

RELEASE DATE: **28th June 2024**

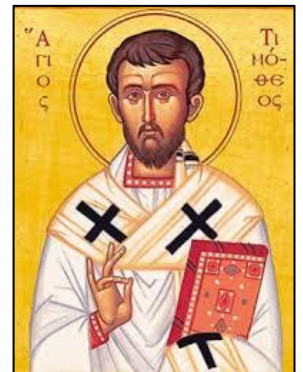
1 Timothy 1 . . thought provoking questions from Pastor Tim

At the start of June 2024 Pastor Tim began a new series from the book of 1 Timothy under the title "Guarding the Deposit". On consecutive Sundays, Tim preached the following pair of sermons both of which can be heard or read via the sermons page on the BBC Church Website.

Pt 3. 16th June, "Mercy and grace to the chief of sinners" 1 Timothy 1v12-17

Pt 4. 23rd June, "Fight or crash" 1 Timothy 1v18-20

A list of Tim's challenging questions related to the two sermons was circulated among the church fellowship and the individual Home Groups discussed their answers. Below and overleaf is the transcript from the morning group at the church led by Bob Travers.



The Apostle Timothy

Pastor Tim's questions are in black and Bob's thoughts are shown in red. These formed the basis of the groups discussion and hopefully you can personally expand on the answers.

Q. What encouragement does Paul's description of his life before he was a Christian give us when it comes to the work of evangelism?

A. What we have been in the past isn't necessarily a commendation, barrier or pre-requisite for God to call and use us. God can, and does, call and use the most unexpected people to bring about His purposes. Can you think of any examples?

Q. Dramatic testimonies are often widely published and can be very effective. However, they can lead to God's work in the lives of "ordinary" people to get neglected. How can we avoid this? How can we find ways to celebrate God's grace in our own lives when our testimony isn't as dramatic as Paul's?

A. They may well be exaggerated for dubious reasons. Sin is sin in any form and is an abomination to God. BUT God's grace is sufficient through the atoning work of Christ to cover any sin, if there is true repentance and faith in Jesus. The most important thing, whatever our past/ testimony is that we must end up closer to the Lord. That's what He wants and what He will do if we let Him. That's what we need to demonstrate and foster in others.

Continued over...

Q. How does 1 Corinthians 5 help us understand Paul's statement about handing Hymenaeus and Alexander over to Satan?

A. 1 Corinthians 5 makes it clear, it is not our job to judge the world/ non-Christians, who know no better. We do have a responsibility for what is happening within the church and to protect, so far as possible, from themselves, those in the church who we recognise are going astray or to let them go, if the Lord so directs. We need to love them enough to speak clearly to them about the danger of falling away from the Lord.

The following questions are very personal, but designed to get us thinking more about developing a culture of honesty and openness.

Q. In what ways might we be tempted to reject faith and a good conscience?

A. - Tim "Legalism" and "Liberalism" - 7 Ways to shipwreck your faith: -1. Loving the world/ created more than the Creator. 2. Neglecting the Word of God. 3. Trusting your feelings. 4. Worrying. 5. "Hanging out" with the wrong people. 6. Relying on yourself. 7. Refusing to hope.

Q. What would it mean for other people to come alongside us and help us?

A. Means you are not alone – "Problem shared can be a problem halved". Holy Spirit in them can minister to your spirit. They might have survived/ triumphed over something, through the Lord's help, that you are still grappling with. They might help establish a sense of balance and counter the tendency for self-pity. May turn out to be a positive role-model.

Q. How would we feel about sharing our tendencies to make shipwreck of our faith with others?

A. The temptation is to hide things, keep them in the dark, which show us in a bad light. Danger of comparing ourselves with others – "we are not as bad as them". We need to resist that temptation and be honest if we are ever to be of any real value to the Lord's work.

Q. What does this say about our seriousness to wage the good warfare?

A. Our intentions may be good but pride can get in the way – what others say or think. The flesh can be very weak and we can be easily led astray. Again we need to rely on the power of the Holy Spirit to equip us to serve the Lord as we should.

Q. How does having a culture of gospel grace help a church develop a culture of openness?

A. If others can share their imperfections and yet testify to the grace of God and power of the gospel in their lives then we might just be convinced the Lord can help us too. We can learn for ourselves how gracious He is and have grounds for hope for ourselves.

Q. In what ways might we be able to help one another wage this good warfare?

A. By being real and honest, not pretending. Looking out for each other, genuinely caring about others in the church – even putting them first, being pro-active in protecting others against gossip and misrepresentation.

Take time to pray for one another, especially over those issues that have been raised that would lead us away from the gospel of grace.