

# 1 Timothy 1 (Part 2) :12-20 • The Leader in God's Kingdom

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We are picking up our study here in 1 Timothy chapter 1 in verse 12. So we're going to read beginning there down through the end of the chapter. Follow along with me as I read, it says,

*“<sup>12</sup> I thank him who has given me strength, Christ Jesus our Lord, because he judged me faithful, appointing me to his service, <sup>13</sup> though formerly I was a blasphemer, persecutor, and insolent opponent. But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief, <sup>14</sup> and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. <sup>15</sup> The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost. <sup>16</sup> But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life. <sup>17</sup> To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.*

*<sup>18</sup> This charge I entrust to you, Timothy, my child, in accordance with the prophecies previously made about you, that by them you may wage the good warfare, <sup>19</sup> holding faith and a good conscience. By rejecting this, some have made shipwreck of their faith, <sup>20</sup> among whom are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme.”*  
(ESV)

Stop there, let's pray. Heavenly Father, open our hearts. This, your word requires the ministry of your spirit, that it might come alive in our hearts, that it might fill us with insight and understanding, that we might gain a heart of wisdom from it. We rely completely on you, O Lord, and we ask you to do that work that only you can do. And we ask it in the name of Jesus, our Savior, amen. Amen.

We mentioned last week, as we began our study in 1 Timothy, that this letter along with 2 Timothy and Titus, make up what we call the pastoral letters — a group of letters here in the New Testament that focus primarily, I would say on church leadership, although they definitely touch on some other things.

But church leadership is a major element of this in a lot of the things that he is saying. So, you know, we, along those lines, we made the point last week, and I'm not going to belabor it today, but we made the point last week that this is important for all believers to know and understand, regardless of whether you'll ever find yourself in a position of church leadership or not, these are important things to know in order to stay safe.

And in the first half of this first chapter, the Apostle Paul — you'll recall — charged Timothy with silencing certain teachers or false teachers that had made their way into the church in Ephesus. He described those teachers as having swerved from the truth and they began to engage in what he called vain discussions, which is basically empty talk and he said that they were misusing the Mosaic Law.

And now, as we get into the second half of the chapter, almost as if the apostle is contrasting his ministry with that of the false teachers that he is asking Timothy to silence, he begins to speak about his own background and his own calling. And this is important for him to repeat to an individual who is in church leadership. This is very purposeful on his part.

And he begins by saying, if you look with me again in verse 12, “*I thank him who has given me strength, (and then he tells us who ‘him’ is), Christ Jesus our Lord, because he judged me faithful, appointing me to his service...*”

Now, we talked last week specifically about the apostle Paul's calling. In fact, we even — you'll remember — read last week, that passage in Acts where we are told how and when the apostle Paul was called. He was hanging out with a group of believers up in Antioch where the church was growing rapidly. And there, as they were fasting and worshiping and so forth, the Lord spoke prophetically through one of the individuals or could have even been multiple people there.

And he confirmed, the Holy Spirit confirmed through a prophetic message, the calling of Paul and Barnabas, he said, “*Set apart for me, Paul and Barnabas for the ministry to which I've called them.*” (Acts 13:12) And essentially the church laid hands on them and sent them out, which of course is what the word 'apostle' means — sent out, sent forth, and so forth.

But here, you'll notice that Paul starts by thanking God — Jesus specifically — for giving him strength. Did you notice that his first thing is, I thank Him who has given me strength? And, you know, Paul needed a lot of strength for his ministry. It was very taxing, very difficult, very challenging.

We believe that Paul had, or developed, a disease of the eyes at some point during his apostolic ministry. He talks in his letter to the Galatians about how he reminds them, he says, “You'll remember it was because of a sickness that I even came among you.” And then, he begins to talk to them and he says, “And I believe that you would have given me your eyes if you could have.”(Galatians 4:13-15) So he's making reference to this issue of the eyes and it must have made his travel very difficult.

Anybody knows, I don't know about you, but I hate being sick away from home. I mean, it's the worst thing in the world. You know, when you're sick, you want to be in your own home. You want to be in your own bed. You want to be around your own stuff. You know, it's a terrible thing to be on the road.

