

1 Timothy 1 (Part 1) :1-11 • An Apostle by the Command of God

Teacher: Pastor Paul LeBoutillier
Life Bible Ministry

We're going to start a new study this morning, and I'm kind of excited about it. So open your Bible, please, to first Timothy. This study is actually going to take us through three consecutive letters in the New Testament. Of course, first and second Timothy and then the book of Titus. These three letters are referred to today as the pastoral letters.

They actually weren't called that until the 18th century. Prior to that, I, they were just letters to Timothy and Titus. But I think pastoral letters is kind of a good title because they deal with, you know, pastoral matters. Paul is writing to these two relatively young men and talking to them about things related to the church, and organization, and leadership and stuff like that. And so that's what we're going to be going through.

Now, as I'm saying that there might be somebody here who's thinking to yourself, well, I really don't think I'm probably ever going to be a pastor. And I don't know if I'll ever be in any sort of church leadership position. So why are these important to me? Why is the study of the pastoral letters important to the general body of Christ?

And I'll tell you why. It's because when you came to Jesus, when you accepted him as your Savior, you were born into the family of God, the church. And the church, his body has an organizational structure, which is made up of many parts. And it's important that we understand that those parts, all of the parts are important.

But during this study, we're going to focus on the parts that are essentially leadership. It's important for you to know about those parts. Let me show you something that Paul said to the Corinthians back in 1 Corinthians chapter 12:

1 Corinthians 12:12, 14 (ESV)

...just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many are one body, so it is with Christ. For the body does not consist of one member but of many.

He said, *"just as the body is one and has many members (or parts,) and all the members of the body, though many, are one body... (in other words, they make up one single body) ...so it is with Christ. For the body does not consist of one member but many."* And so among all of those members, that are in, that make up the body of Christ, God has established certain members to function in roles of leadership.

And Paul talks about that when he writes to the Ephesians. Let me show you this Ephesians four beginning in verse 11:

Ephesians 4:11-12 (NIV84)

It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up.

"It was he (and that's talking about Jesus) who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, (and then he tells why God gave those ministry positions to the church) to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up."

And so you see these various ministry positions. He gave some to be apostles. The word apostle means "one sent forth." In fact, the Greek contains the idea of "sent forth with authority." And that authority is to, you know, it's, there's a lot of things it's actually related to, but they were to start churches and raise up other leaders to function in those churches.

You know, we don't have technically the kind of apostles that they probably existed in the first century, because there was a special work that the Lord was doing through those men of just establishing the church for the very first time. And we know that their writings have become essentially scripture. But fundamentally, the job of an apostle is still very much in force today we just simply call them missionaries. They're the ones who are sent forth to go and start churches, share the gospel, start churches and that sort of thing. So is the work of an apostle still going on today? Yeah, very much.

And then you have prophets. Those are they who function with the spiritual gift of speaking a message from God to the body of Christ with a prophetic gifting. There's evangelists, you know what an evangelist is, "those who are gifted." I am not an evangelist, but I love to watch evangelists. They have the most incredible way of sharing the gospel so simply. And I try to, to me as a teacher, I make it so complex sometimes. And I listened to old things videos, or watch

old videos of like Billy Graham. You know, what an incredible man to just simply share the gospel simply. It's a gift. It's a gift that God gives to the body of Christ.

And finally, you come to that last grouping of leaders that we saw there in Ephesians, which is the pastor teacher. Some people think those are separate, but I personally think that they're one. The pastor teacher is the one who is called to "shepherd the church" because that's what the word pastor means. It could be translated pastor or shepherd. The Greek word means both. And he is of course tasked with making sure the sheep are loved, protected and well fed. Hopefully that's what we're doing today.

So the reason that all this is so important for you to know is because there are people that God has given to lead in the church. And the more you know about those roles, the more you understand what God has called those people to do in the body of Christ, the safer you're going to be.

Because you see, here's the bad news part. It's that not everyone who claims to be a leader is really a leader or called by God. And there are some people who are not being led by the spirit but are in fact being led by the flesh. And it happens. And it's important that you understand what God intended for leaders and how they are to function in the body of Christ so that you stay safe for you and your family.

You'll remember that when the apostle Paul was exhorting the elders from Ephesus, it's interesting, you know, Timothy was in Ephesus at the time when Paul wrote this letter. But Paul had spent a great deal of time in Ephesus. In fact, more time there than any other place.

