Redemptive ultimate purpose: Teaching them not to blaspheme and preserving the church