And in Paul's day, the difficulty of fighting through issues and illnesses and problems of physical infirmity while you're traveling, yeah, it's terrible. And yet, Paul says here, “I thank God who has given me strength.”

And you know, one of the most important things to remember for the one who serves the Lord, is that God is the one who empowers us to serve. He's the one who gives us the strength. He's the one who gives us the ability to do what we do. In other words, whatever He calls you to do something, He's going to empower you to do that thing, whatever it is, whatever your calling is. He will give you the ability to accomplish that calling.

But the second thing that Paul mentions here is equally as important. Look at verse 13 with me, this is very important in your Bible. It says, “...*though formerly I was a blasphemer (he says I was a), persecutor and insolent opponent (he means an opponent of Christianity).*” He says, “*But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief,* <sup>14</sup> *and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.*”

I want you to notice here that Paul speaks of his ministry now that is based upon two things and they are mercy and grace. You'll notice in verse 13, he says, “*I received mercy*” and then in verse 14, he says, “*the grace of our Lord overflowed for me.*” Can I put up on the screen for you just for a moment a reminder of the definitions of those 2 important biblical words:

**Mercy:** Not receiving the judgment we deserve

**Grace:** God's favor toward us that we do not deserve

Mercy means not receiving the judgment we deserve. In other words, Paul is admitting there, I deserved judgment. I deserved wrath, but I didn't get it and that's mercy. But grace is also very important. It is the favor that comes our way, it's God's blessing. It's His richness that comes our way that we do not deserve. So in one case, we don't get what we do deserve. In the other case, we get what we don't deserve. And Paul says his ministry is predicated upon the mercy and the grace of God.

And it's vitally important for, I believe, every leader within the church of our Lord, to remember that God didn't choose them because they were impressive or admirable. Very important. Anybody who ever, in any function of leadership at all, you were not chosen because you were impressive, because God was impressed with you. You were not chosen because you had some admirable traits that God just was dying to use. A calling that comes from the Lord is not something that is deserved.

Do you remember what God says — what Paul talks about in the word — about why we were called? Let me show you on the screen from 1 Corinthians chapter 1. I love this. He says,

**1 Corinthians 1:27 (ESV)**

*... God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong;*

And we have to remember that. And that applies to leaders as much as anyone else. We are not chosen for all the reasons we'd like to think. We were chosen because God wanted to show his glory and his power through us.

And frankly, that's why Paul goes on to say in verse 15, look with me there. He says, *“The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost.”* As the NIV simply says, *“... of whom I am the worst.”*

Guys, this isn't Paul taking on an attitude of false humility or, you know, an inferiority complex or something dumb like that. This is just the simple truth, *“Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, and I'm the worst one.”* And that's Paul just being Paul.

But more than that, this is Paul writing to a leader in the church. Remember, 1 Timothy is a letter written about church leadership. And this is a great reminder to say to any church leader: “Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.”

And none of us deserve this place that we now hold, none of us deserve to be where we are.

Every Christian who's called into Christian service really needs to keep this close to their heart. I don't care what you do, we need to keep this close to our heart because you know what, we've had 2, 000 years to mess it up. And I mean that sincerely.

The idea that leaders in the church should be called names like reverend or most holy something or other or something like that, frankly, is entirely without biblical warrant. Those are exalting names.

Is that what the Bible says church leaders are supposed to be? Exalted? I mean, that's not what I read. That's the opposite of what I read in the Bible about how church leaders are to be seen or to think of themselves. Let me show you this from Matthew chapter 20. I love this passage.

**Matthew 20:25-28 (ESV)**

*But Jesus called them to him and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. It shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave, even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."*

Jesus called his disciples around to him and he said, "*You know (you guys know) that the rulers of the Gentiles love to lord it over their subjects (them), and their great ones exercise authority over them. (But He says), It shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great (and that means to attain some position of, you know, what the world might otherwise consider to be greatness) among you, must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave...*" And then He says, this vitally important thing, "*...even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.*" That is the model for church leadership. That's it right there.

