

Text: 1 Timothy 1:3-11

Exegetical Idea:

Paul encourages Timothy to warn his congregation against the useless speculation of false teaching and instead to learn God's commandments, which produce love and inward transformation.

Exegetical Outline:

- I. Paul explains his exhortation to Timothy to remain behind in Ephesus: so that Timothy could command the congregation not to teach false doctrine or to follow myths and divisive teaching because such things are little more than useless speculation rather than faithfulness to God's commandments (1:3-4).
 - A. Timothy is to command certain Ephesian Christians not to teach doctrine that differs from what Paul has taught (1:3b).
 - B. Timothy is to command certain Ephesian Christians not to pay attention to certain teaching because such useless speculation encourages needless disputes rather than faithfulness to God's revelation (1:4).
- II. The purpose of God's commands is to produce love flowing from the believer's sanctified inner person rather than the vain and empty talk from those who claim to be teachers of the law even though they have gone astray (1:5-7).
 - A. When a believer learns love (for God and his fellow Christian) the purpose of the law has been realized (1:5).
 - B. Those who engage in such vain and useless teaching have turned aside from God's revelation. They desire to be known as teachers of the law but in reality do not understand either what the law says or what it means (1:6-7).
- III. One purpose of the law is to restrain the wicked and to highlight their sinfulness by comparing it to the healthy teaching that is in line with gospel of God which has been committed to Paul and, through him, to his followers (1:8-11).
 - A. The law is good when one uses it for the purpose for which it was intended (1:8).
 - B. The law is made for law-less people to reign in their wicked tendencies and to demonstrate their violation of God's law (1:9-10a).
 - C. Lawless ones are demonstrated not just by the previously listed actions, but by any action or attitude that is contrary to the teaching previously revealed by God which is in line with the gospel (1:10b-11a).
 - D. The gospel of Jesus Christ and the truth of God has been committed to the apostle's care and handed down to those who follow in his steps such that faithfulness to the teaching of the apostles is faithfulness to God and his teaching (11b).