

1. Learning to Develop Our Inner Man

Today, we are beginning a new series to help our children learn to grow in godly leadership. Godly leadership is not based on personality, human abilities, business success or any of the other things to which the world looks when the world looks for leadership. Instead, godly leadership is to be developed and recognized as people grow in godly character so that they are led by the love of Christ. They lead others by example and do not drive people by fear, which is often the way that worldly leadership functions. As a result, we begin our study of this topic by learning how to develop our inner man.

In 1 Timothy 2:1-2, we read, “Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the commandment of God our Savior and the Lord Jesus Christ, our hope, To Timothy, a true son in the faith: Grace, mercy, *and* peace from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord.” Here, we see that Paul began this letter by saying he was an apostle of Jesus Christ. Paul was called by Christ to be an apostle to the Gentiles. That ministry was later confirmed by the other apostles. Galatians 2:9 says, “And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that had been given to me, they gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we *should go* to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised.” Paul faithfully carried out that ministry to the Gentiles throughout his ministry.

We see that this call of Paul as an apostle of Jesus Christ was by the commandment of God our Savior. The Old Testament writers often spoke of the fact that God was their salvation. Isaiah 12:2 says, “Behold, God *is* my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid; “For God, the LORD, *is* my strength and song; He also has become my salvation.”” Here, we see that Isaiah looked to God for his salvation. Later, we know that the Father sent Christ to this earth to provide that salvation. We also see that Jesus Christ is our hope. God planned our salvation but Christ provided our salvation. As a result, it is Christ that gives us hope for the future.

Paul wrote this letter to Timothy whom Paul described as a true son in the faith. Here, we see that it is possible to have spiritual children as well as physical children. In fact, Paul had many spiritual children. 1 Corinthians 4:14 says, “I do not write these things to shame you, but as my beloved children I warn *you*.” In Philemon 1:10 Paul wrote, “I appeal to you for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten *while* in my chains.” Here, we see that those who choose to provide the care of a spiritual parent will have spiritual children who develop and become full partners in ministry. Paul wanted each of his spiritual children to experience grace, mercy and peace from the Father and Christ.

We see that Timothy was in Ephesus at the time that Paul wrote this letter. 1 Timothy 1:3-4 says, “As I urged you when I went into Macedonia—remain in Ephesus that you may charge some that they teach no other doctrine, nor give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which cause disputes rather than godly edification which is in faith.” Paul had made a return visit to Ephesus after several years in prison first in Caesarea and then in Rome. We see that several kinds of false teaching had come into the church in Ephesus during these years. The word “charge” means *to give a command or to pass on instructions*.

In verse seven, we will see that some of these who were teaching other doctrines were individuals who desired to be teachers of the law. The word translated “teachers of the law” is only used three times in the New Testament. In addition to verse seven, it was used to describe Gamaliel in Acts 5:34. Then, Luke 5:17 says, “Now it happened on a certain day, as He was teaching, that there were Pharisees and teachers of the law sitting by, who had come out of every town of Galilee, Judea, and Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was *present* to heal them.” In both Luke and Acts, we see that these were Jewish teachers or interpreters of the law who would interpret the Old Testament for the people. Since they were teaching other doctrines, these would be Jews who were trying to teach the Ephesians to add certain elements of the law to Christianity.

The decision of the Jerusalem Council in Acts 15 is clearly stated in Acts 15:28-29 where we read, “For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things: that you abstain from things offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well. Farewell.” Since these four things go back to the first nine chapters of Genesis, these were universal teachings for all people long before the Jewish law was given and so are the only things that the Gentiles were required to observe. Other teachings that were confusing the church at Ephesus were fables (invented stories or traditions) and endless genealogies (lists of ancestors). Paul said that these teachings only produced questions instead of helping Christians to be built up in the Lord.

1 Timothy 1:5-7 says, “Now the purpose of the commandment is love from a pure heart, *from* a good conscience, and *from* sincere faith, from which some, having strayed, have turned aside to idle talk, desiring to be teachers of the law, understanding neither what they say nor the things which they affirm.” Here, we see that the true purpose of the Old Testament law is love. Matthew 22:37-40 says, “Jesus said to him, “You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.” This is *the* first and great commandment. And *the* second is like it: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”” We see here that love fulfills the whole Old Testament.

In order for that love to be godly love, it requires a pure heart, a good conscience and a sincere faith. The word that is translated “pure” means *free from sin and guilt*. A good conscience is a conscience that is good in its character and beneficial to others by the things that it does. A sincere or genuine faith is the result of a person placing his or her faith in Christ. The false teachings were being taught by individuals who had swerved or strayed from the faith. The word is translated “strayed” in 2 Timothy 2:18 where we read, “Who have strayed concerning the truth, saying that the resurrection is already past; and they overthrow the faith of some.” Here, we see that false teaching comes from those who turn away from the truth of the Gospel. Although such individuals wanted to be teachers of the law, they did not understand the purpose of the law; and at the same time, they thought that their teachings were true.

1 Timothy 1:8-11 goes on to say, “But we know that the law *is* good if one uses it lawfully, knowing this: that the law is not made for a righteous person, but for *the* lawless and insubordinate, for *the* ungodly and for sinners, for *the* unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, for fornicators, for sodomites, for kidnappers, for liars, for perjurers,

and if there is any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine, according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God which was committed to my trust.” Here, we see that the law is very good if it is used for the purpose for which God intended it.

That purpose is explained in Galatians 3:24-25 where we read, “Therefore the law was our tutor *to bring us* to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.” The purpose of the law was to bring us to Christ so that we realize that the only way that we can be justified (declared to be righteous) is by faith in Christ. Once the law has completed that purpose we are no longer under the law. The law kept us in bondage. That is why Galatians 5:18 says, “But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.” The law is good if we use it for its intended purpose to help people see that they are sinners and need a Savior. However, once a person becomes a Christian that person is no longer under the law.

That is why we are told that the law is not made for the righteous person. At the moment of salvation, we have the righteousness of Christ placed on us. 2 Corinthians 5:21 says, “For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” Our sin was placed on Christ so that at the moment of salvation the righteousness of Christ could be placed on us. That is why the law is not made for the person that stands in the righteousness of Christ.

We need to see for whom the law was made. 1 Corinthians 9:21 uses this word four times where it is translated “without law”. That verse says, “To those *who are* without law, as without law (not being without law toward God, but under law toward Christ), that I might win those *who are* without law.” Here, we see that it refers to the Gentiles who never had the law and need to hear the law to realize they are sinners. In Acts 2:23, it talks about the Jews who crucified Christ and called them wicked. That verse says, “Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death.” Here, we see that it speaks about Jews who knew the law and were in rebellion against God.

In fact, the first six words “lawless”, “insubordinate”, “ungodly”, “sinners”, “unholy” and “profane” all speak about people who are in rebellion against God and show their rebellion by breaking the first part of the law, which speaks of the sins of mankind against God. When people are in rebellion against God, they also show their rebellion against God by rebelling against people. As a result, the rest of the list covers the second part of the law as the second part of the law talks about the sins of mankind against other people. Once we come to Christ, He wants us to learn to be led by the Holy Spirit. That is why it is so important for us to help our children learn to be led by the Spirit. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to be walk in love and be led by the Spirit.