

## Statements You Can Trust

### 1 Timothy 1:15

#### Introduction

1. We live in a world full of information that is commonly disseminated without verification. This problem is exacerbated by technological advances, and social media.
  2. There are many things shared which claim profound spiritual truth, but after investigation are exposed as poor attempts at interpretation, or simply dishonest hoaxes.
  3. The first century had its share of mixed information which had to be sorted through – **1 Timothy 6:20-21** – Timothy was exhorted to defend the faith and avoid false knowledge.
  4. One of the ways Paul sought to dispel the misinformation of false teachers in his letters to young evangelists was to preface or follow some significant statements with a stamp of authenticity – **“This is a trustworthy statement” (Titus 3:8, NASB).**
  5. There are five such statements within the epistles to Timothy and Titus which offer powerful insight into the gospel of Christ and its relation to us. These are trustworthy statements **“deserving full acceptance” (1 Timothy 1:15, NASB).**
- I. Christ Jesus Came into the World to Save Sinners (**1 Timothy 1:15**)
    - A. **“for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.” (Luke 19:10)**
      - a. Not to condemn, but to save – **John 3:16-17**
    - B. Paul calls himself chief of sinners – **(v. 15)** – **cf. 1 Corinthians 15:9**
    - C. This was not a cheap grace that Paul is talking about:
      - a. Cost Jesus – **1 Timothy 2:6** – gave self as a ransom.
      - b. Cost Paul – **Galatians 6:14** – crucified to the world.
    - D. The saying is trustworthy and to be accepted, but must be understood:
      - a. Paul is an apostle – ambassador, representative of Christ.
      - b. Paul is devout, just, and blameless – **cf. 1 Thessalonians 2:10**
      - c. **“to save sinners”** – **Romans 7:24-25** – to be delivered from the body of death that is sold under sin and dominated by sin.
    - E. Paul is not just saying Christ did this but provided a pattern for such salvation by saving Paul – **(v. 16)** – the pattern for how Paul was saved is the pattern that is trustworthy.
      - a. **“so that in me as the foremost” (NASB)** – he is a foremost example of what it is for a sinner to be saved.
      - b. Timothy to charge some who were using the law unlawfully to teach sound doctrine instead – **1 Timothy 1:3, 6-7**
      - c. The Law’s use was to turn sinners from their sin – **1 Timothy 1:8-11**
      - d. The pattern of Paul – **1 Timothy 1:12-15**

- i. **(v. 12)** – Paul was **“faithful”** – trustworthy, loyal to God – **cf. Acts 23:1** – good conscience, but mistaken.
  - ii. **(v. 13)** – blasphemer, persecutor, insolent – a part of the list **(vv. 9-11)**.
  - iii. **(v. 14)** – God’s grace appeared (**cf. Titus 2:11**) and led to faith and love (**cf. v. 5** – charging these men is meant to produce these things when they are convicted).
  - iv. **(vv. 15-16)** – through God’s grace, mercy, and longsuffering Paul was granted repentance, and through Christ’s ransom was rescued from sin.
- II. Godliness is Profitable for All Things (**1 Timothy 4:8-9**)
  - A. The statement is disputed – does **verse 9** refer to what precedes it or what follows?
    - a. Either way the two verses preceding and following the statement of trustworthiness are intimately related, and overlap.
  - B. Paul encourages Timothy to avoid the very thing those he was told to charge were embracing – **1 Timothy 1:3-4; 4:6-7**
    - a. They were preoccupied with genealogical records, and fabricated stories weaved through them.
    - b. This took them away from the substance of truth.
    - c. Godliness – *eusebeia* – “from *eu*, “well,” and *sebomai*, “to be devout,” denotes that piety which, characterized by a Godward attitude, does that which is well-pleasing to Him.” (VINE)
      - i. “piety; specially, the gospel scheme” (STRONG) – **1 Timothy 3:16** – metonymy of the effect – godliness is used as a reference to the gospel because it is the effect that the gospel causes.
      - ii. Paul is telling him to exercise himself toward godliness by giving great attention to the gospel (**v. 16**) instead of fables that cause problems (**cf. 1:4**).
  - C. Paul extends the metaphor of physical exercise to emphasize the importance and supremacy of godliness – **1 Timothy 4:8**
    - a. Not likely saying that godliness benefits us in physical ways (like exercise does) as well as spiritually eternal ways – though this is true.
    - b. **“life that now is and of that which is to come”** – makes it seem as though the contrast is life on earth and life in heaven.
    - c. **“it holds promise of life both for the present and for the future.” (Hendriksen)**
      - i. I.e. the **“life”** is the promise, not the location of promise.