And then when he left and was passing by the area, he called for the Ephesian elders to meet him in a particular place so that he could exhort them. And while he exhorted them, he talked to them about their role as leaders. These were the elders, overseers, pastors of the church in Ephesus, which was probably quite large at the time. And let me show you what he actually said to them, because this is important:

Acts 20:28-30 (ESV)

Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood. I know that after my departure, fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them.

He said, "*pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, "I want you to note that. The Holy Spirit, he says," to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood. I know that after my departure, fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, (and he tells us why, it's in order) ...to draw away disciples after themselves. (correction them)"*

In other words, they're going to, he says, there's going to be a power grab and some of them are going to use spiritual sorts of things to draw people away. And then he calls these people fierce wolves, although some people are going to see them as legitimate leaders. And they are going to, they're going to claim that they are legitimate leaders, but in fact, they are fierce wolves.

I don't know if you've ever been under a wolf in, and I'm talking figuratively for in a church, but it's a very dangerous situation. And that's one of the reasons why understanding leadership, from the from a Biblical perspective, is so vitally important. And I probably am not going to surprise anybody here today when I tell you that over the years we've really, we Christians generally speaking, okay, we've, we've messed up leadership a lot. We've done a lot of really dumb things.

What I mean by that is that we have instituted leadership designs into the church that were never meant to be part of the church. And we just thought they were a good idea so we brought them in. And one of the leadership designs you'll see in some churches is that they've patterned their leadership after business. They run, they literally run their church like a business. And they look out, they look around at businesses and they say, well, it's a successful business. We're going to use that model and we're going to bring it into the church.

And so they have a business model that includes this organizational structure that works in the business world, but was never intended to be part of the church. So you got presidents, and vice presidents, and committees, and groups and nobody can, you can't pick up a piece of paper off the ground without having committee vote. And it's this burdensome sort of a thing that just, you know, it doesn't work. And then over the years, some churches have tried to mimic some of the best elements of what we have in our government leadership structures.

I got to tell you, and this is particularly here on Independence Day, I like the established government that our forefathers put in place here in the United States of America. I like it. I think it's worthwhile celebrating the Declaration of Independence. Because it is the best thing that I think mankind has ever had

going on the earth apart from a true theocracy. I think democracy is a good form of government. I like it. It grieves me greatly that it's going away. But I like it.

But guys, it doesn't work in the church. And democracy was never meant to be a leadership structure to be injected into the church. It's a wonderful governing sort of a model for a society at large, but it's not biblical from the standpoint of how the local fellowship ought to be run. But these are the things that we've done.

But you see, over the course of this study, I'm really hoping that we're going to not just investigate but understand more about God's model for the church and for leadership. And hopefully we'll come to a greater understanding about why it's best. And why, that shouldn't surprise us, of course, God's way works best. You know, like, whoa, wow, what a revelation, you know.

What we're going to do is we're going to start here. I'm going to begin by reading the first 11 verses of the chapter and then we're going to pray and ask the Lord to open our hearts to them. Okay. So follow along with me in your Bible as I read. It starts off this way:

1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus, by command of God, our Savior and of Christ Jesus, our hope,

2 To Timothy, my true child in the faith:

Grace, mercy, and peace from God, the Father and Christ Jesus, our Lord.

3 As I urged you when I was going to Macedonia, remain in (correction-at) Ephesus so that you may charge certain persons not to teach any different doctrine, 4 nor to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies, which promote speculations rather than the stewardship from God that is by faith. 5 The aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith. 6 Certain persons, by swerving from these, have wandered away into vain discussion, 7 desiring to be teachers of the law, without understanding either what they are saying or the things about which they make confident assertions.

8 Now we know that the law is good, if one uses it lawfully, 9 understanding this, that the law is not laid down for the just but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who strike their fathers and mothers, for murderers, 10 the sexually immoral, men who practice homosexuality, enslavers, liars, perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to

sound doctrine, 11 in accordance with the gospel of the glory of the blessed God with which I have been entrusted."

Stop there if you would, please. Let's pray.

Heavenly Father, as we dive into a study here of first Timothy, we pray that You would open our spiritual eyes and ears that we might gain a heart of understanding from the scripture and to know about what these things are saying. Lord, give us wisdom and insight we pray and help us to apply Your word to our lives for therein, is wisdom. In Jesus name we pray, amen.

