



1 Timothy 1:3-11



3 As I urged you when I went into Macedonia—remain in Ephesus that you may charge some that they teach no other doctrine, **4** nor give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which cause disputes rather than godly edification which is in faith. **5** Now the purpose of the commandment is love from a pure heart, from a good conscience, and from sincere faith, **6** from which some, having strayed, have turned aside to idle talk, **7** desiring to be teachers of the law, understanding neither what they say nor the things which they affirm.

8 But we know that the law is good if one uses it lawfully, **9** 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, **10** for fornicators, for sodomites, for kidnappers, for liars, for perjurers, and if there is any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine, **11** according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God which was committed to my trust.

The New King James Version. Nashville : Thomas Nelson, 1982

Paul is urging Timothy to stay put and oversee the church that no other teaching comes filtering through and lead people away from the Gospel and the teachings of God's truth.

Timothy was a young minister, appointed to lead the apparently contentious church at Ephesus. He had already learned the essentials of the gospel; now he had to learn how to lead. In this letter, Paul was passing on all the wisdom he had accumulated in his years of ministry. His insights are extremely practical, and valuable even today.

The word fables is used in Titus 1:14 in connection with Jewish fables. Genealogies is used in Titus 3:9 within the context of the Law. The errors that Paul left Timothy to correct in Ephesus appear to have been primarily Jewish in nature, involving unrestrained speculation about genealogies and allegorical interpretations of the Law like those found in rabbinical literature. In Ephesus this could have been combined with Gnostic speculation concerning a number of spiritual beings. The Greek word for edification means "stewardship" and expresses the concept of orderly management of a household. Paul understands the church



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as the “house of God” (see 3:14, 15). Disputes do not promote “house order” in the church. The focus of a believer’s life should be the clear and sound doctrine found in the Word of God, not human speculation.

teachers of the law: This phrase is derived from Judaism and is used in Luke 5:17; Acts 5:34 in connection with the Pharisees. These were the individuals whom Timothy was to instruct and correct. Their errors came from their relation to the law. These men were loveless, legalistic teachers with impure hearts and motives. Instruction without love promotes legalism.

Paul’s list of those who have violated the law appears to parallel the order of the Ten Commandments (see Ex. 20:3–17). The first three pairs of violations recall the first four commands, which address a person’s relationship with God: the lawless and insubordinate, the ungodly and . . . sinners, and the unholy and profane. Following these are eight violations that parallel five of the last six commands of the Ten Commandments. Covetousness is not mentioned.

according to the glorious gospel: This phrase should be interpreted in its immediate context, a discussion about the purpose of the law. The proper use of the law is to demonstrate human sinfulness and need our for the Good News that Christ has saved us from bondage to the law and our own sins.

Radmacher, Earl D.; Allen, Ronald Barclay; House, H. Wayne: *The Nelson Study Bible: New King James Version*. Nashville: T. Nelson Publishers, 1997, S. 1 Ti 1:3