

Text: 1 Timothy 1:12-16

Translation:

¹² I thank him who has given me strength, Christ Jesus our Lord, because he has considered me faithful, placing me into ministry, ¹³ though I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor and a violent man, but I received mercy because I did it ignorantly, in unbelief; ¹⁴ and the grace of our Lord overflowed with the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.

¹⁵ This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners of whom I am the worst.¹ ¹⁶ However, for this reason I received mercy: so that in me first² Christ Jesus might show perfect patience as an example³ for those who are about to believe in him to eternal life.

Exegetical Idea:

Paul thanks God for his mercy, exemplified in Paul by transforming a grievous sinner into a faithful servant through the mission of Jesus Christ.

Exegetical Outline:

- I. Paul praises God for divine mercy which turned Paul from an ignorant sinner into a faithful servant (12-14).
 - A. Paul thanks God for the work of Christ in his life which resulted in his entering into service for Christ (12).
 - B. God's mercy is emphasized by Paul's testimony of his former lifestyle which resulted from his ignorance of Christ's true person and status (13).
 - C. Paul indicates that God's abundant grace is made known through Jesus Christ and is revealed in his faith and love (14).
- II. Paul praises God for divine mercy which made Paul an example of God's transforming power (15-16).
 - A. Paul repeats a Christian saying to emphasize that he sees himself as the worst of sinners and Jesus' mission primarily as one of bringing salvation to sinners (15).
 - B. Paul's salvation despite the depth of his sin is an example of Christ's power and willingness to save those who come to him despite their own great sin (16).

¹ lit. "first"; one could also translate this "of whom I am first and foremost."

² Note the repetition of "first."

³ lit. a "pattern" or "prototype"