This letter begins with all of the components that were typical to an ancient letter. They would start off with the name of the sender. You and I write letters and we put our name at the very end, but they wrote on scrolls. And so it would be very inconvenient to scroll all the, go all the way through the scroll to look at the very end and see who wrote you. And then roll it back up again and then read the letter. And so it was common to put the sender first. And then he would name the recipient. And then following that he would give a brief greeting. And so it is with this letter.

He begins with "*Paul, (the author, followed by his position,) an apostle of Christ Jesus by command of God our Savior and of Christ Jesus our hope.*" And I want you to stop there for just a moment because the very fact that Paul is using his official title here, is I think very important in this letter. And it shows that it's not just a private communication to Timothy.

He and Timothy had worked together, they had long experience and history with one another. And so, for Paul to, I mean, if you wrote a letter to somebody, would you go through and give your title? Paul expected this letter was going to be read to the church at large. But more than that, it is interesting that he calls to their attention here, his ministry as a command of God. Did you catch that? He says an apostle by the command of God, right?

So he's making it clear in this very first verse. He didn't choose this. Paul didn't choose to be an apostle. He never said, I'm going to go to apostolic school, learn how to be an apostle, and then I'm going to travel around and, you know, start churches and even, I might even write some stuff and it'll probably go in the Bible. There was none of that. He says, I received this calling and I was given a command to go forth from the Lord.

And so what he's doing here, he's already speaking volumes. Remember, this is a pastoral letter. This is about leadership. This is about how leadership ought to

be in the body of Christ. You with me? So he's already saying a lot about how leadership ought to be in the body of Christ, because we know that Paul was called to the ministry. I mean, we know how Paul was called to the ministry because it's actually recorded for us in the book of Acts. Let me show you:

Acts 13:1-3 (ESV)

Now there were in the church at Antioch prophets and teachers, Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen a lifelong friend of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off.

Acts chapter 13. It says that there were in the church at Antioch, that was north of Jerusalem, and that's where the church really began to balloon and grow. There were prophets and teachers, and he named some of them, Barnabas, Simeon, who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen a lifelong friend of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul, of course, who is going to be renamed Paul.

But it says, while they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, notice this is God speaking, and this is not an audible thing in the sense of a voice from heaven. This is, he's already made the point that there were prophets there. And so this is a prophetic message. And so what did the Lord say through one of these prophets?

He said, set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them. And then after fasting and prayer, they laid their hands on them, and they sent them off. There it is. There's a Biblical ordination. Isn't that cool? I think it's cool. I mean, it's got so many cool elements.

You'll notice that Paul wasn't hired to be an apostle. He wasn't selected by a majority vote. Who wants Paul to be an apostle, raise your hand. No, I'm not, you know. If we get a two thirds majority, then you're in, Paul. You can be an apostle. None of that happened. It was the Lord who called him. And then the brothers laid hands in recognition of what the Lord did. They didn't do it. Their laying on of hands was a recognition of what God called. You see.

We don't have the ability to ordain people to the ministry. We only recognize those whom God has ordained, you with me. This is a departure from kind of the way, you know, we've begun to do things. But this is why Paul was able to write to Timothy and say, I am called as an apostle by the command of God. And cause we've gotten away from this. And that's why I'm making such a big

deal of it. We've deviated from this in our modern way of selecting leaders. And of course, the reason we've done this is that we're smarter than those people were. And we don't need the Holy spirit anymore. You can tell I'm being facetious, I hope.

But that's kind of what it comes down to. We've got mechanisms in place. We have seminaries. We don't have to, we have to go through all this rigamarole of fasting and praying. We just run them through, run them through seminary. All they got to do is graduate and get a degree and they're good.

Now, let me make something clear before you send me a nasty gram. There is nothing wrong with going to college and getting a degree. Nothing. There's nothing wrong with it at all. In fact, you know, we have supported and helped many kids from our fellowship go to Bible college. But let me just say something, an academic degree or time in Bible college or whatever, and a calling from God are two completely different things. They are not the same.

And I say that because when God calls a man, he goes beyond anything that is related to academic learning. He empowers the man. That's the cool thing. The man that God calls, or the woman that God calls, He also empowers, enables to accomplish what they have been called to do.