He says, you know how the Gentiles love to be all puffed up and take their authority over others, no, that's not you. That's not the way we do things here in the kingdom of God. It is an attitude of service. It is an attitude of sacrificial service. He says, "*...even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life.*" Now, I can't give my life as a ransom, but I can give my life to Him and to those whom He calls me to serve, and so can you.

And that's the model that we've been, that's what we've been given. And that, Christians, is what you should expect out of your church leaders. That's what you should expect. And that's why this is an important letter for you to study and understand, because otherwise we go into church settings, and we don't know what to expect. We think that maybe leaders are supposed to be exalted. And we call them these exalting names that glorify the man above others. And that's just not, that's not what we're called to be as leaders. We are to sacrifice our lives.

But don't make a mistake of believing that an attitude of sacrificial service is the same thing as frailty or lack of competency. Church leaders ought to be very capable of leading, and they should be strong when the strength is needed in the Lord.

And we're going to see, in fact, an expression of that strength at the end of this chapter. But I want you to notice what Paul goes on to say in verse 16, “*But I received mercy (look at these words) for this reason (and then he explains), that in me, as the foremost (or if you will, the worst sinner), Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience (and again) as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life.*”

Two phrases in there, for this reason and as an example, those are key. And you know what? It's true. The apostle Paul's life and his calling, they're examples that I've used with people. You know, I've actually had people come up to me and tell me that their sins are too terrible for God to forgive.

Have you ever had someone do that? Talking to them about the Lord, and they're like, no, but pastor, you don't know what I've done. You don't know the things I've done. There's no way He can forgive someone like me. You know what I do? I bring up the Apostle Paul because he's such an example of God's overflowing mercy in his life.

And I'll kind of ask him things like, well, let me ask you a question, have you ever persecuted believers and burst into their home and dragged them out of their homes and arrested them and thrown them in prison? No. Well, the apostle Paul did. Let me ask you this, have you ever stood around in agreement while a Christian was brutally murdered in front of your eyes and you were in agreement and you were like, yes, kill him. Have you ever done that? No. Paul did. Paul did. He hated Christians with a malevolent bitterness that I'm sure caused fear in the hearts of some of the people that were believers living back at that time.

You know what's crazy about all those things? God forgave him. And I remind people of that when I'm talking to them. I tell them about what Paul went through, the kind of man he was. And then I say, God forgave him. You still think you can't be forgiven?

Paul is an example, and he says it right here. He says the reason God poured out his mercy on me was as an example of just how incredible He is in that forgiving business. He forgave me, blew him away, blew Paul away at the time. It continues to blow us away frankly, from the standpoint that wow, God is incredible.

And when we finally come to terms, which is how incredible God is, and we start to really lay hold of his goodness and his mercy, you can't help but doing what Paul does in verse 17. Look at verse 17, he says, “*To the king of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be (glory or ) honor (rather) and glory forever and ever. Amen.*” You know what this is guys? This is just a pure outburst of praise. That's what it is. Paul does this from time to time. He did it in the book of Romans too, after the first several chapters and doing one of the most incredible jobs of laying out the gospel in some of the most incredible detail, Paul just bursts into worship and praise at the end of chapter 11. And he's doing it here again, he just can't hold it in because God is too good.

Now, the last few verses that we're going to cover this morning are a charge that Paul gave to Timothy, and there's a warning that goes along with it. And he says this in verse 18, “*This charge, I entrust to you, Timothy, my child, in accordance with the prophecies previously made about you...*” Now, I want to stop there for just a moment, please. And the reason I'm stopping here is because once again in a pastoral letter that is talking about leaders in the church. We are confronted with this idea of the presence of prophecy as it relates to confirming someone's calling into the Christian ministry. Here it is again.

We saw it in Paul's life in Acts. Paul makes reference to Timothy. In fact, he's going to remind him about this again later on in the letter. Let me show you in set in 1 Timothy chapter 4. He's going to go on and he's going to say:

**1 Timothy 4:14 (ESV)**

*Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophecy when the council of elders laid their hands on you.*

And Paul refers to the gift that Timothy was made aware of when the elders laid their hands on him in recognition of his calling as an apostle and a church leader.

