

Entrusted  
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1 Timothy 1:3-17

Opening: **What does the word “entrust” mean? What are some examples of someone being entrusted with something valuable and important?** (Illustration: watching a baby – scary swimming pool story.)

- Two conditions that should never coexist are “entrusted” and “distracted.”
- When you’ve been entrusted you can’t allow yourself to be distracted.
- Today’s church leaders have been entrusted to keep the focus on the message of the gospel: *“Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners”* That responsibility extends beyond leaders to every follower of Christ.
- One of Satan’s favorite techniques to divert Christ’s church from our mission is to divide the people through *“meaningless discussions.”*<sup>ii</sup>
- At the first century church in Ephesus, the meaningless discussions were false teaching by “certain persons” who aspired to be admired for their knowledge, position, and prestige.
- Paul wrote this letter to instruct his protégé Timothy on how to keep the church in Ephesus focused on the main thing: the message of the gospel.

The Big Idea: When you’ve been entrusted you’d better not get distracted. Followers of Christ have been entrusted with the truth of the gospel and we should not allow ourselves, or our church, to be distracted by anything else.

- The Apostle Paul had spent three years planting, launching, and loving the church in Ephesus. When Paul left on his next missionary journey, he entrusted Timothy to stay behind and be the leader of that church.

- Verse two tells us Paul was a spiritual father to Timothy. So this is a father writing to his son with advice on how to lead this young congregation.

<sup>3</sup> When I left for Macedonia, I urged you to stay there in Ephesus and stop those whose teaching is contrary to the truth. <sup>4</sup> Don't let them waste their time in endless discussion of myths and spiritual pedigrees. These things only lead to meaningless speculations, which don't help people live a life of faith in God.

- We don't know specifically what false teaching this was.
- Some speculate this was a "blending" of Jewish fables and pagan myths.<sup>iii</sup>
- Others speculate, *"They were leading believers out of the liberty of grace (Gal. 5:1ff) into the bondage of legalism"*<sup>iv</sup>
- Whatever the false teaching was, the result was *"meaningless speculations which don't help people live a life of faith in God."*
- Sometimes the distraction in the church is not even false teaching but debating things that are not essential.
- Sincere followers of Christ can get more excited about debating creation versus evolution, or when the rapture will come, etc. than learning how to share the gospel and "live a life of faith in God."
- When you've been entrusted you'd better not get distracted.
- Whether it's disputes about non-essentials or out-and-out heresy, we have a responsibility to keep ourselves and our church focused on biblical truth.
- Paul's teaching wasn't about meaningless debates but changed hearts.

<sup>5</sup> The purpose of my instruction is that all believers would be filled with love that comes from a pure heart, a clear conscience, and genuine faith.

- Instruction in the truth of scripture will result in people filled with love.
- This is agape love. Christ talked about it in Matthew 22:37–40 (love God and love others.) It is described in 1 Corinthians 13.

- The website Got Questions? Defines it: *“Agape love as modeled by Christ is not based on a feeling; rather, it is a determined act of the will, a joyful resolve to put the welfare of others above our own. Agape love does not come naturally to us. Because of our fallen nature, we are incapable of producing such a love. If we are to love as God loves, that love...can only come from its Source. This is the love that “has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us” when we became His children ([Romans 5:5](#); cf. [Galatians 5:22](#)).”<sup>v</sup>*
- When a group of believers stays focused on the truth of scripture, it results in godly love, “pure heart(s), clear consciences, and genuine faith.” Those characteristics only come from the Holy Spirit living inside their hearts.

<sup>6</sup> But some people have missed this whole point. They have turned away from these things and spend their time in meaningless discussions. <sup>7</sup> They want to be known as teachers of the law of Moses, but they don’t know what they are talking about, even though they speak so confidently.

- Paul said these false teachers were misusing Old Testament law.

<sup>8</sup> We know that the law is good when used correctly. <sup>9</sup> For the law was not intended for people who do what is right.

- The law (Ten Commandments) is good when used correctly.
- It’s like the words on a bottle or package, *“use only as directed.”*
- **What is the correct role of God’s law (Ten Commandments) in our lives today?**
- We know God’s law *“shows us what God is like and what he wants us to be and do. The Ten Commandments are a guide for right and wrong in our daily choices.”<sup>vi</sup>* But God’s law also points us to Jesus as Savior.
- First, Romans 8:3 (NLT) tells us what the law can’t do for sinners:

<sup>3</sup> The law of Moses was unable to save us because of the weakness of our sinful nature. So God did what the law could not do. He sent his own Son in a body like the bodies we sinners have. And in that body God declared an end to sin's control over us by giving his Son as a sacrifice for our sins.