And that's something that no school of higher learning can accomplish. They can equip with some academic understanding of, I suppose, what's involved in understanding the Bible and so forth. But they can't empower. The spirit empowers, okay. The Holy Spirit and He's the one we've edged out of the equation. We edged Him out. We basically kind of, and we didn't mean to do it necessarily, but we did it nonetheless. We basically said, this is what it takes, you know.

Verse two, you'll notice he lists the main recipient saying "*to Timothy, my true child in the faith.*" Don't be confused by that. Timothy was not his biological son. But he was kind of rather a sort of spiritual apprentice, I think is maybe, I don't know, the best way to put it. And he, and Paul loved Timothy as if he was his own son, but he called him his child in the faith, not his child in the flesh. Okay. So a child in the faith is somebody you've poured your life into and so forth. And that's what had been going on.

And then comes the greeting: "*grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and (of) Christ Jesus, our Lord.*" And then Paul just dives right into the purpose of the letter in verse three. He says, "*as I urged you, when I was going to Macedonia, remain there at Ephesus so that you may charge certain persons*

not to teach any different doctrine, nor to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies, which promotes speculations rather than the stewardship from God that is by faith."

And you're going to notice here, when Paul is writing to those in pastoral leadership, like Timothy and Titus, he is most concerned with their diligence to maintain the authority and fidelity of sound doctrine. It's huge. It's absolutely huge. Sound doctrine. You can't put too much emphasis on it.

So he left Timothy behind in Ephesus in order that he might use the authority that he had been given, Timothy that is, to command certain men, and we know Timothy was a little bit timid, but to command certain men not to teach anything other than the objective truth of God's word, as it had been revealed by the apostles.

Remember, the New Testament was just being written at this time and had not yet been codified. It was just a bunch of letters that were circulating through the churches. And so they didn't have what you and I have in the sense of, you know, this (holding up the Bible) and we can, they couldn't point to it that way. But they had the apostles teaching and that is what Paul is telling Timothy to command certain men not to deviate from. So he was left there to do that.

You'll notice at the end of verse three, he refers to this false teaching that Timothy is supposed to address as "any different doctrine." Did you notice that? He just calls it different doctrine. What's interesting about that is that's exactly what the Greek word means. It literally just means anything that is different than what had been passed along from the apostles.

So anything that doesn't square with this (holding the Bible) is considered false doctrine. This is the standard by which we determine truth from falsehood. Okay, this is it right here (holding the Bible.) This is how we do it. It's how we make that determination. And believe me, in the first century, man, even though the church was just very young, they had already had plenty of weird, different doctrines swirling around.

Remember what Paul said when he wrote to the believers in Galatia? Let me show you this:

Galatians 1:6 (ESV)

I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel-

He says, I'm astonished that you're so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to what "a different gospel." There's that same Greek word that just means "other than" what you had been taught.

And Paul is talking to people to whom he brought the gospel and says, I'm just shocked that you're so quickly departing to something other than what you learned. Because what we see in this, when Paul talks about different doctrine, what we immediately see is that there is a standard for doctrine. There's a norm, okay. There's a norm for doctrine. It's supposed to be like this (indicating the Bible) and not like that. It's important to remember, and we're told to hold fast to what is true.

I don't know if you remember when Jude wrote his letter. Jude, you remember, was the half-brother of Jesus, son of Mary and Joseph. He wrote this when he started his letter. He said:

Jude 3 (ESV)

Beloved, although I was very eager to write to you about our common salvation, I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints.

He says, you know, I really wanted to write you a letter and talk about other things, but you know, I just, I got to talk to you now about just contending for the faith. In other words, standing for the real, true apostolic doctrine that was given to those men who walked and talked with Jesus. And who were given by revelation, like Paul, this further understanding of what it means to be saved by grace through faith and so forth.

And you'll notice in verse four, he kind of talks about some of the junk that was swirling around in Ephesus. He says not to, tell these guys not to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies which promotes speculations.

Have you ever sat and talked with a bunch of other Christians and they're just, they love you to speculate. What do you think? What do you think would be... What would happen if... And then they tell you, well, I think... and you get into all these weird speculations. And does it help anything? It doesn't help anything. It doesn't solve anything. It doesn't teach you anything. It's just people kind of going, well, I think...