And you know, we talked a little bit last week about how we've pretty much mostly abandoned that whole idea of spirit directed confirmation. That's kind of my term for it, spirit directed confirmation. It's a process by which we confirm someone's calling in the Lord. But in the Bible, we see that it was spirit directed. But today we've elevated other things. We talked about it. I won't belabor it. But we've elevated other things instead of listening to the spirit.

Have you ever just sat down and wondered why the ministry of prophecy has so diminished in the body of Christ to the point of almost evaporating completely from the standpoint of certain sectors of the body of Christ? You ever just stopped and thought, think about it, why it is just, it's diminished.

Why don't we rely on the Spirit the way they did in the New Testament Church? Why don't we listen for His voice? Why don't we even expect that He can talk? Somehow God became mute over the years. And we're kind of like, what's up with that? God have nothing more to say? Does God have no more confirming words to say when a man or a woman are called into ministry?

You know, we've talked about it in the past a little bit. We know that it's largely reactionary. And what I mean by that is that, you know, many parts of the body of Christ have seen abuses that have taken place and continue to take place. I hear from Christians all over the world every week. And you know, I know in some sectors of the world, particularly like in Africa, the continent of Africa and elsewhere, you can barely find a church that isn't off the rails in a Pentecostal sort of a way. It's very very very very difficult.

I hear from people all the time who say, we, there is nobody who's teaching through the Bible. It's just craziness, Sunday after Sunday. And I get it. And the church has reacted to that craziness.

There was a wonderful Calvary Chapel pastor who's now with the Lord, actually went to the Lord just recently, a guy brother by the name of Tom Stipe. Some of you may know of Tom. I got a chance to meet him years ago and chat with him. He was in on the early Jesus people revival in the late 60's, early 70's that of course, catapulted the original, you know, Calvary chapel down in Southern California to have at that time, 30,000 members at one point in the late 60's, because of that great revival that was happening, not only on the West coast, but on the East coast and even spilled into some other areas.

But Tom eventually went to go pastor a church in Colorado. He was there for a long time before he went to the Lord. But he wrote a book called Counterfeit



Revival. (**Correction:** Counterfeit Revival was actually written by another author, but Tom Stipe's comments appear in the Forward of that book).

Because Tom watched the genuine revival and the genuineness of what was happening in the Calvary Chapels down there where they were teaching through the Bible. But he said in — that amidst all the excitement for God and for His Word, there was also excitement in the area of prophecy. And you know what? It got out of hand, and he talks about how it got out of hand and this is what we typically kind of react to. But if I could, I'd like to share with you some excerpts from Tom's book, Counterfeit Revival, and I'll put them up on the screen for you. Here's what he writes, he says,

After only a couple of years, the prophets seemed to be speaking to just about everyone on just about everything. Hundreds of... members received the 'gift' of prophecy and began plying their trade among both leaders and parishioners. People began carrying around little notebooks filled with predictions that had been delivered to them by the prophets and seers. They flocked to the prophecy conferences that had begun to spring up everywhere. The notebook crowd would rush forward in hopes of being selected to receive more prophecies to add to their prophetic diaries...

He goes on to say,

Not long after 'prophecy du jour' became the primary source of direction, a trail of devastated believers began to line up outside our pastoral counseling offices. Young people who had been promised teen success and stardom through prophecy were left picking up the pieces of their shattered hopes because God had apparently gone back on His promises. Leaders were deluged by angry church members who had received prophecies about their great ministries they would have but they had been frustrated by local church leaders who failed to recognize and 'facilitate' their 'new anointing.'