- Our sinful nature is so sinful we don't have the ability to keep God's law.
- Jesus had to die as a "sacrifice" so we can be forgiven for our sins.
- He sent His Holy Spirit to live in our hearts so we don't have to be slaves to sin. (Gal 5:16-25)

Galatians 3:24–25 (NLT)

<sup>24</sup> Let me put it another way. The law was our guardian until Christ came; it protected us until we could be made right with God through faith. <sup>25</sup> And now that the way of faith has come, we no longer need the law as our guardian.

- Wiersbe: *"The Law cannot save lost sinners (Gal. 2:21; 3:21–29); it can only reveal their need for a Saviour."*<sup>vii</sup>
- *"The Law is intended for those who remain unconvinced of their sin."*<sup>viii</sup>
- Paul gave some examples of those who need the law to reveal their sin.
- It's not an exhaustive list, but it parallels the last six of the Ten Commandments.

It is for people who are lawless and rebellious, who are ungodly and sinful, who consider nothing sacred and defile what is holy, who kill their father or mother or commit other murders. <sup>10</sup> The law is for people who are sexually immoral, or who practice homosexuality, or are slave traders, liars, promise breakers, or who do anything else that contradicts the wholesome teaching <sup>11</sup> that comes from the glorious Good News entrusted to me by our blessed God.

- *"In their misuse of the law, the new teachers put the emphasis on what people could do, while Paul emphasized what God had*

*done. They drew people away from God's offer of forgiveness, while Paul led people to it.*<sup>ix</sup>

- Paul was “exhibit A” for what the grace of God can do for a sinner.
- Listen to his testimony of God’s amazing grace in his life.

<sup>12</sup> I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength to do his work. He considered me trustworthy and appointed me to serve him,  
<sup>13</sup> even though I used to blaspheme the name of Christ. In my insolence, I persecuted his people. But God had mercy on me because I did it in ignorance and unbelief. <sup>14</sup> Oh, how generous and gracious our Lord was! He filled me with the faith and love that come from Christ Jesus.

- Verse fifteen is a great memory verse:

<sup>15</sup> This is a trustworthy saying, and everyone should accept it: “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners”—and I am the worst of them all.

- That verse didn’t just apply to Paul. It applies to every follower of Christ and every one of us can rejoice in the truth that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners – even the worst sinners!
- We can also claim verses sixteen and seventeen as our own.

<sup>16</sup> But God had mercy on me so that Christ Jesus could use me as a prime example of his great patience with even the worst sinners. Then others will realize that they, too, can believe in him and receive eternal life. <sup>17</sup> All honor and glory to God forever and ever! He is the eternal King, the unseen one who never dies; he alone is God. Amen.

So, What’s the Takeaway?

- Ever feel like you’re the worst sinner of all? What a relief to know that Christ died for every sinner and no one is beyond his forgiveness!
- Living the life of a follower of Christ isn’t about rules, regulations, or complicated theological arguments. It’s about

absorbing the truth of scripture and allowing God's Holy Spirit to change us from the inside out!

- Followers of Christ have been entrusted with that gospel message.
- When you've been entrusted you'd better not get distracted.
- One of Satan's favorite techniques to derail Christ's church is to distract, divert, and divide believers by taking our focus away from the truth of scripture. It's your job and mine to make sure that doesn't happen in our own lives and in our church.
- How can we spot a false teacher? The Life Application Study Bible:

*“(1) They teach what is contrary to the truth found in Scripture (1:3; 1:6-7; 4:1-3). (2) They promote trivial and divisive disputes instead of helping people come to Jesus (1:4). (3) They aren't concerned about personal evidence of God's presence in their lives, spending their time on “idle talk” instead (1:6). (4) Their motivation is to make a name for themselves (1:7). To protect yourself from the deception of false teachers, learn what the Bible teaches and remain steadfast in your faith in Christ alone.”<sup>x</sup>*

- Remember, we've been entrusted with the truth of the gospel.
- When you've been entrusted you'd better not get distracted.

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<sup>i</sup> Tyndale House Publishers. (2013). [Holy Bible: New Living Translation](#) (1 Ti 1:15). Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers.

<sup>ii</sup> *ibid*

<sup>iii</sup> Explore the Bible © 2019 LifeWay. Christian Resources, Nashville, TN 37234.

<sup>iv</sup> Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). [The Bible exposition commentary](#) (Vol. 2, p. 211). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

<sup>v</sup> <https://www.gotquestions.org/agape-love.html>

<sup>vi</sup> Larson, Knute. Holman New Testament Commentary - 1 & 2 Thessalonians, 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon: 9 . B&H Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.

<sup>vii</sup> Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). [The Bible exposition commentary](#) (Vol. 2, p. 211). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

<sup>viii</sup> Litfin, A. D. (1985). [1 Timothy](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 732). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

<sup>ix</sup> Robinson, S. J. (2004). [Opening up 1 Timothy](#) (p. 23). Leominster: Day One Publications.

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<sup>x</sup> Tyndale. Life Application Study Bible NKJV (LASB: Full Size) (Kindle Locations 175172-175177). Tyndale House Publishers. Kindle Edition.