And you know, there's one thing the Lord told me early on in my pastoral ministry is Paul, I don't really care what you think. It's not all that, it's not important what you think. What's important is my truth. So don't tell the people

what you think. You tell them what I said, and that's what's going to change their lives. And that's the important part about this, because these other speculations become just a distraction.

And we're very distracted today as Christians. We talk about (groan) a lot of dumb things that in the final analysis, aren't going to amount to a hill of beans, but we spend a lot of time talking about it. Because again, all those distractions aren't going to change your life. They're not going to help your marriage. Not going to help your family relationships. They're not going to help your heart. They're not going to help you get over areas of sin. They're not going to give you victory over the flesh. All those speculations are just going to take up your time and your energy.

But they're not going to help you live for Jesus and shine your light and be the salt of the earth. It'll just take up your time. And that's what Paul is telling or charging, if you will, Timothy to do there in Ephesus. To rein in all this useless empty talk. That's what vain means. Empty. It's meaningless.

But I want you to notice here that the goal of this exhortation, this charge that Paul is giving to Timothy, is not merely to maintain an unblemished doctrine. Notice three things that Paul cites as the goal in verse five. Look with me at verse five. The aim, he says, or the goal of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and sincere faith.

And so you can see here that the goal is not just to be doctrinally correct. Do you know it's possible to be doctrinally correct and dead at the same time? You can be right and you can be dead right if there isn't love. If there isn't a pure heart. If there isn't a clear conscience, you know. So, that's the goal. Let's look at these on the screen:

The Goal:

- **Love that issues from a pure heart**
- **A good conscience**
- **A sincere faith**

This is Paul's way of talking about Christ likeness. He says, Timothy, here's the deal, I want you to rein in all this useless talk going on because it's not going to help anybody. I want you to get the people back to the Word of God.

You know why? Because here's what's going to come out of it. It's going to come out of, love is going to come out of it from a pure heart. And a good

conscience is going to come out of it. And a sincere faith is going to come out of it, but you're not going to get those things out of that useless talk. So get the people back to doing what they're supposed to be doing and why. False doctrine can't transform your lives. The pure Word of God can and does.

You know, I wish I could share with you just some of the emails I get every single week from people who have found us online and started going through the Bible. And some of these people listen to a message like one or two or three a day. And they're just getting the Word of God. And they will write and just tell me about the most incredible transformations going on in their lives. I mean, transformations: their lives, their marriages, their homes are being transformed.

And it's not me. It's the Word of God. It's the word of, and the Word of God will transform your life. False doctrine will never do it. The Word of God will do it. And that's why we need to stay with it.

Paul outlines the danger of veering away in verses six and seven. He says, certain persons, look with me there, verse six, by swerving from these have wandered away into that vain discussion, like we were talking about, desiring to be teachers of the law and all important and everything without even understanding what they're saying. Or about what they are confidently asserting, and that sort of thing. And this was common among the early church. We've talked about it when we've gone through other books of the Bible. We've talked about it in Romans. We've talked about it in Galatians. We've talked about it in Hebrews. And this was happening.

There were these group of people called the Judaizers, and they would kind of follow Paul around. And after he'd leave a church, they'd go in there, and they'd start telling the people, oh this Christianity thing, this is all good and fine, but you've got to keep the law, you know. And you've got to be circumcised and you've got to keep the Sabbath. And you've got to do the food laws and you've got to do this and that. And they give them all these things and say, you've got to do this in addition to believing and having faith in Jesus Christ.

We actually read about this in the book of Acts. Let me show you this. Acts chapter 15 it says,

Acts 15:1 (ESV)

...some men came down from Judea and were teaching the brothers, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved."

This is what was going on. This was happening in the churches. Precisely the kind of people Paul is telling Timothy to command to no longer teach and preach because they're doing, they're preaching falsely.

So what was it that these misguided teachers didn't understand? Paul explains. Look at verse eight. Now we know that the law is good, he says, if one uses it lawfully, understanding this, that the law is not laid down for the just, but for the lawless and disobedient, for ungodly, and sinners, for the unholy and profane dah dah dah dah dah.

He goes on and he kind of begins to describe the unholiness and so forth. And he says, that's who the law is meant for. And he's making the point here that the law is a good thing, as long as it is not misused. The problem is with those who misuse the law.