And finally, he says,

After a steady diet of the prophetic, some people were rapidly becoming biblically illiterate, choosing a 'dial-a-prophet' style of Christian living rather than studying God's Word. Many were left to continually live from one prophetic 'fix' to the next, their hope always in danger of failing because God's voice was so specific in pronouncement, yet so elusive in fulfillment. Possessing a prophet's phone number was like having a storehouse of treasured guidance. (He says) Little clutched notebooks replaced Bibles as the preferred reading material during church services. - **Tom Stipe, Counterfeit Revival**

Fascinating. That's a very insightful firsthand eyewitness account of what is a rather troubling human tendency on our part, and that is to lose balance. We do that. I don't know why, but we do. We lose balance really easily. We swing to one side or the other. We either focus on the word to the exclusion of prophecy, which frankly, the Bible doesn't support or we go whole hog into prophecy, and we end up neglecting the Word.

And then we get weird, and nobody wants to be around us. And then other parts of the church react to our weirdness, and they go off, and they neglect the Holy Spirit altogether because we've presented an unbiblical picture. Isn't that too bad?

Because you see, the Bible talks about prophecy and right here in 1 Timothy, Paul is reminding Timothy to hold close to his heart the remembrance of what God said prophetically when his ministry calling was confirmed. Hold on to it, Tim!

Why? Why hang on to it? Why is he telling him so, to hang on to this? Look at, we're in the middle of verse 18. Look with me, in your Bible: “...*that by them you may wage the good warfare* (or if you will fight the good fight), <sup>19</sup> *holding faith and a good conscience.*” So you see, he puts 3 things out there and he says, “I want you to hold on to these things because there's, this is going to make a big difference in your life.” Let me put these three things up on the screen.

- Fight the good fight
- Hold on to faith
- Hold on to a good conscience

Fight the good fight. I like that better than "wage the good warfare." I don't know. It's just, I don't know, it just rolls off the tongue easier. Hold on to faith and hold on to a good conscience. And, of course, that phrase, "fight the good fight" reminds us all that the Christian life is a battle.

We have to be reminded of that every so often. Sometimes I think we get this impression like it's not supposed to be rough. It's not supposed to be hard. We're living in a fallen world that is diametrically opposed to everything God cares about in His kingdom. And you are a big royal pain in the backside of every unbeliever. You're a burr under their saddle. You irritate them and you annoy them with your talk about God.

Yeah, life's a battle. So what does he say? Fight the good fight, brother. Keep fighting. Keep fighting, don't give up. Your strength comes from the Lord.

People so often say this to me, but I'm so weary. Oh, I know, I know, believe me, I know. But you got to say, my strength comes from the Lord.

Maybe you're in a battle right now that you're just weary from. You got to just, well, you're in a good place today, just hearing the Word of God, worshiping with the saints, being encouraged, getting prayer, that sort of thing. But as you go out from here, I hope that you'll walk in the strength of the Lord.

It's a battle. It's a battle. It's a battlefield out there and it's getting more serious all the time. The world that we're living in is becoming more seriously opposed to the gospel and believers all the time. Next, he tells him to hold on to faith. And this is critical, hold on to faith. Your faith is your confidence in God.

You remember the shield of faith, what that's all about. You can't put that puppy down. Let me tell you, not when you're in a battle, you cannot lower that shield or you're going to get nailed. He says, "Hold on to faith." You know, I get a lot of questions from people saying, Pastor Paul, how can I increase my faith? And I always take them to Romans 10 and I show them this,

**Romans 10:17 (ESV)**

*...faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.*

You're doing exactly right now what you need to do to get built up in your faith, hearing the Word.

And finally, he says to hold on to a good conscience and a good conscience is something we often don't think about, but it is absolutely essential. And I'll tell you why the enemy preys on a guilty conscience with guilt and condemnation. And oh does he love to use those two little tools to get you to feel like a scumbag and that God could not possibly use you in a million years. And he prays and exploits that guilty conscience.

What is a clear conscience? What is it? What does Paul mean when he says a good conscience? He's just talking about that positive reassuring sort of a sense that I'm not struggling under the conviction of sin that I haven't dealt with. Paul isn't saying it's the reassurance that you haven't sinned. We all sin every day.

