

## **1Timothy 1:12-20**

vs 12 In God's foreknowledge did He choose Paul and give him strength because He saw Paul would be faithful? Is that the reason Paul was appointed this important role in beginning the Church? It must be the highest role next to that of Jesus to Whom the Church belongs as his body. Having written much of the doctrine of the NT and spreading the Gospel over much of the known world, he also was a major influence even on the apostle Peter and others whose lives were so influential to the founding of the NT Church. Where would Christianity be without that early work of this Apostle, is hard to imagine. Not to give him too much credit - it was the strength of God and took a dramatic calling and anointing. 1Co 15:10 Here is a great example of grace AND effort, cooperating whole-heartedly with the Spirit.

Has Christ given you strength? Phil 4:13 God is faithful. Is man ever? Only when we are in Him cooperating with the Spirit are we considered faithful. Even Paul's faithfulness was the fact that he is in Christ Jesus. I see this strength and faithfulness exercised as letting go of the Letter of the Law and being teachable. Faithful to let go and let God as opposed to doing it yourself. He let go of works with the help of the strength from Christ and was faithful to receive instruction.

vs 13 It seems a Calvinist might have trouble with this verse for he would claim it had nothing to do with Paul at all when Paul claims mercy was bestowed because of his ignorance and excused because he was doing it in unbelief. Acts 26:9-11 Do we have the same mercy for those acting in ignorance and unbelief? Remember Jesus' words on the cross? "Forgive them they know not what they do." What does that say for those who know the truth and blaspheme? Jn 9:39-4, Heb 10:26,27, 2Peter 2:21,22

vs 14 Paul is careful that all recognize it is the abundant grace of God, God's faithfulness and love that are in Christ Jesus more than any other qualifying factor. We should all relate to Paul's feeling here.

vs 15 Why did Jesus leave glory to walk among us in a body? "to save sinners" like you and me. Paul's description of himself in his letters changes as he matures. In Corinthians he calls himself the least of the Apostles, and later the least of the brethren and now at the end of his life he recognizes himself as the worst sinner. Doesn't recognizing ourselves as sinners saved by the grace of God from the wrath we deserve keep us in an attitude of thankfulness and humility?

vs 16 What beautiful words, 'unlimited patience'. Do we have in our hearts the same attitude? Jesus picked me because He wanted people to have hope that God has unlimited patience. Do we accept the lesson Paul is saying his life displays? Do I know and realize the unlimited patience of God? It reminds me of the love of a mother who no matter how many times the toddler stumbles she

is proud to see the effort made. She picks him up and helps him try again and again. Not to realize this is to fall into condemnation for not instantly maturing.

vs17 He breaks out into a song considering the unlimited patience of God and the wonder of being chosen. The song says Oh infinite unseen Father - all honor and glory is yours now and always. So be it. We should ponder the grace of God, His attributes, and sing a lot more.

vs18 this instruction - this letter Apparently there were some prophetic things said about Timothy and Paul is writing in accord with those words to encourage him to live them out, which is referred to as fight the good fight. The good fight is something we all must do but Timothy had a unique calling. When we instruct we should give instruction that is in keeping with what God has said. Later Paul will compare the Christian life to being a soldier. In what ways do we fight a good fight? (see next verse)

vs 19 Paul refers to this good conscience in the end of 2Tim saying he walked in it and wished others did. Many have other motives than the Lord Jesus. Faith is not a one time thing - it must be something we tenaciously cling to. Rejection of your conscience can cause your faith to run aground and be destroyed by the waves of life. Quite a picture! Faith is like a boat that carries us over the rough waters but a good conscience keeps out of the danger of the reefs and sandbars. It is not a good idea to abandon the faith boat or the charts of a good conscience. What do you think 'shipwrecked their faith' means?

vs 20 Mentioned also in the end of 2Tim (2:14,4:14) these men must have really stepped out of bounds in opposing the gospel. When we run aground the destruction of Satan can teach us a lesson. This is similar to the 1 Corinthian 5:4,5 instruction of asking for the protection of God to be removed from that life so they will be taught, kind of like Job's story. 1Cor 11:32