Guys, do you know that the law is still being misused? The law is still being misused. Even today. It is misused whenever it is presented as a means of having a right standing before God. Or as a means of being saved, like they were doing as we said, read, there in Acts 15, "you must follow the law of Moses or you can't be saved." That's a misuse of the law.

Anytime you inject the law into an equation for salvation, you are misusing the law because what the legalist didn't understand is that the law was never intended as a means for being saved. God never gave the law for people to be saved. Never. Not even in the Old Testament. Nobody has ever been saved by keeping the law. Ever. That's what Paul wrote in Romans chapter three. Let me show you:

Romans 3:19 (ESV)

For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes (what) the knowledge of sin.

That's how the law is used properly. I sometimes like to read these verses out of like the New Living Translation because it's, I mean, it's a little loosey goosey and I wouldn't recommend it necessarily as a serious study Bible, but sometimes it gives some interesting clarity. Let me show you this in the NLT:

Romans 3:19 (NLT)

For no one can ever be made right with God by doing what the law commands. The law simply shows us how sinful we are.

Yeah, that's correct. It's true. It's exactly right. That is the proper use of the law. And so the people will be made to understand just how sinful they are, and obviously to turn to the Lord.

And I get questions so often from people who are confused about the Christian's relationship from the law. They'll say, Pastor Paul, how do I know that I'm, well, you know what, I actually wrote down a common question that I get, so let me put it on the screen for you. Very common:

Common Question:

"I know that we're not saved by keeping the law, but instead we're saved by grace through faith. But if I love God, shouldn't I strive to obey the law in my life?"

I get that one a lot. And it's an interesting question. And I think it's a valid question. I think it's probably an important question.

And then the person who's writing, it'll usually go on to quote some elements of the law or the Ten Commandments and say, you shall not commit adultery. You should not bear false witness. You shall not steal or something like that. And they'll say, isn't that stuff I'm supposed to strive after in order to please God and that sort of thing.

And honestly, the question, it sounds as if you should say yes when they ask it that way. It sounds like you should respond by saying, well, yes, if you understand that you're not saved through the law, then it's okay to follow the law and keep those elements of the law because it's a good thing and dah dah dah.

But that approach, that approach by a Christian, fails to fully understand what God has done in the life of the believer in order that you might live a "Christ like" life. Because you see, that position puts emphasis on obedience to a command, rather than a yielding of the life to the Spirit, which is what we are called to do.

We are not called to keep a command, we are called to yield to a God, who now lives within us. People, the one who spoke from Mount Sinai and echoed the Ten Commandments down to the hearing Nation of Israel, now lives in you. Do you understand how much more superior that is to have the Law Giver living in you rather than to be following these rules written on stone tablets?

Because as you yield to the work of the Holy Spirit, who, by the way, is not just in there communicating righteousness, He is inside of you, empowering you to live for righteousness. And that's something the law was never intended to do. The law cannot empower you to live for Jesus Christ. It was never meant to.

It is through the Holy Spirit we are empowered, and the Holy Spirit is the Law Giver. He is now communicating His law in your heart, and it's no longer thou shalt not commit adultery. It's, I don't want to displease my Lord. I don't want to do that. He has impacted my will. For it is God who works in you, to will and to act according to His good purpose. It is God who works in you.

It's not you looking at a law engraved on stone and going, I got to do that. It is God who works in you. And He's doing a good work. If we would but yield to that work. Resisting sin, yielding to the Spirit, and saying, God, I can't do this apart from You. I can't live this life You've called me to live. I can't do this. You've got to strengthen me. You've got to be the strength of my life that I might live this life for You.

So, you need to understand that between the command and the power of the indwelling Spirit, there's no comparison. There's no comparison. What you have as a believer is so much more incredibly superior and better than the law. It's beyond compare. It's just totally beyond.

And that's why I tell people, if you're a Christian and you're attempting to live according to the law, even if you know and understand that law can't save you, if you're trying to live according to that law, you're still shortchanging your life. You're shortchanging yourself from living the life that God wants you to live. And it's still a misuse of the law. So don't look to the law, right? Don't look to the law, people, look to the power of the Spirit, the Law Giver who lives in your heart by faith. And who is constantly, daily, communicating the righteousness of God in your heart, amen. Amen.