We sin in ways we don't even realize. So, a clear conscience or a good conscience isn't this idea of, you know, I haven't sinned well, that's just deception. No, a clear conscience is knowing that I've brought everything God has convicted me about to the throne of grace and it is under the blood of the lamb. That's what a clear conscience comes from. It's that reassurance of

knowing my sins are under the blood of Jesus Christ. I have come to him. I have confessed my sins. And that doesn't mean, you know, I have a perfect recall of every possible sin that I've committed in a 24-hour period. It's a heart condition, you guys.

Confession of sin is more of a heart condition than perfect recall. I get this question a lot from people. What if I forget some area of sin, you know, God tells us to confess our sin, but what if I forget some area? And I always tell them it's not about perfect recall. It's about your heart.

When you come to the Lord with a broken and contrite spirit and you say, "Lord, I know I've messed up and I know I don't even realize some of the places where I've messed up. Please forgive me." You are covered. Because your heart is right. You with me? A guilty conscience comes from knowing that there's some area in my life that God has been convicting me about, but I'm ignoring it. I've just been putting it aside. It's not that bad. It's not that big of a deal. Don't worry about it. We're good. It's all good. The enemy will eat you for lunch.

And so Paul says, "Don't do it. Don't lay these things aside." And then in verse 19, we're kind of in the middle of verse 19, he sounds a rather sobering warning about those who would... Look what he says, middle of verse 19, "*By rejecting this, some have made shipwreck of their faith...*" And guys, can I just tell you something? The apostle Paul knew what a shipwreck looked like. He saw some shipwrecks. He was in a shipwreck in more than one. He knew what a shipwreck looked like, it looked like a beautiful sailing vessel previously that was floating along in the water, but is now a bunch of debris washing up onto the shore. That's what a shipwreck looks like: it's debris.

And what he's saying here is that some people have taken their faith and that's what's left of it. It was a beautiful thing and now it's a bunch of debris. Why? Because they let go. They let go of these things. And the final statement of the chapter names a couple of individuals who he says had become shipwrecked.

Verse 20 says, "...among them (whom) are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme." It's very possible, this Hymenaeus is the same man that's mentioned in 2 Timothy as one who was teaching people that the resurrection had already taken place. But even so, we see here that Paul took a very strong position as a leader, this is what I was talking about.

Leaders are supposed to be gentle, loving, sacrificial, but when the time comes for leadership, they step up. And we see Paul stepping up here. And he says,

“I've handed these men over to Satan to be taught not to blaspheme.” And if you're wondering what is involved in handing someone over to Satan, I'll just tell you right now that the Bible doesn't give us a "how to manual on handing people over to Satan." We can speculate that Paul was referring in part, at least to putting them outside of the fellowship, essentially into the domain of the enemy. But the most important thing is the reason why he was doing it. The reason was that these men needed a serious wake up call. He said “I'm doing it so that they might be taught not to blaspheme.” And his hope here is that these men would repent and turn back to the truth and reject this false stuff that was going on in their hearts.

So you know we end this chapter with some kind of unsavory duties that will sometimes fall upon the church leader. Discipline is never fun. I didn't like it as a father. I don't like it as a pastor, but sometimes it has to be done. Doesn't it? Parents? If you've never been involved in church discipline, most of you have been involved in disciplining a child. It's never fun. It stinks. But it's necessary. So we learn a lot in this section, this last half of chapter one about church leadership.

We're going to stop there. I'm going to have you stand with me. We're going to close in prayer. If you need prayer this morning, for the battle that's going on, and you just need somebody to stand alongside you and say, hey, I'm standing with you. We've got people, we'll have them up front here to pray with you.

You don't have to go to them, you might know somebody else here in the body. Just grab them after the service and say, I'm going through a battle right now and I need somebody to stand with me. Just have them pray with you too. Anybody can pray. We all have the same access to the Father through Jesus Christ, amen. Nobody has any special access to the Father around here. We're all on the same level because our access is through the blood of Jesus Christ.

Thank you, Father, for giving us such a wonderful study in 1 Timothy. We look forward to more of the same and we thank you for your incredible goodness.

Father, we just praise you for your faithfulness to speak words of grace and mercy, and to remind us what real church leadership ought to look like. Help us, Lord, to grow in the things that we've learned, for we ask it in the name of Jesus, our Savior, amen.