- ii. Now – presently.
  - iii. Is to come – future.
  - iv. **“profits a little”** – *oligos* – “little, small, few...(A) of number **(B) of time** (C) of degree or intensity” (THAYER)
  - v. **“For bodily exercise profits for a short time, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of life at this time and the time coming.”**
- d. The contrast is between momentary profit and eternal profit – godliness promises life that is eternal and is enjoyed now and forever.
- i. The all of man – **Ecclesiastes 12:13-14**
  - ii. The abundant life – **John 10:10**
  - iii. What abides – **1 John 2:17**
  - iv. Everlasting life that will not be lost – **John 6:39-40**
  - v. Not highlighting physical advantage to godliness as a bonus, but showing the supremacy of the spiritual that is worth even sacrificing the physical – **1 Timothy 4:10**
- III. Believers Should be Careful to Maintain Good Works (**Titus 3:8**)
- A. **“that”** – *hina* – in order that.
- a. It is suggested that the **“faithful saying”** is **verses 4-7**, and it is stated and affirmed in order to provoke a devotion to good works.
  - b. **1 Timothy 1:15** (Christ came to save sinners) should lead us to **1 Timothy 4:8** (exercising self toward godliness), which is manifested in concrete activity of **Titus 3:8** (being careful to maintain good works).
  - c. **“professing godliness, with good works.” (1 Timothy 2:10)** – godliness that results in life is not simply a claim, but an active way of life.
- B. **Titus 3:7** – being heirs of eternal life directly connects with the life possessed in Christ presently – **“having promise of life at this time”**
- a. Therefore, it is important to **“be careful to maintain good works.”**
  - b. **1 Timothy 6:17-19** – trust in God manifested in using possessions in spiritual work, laying up for that inheritance – **“we labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men” (1 Timothy 4:10).**
- C. This makes the importance of maintaining good works evident because it is not only the condition of eternal life, but the content of eternal life – **1 John 1:1-2; 2:3-6; 3:2-3** – **“And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.” (John 17:3)**
- a. To minimize our engagement in **“good works”** is to minimize eternal (spiritual) life itself.

- b. **“Good works”** from obedient faith are the substance of our fellowship with God, which is our spiritual life.
- IV. Aspiring to the Office of Overseer is to Desire a Good Work (**1 Timothy 3:1**)
- A. **“It is a trustworthy statement: if any man aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires to do.” (NASB)**
    - a. **1 Peter 5:2, 4** – serving as overseers, **“Chief Shepherd”**
    - b. **“the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls” (1 Peter 2:25).**
    - c. The work of shepherds in local churches corresponds to His work – overseeing/shepherding souls.
    - d. **Hebrews 13:17** – **“they watch out for your souls”**
    - e. **“IT IS A FINE WORK HE DESIRES TO DO”**
      - i. Why they went about appointing them in every church (**cf. Acts 14:23**).
  - B. Christ died to save sinners through His convicting gospel (**1 Timothy 1:15**), they exercise toward a godliness that is active in the good works of fellowship with God that comprises spiritual life NOW and in ETERNITY (**1 Timothy 4:8-9; Titus 3:8**), and elders/shepherds/overseers look out for those redeemed, and seeking to engage in that life to secure it for eternity – THANK GOD FOR HIS DESIGN AND PATTERN!
  - C. The truth accords with godliness, giving hope of eternal life that is manifested through His word proclaimed – **Titus 1:1-3**
  - D. Elders provide what is lacking – **Titus 1:5, 9, 13-14** – to protect souls from ungodly influence, and to convict the ungodly influencers to turn back to the way of life.
    - a. **Titus 2:1** – the sound doctrine which accords with godliness and gives hope of eternal life is that which leads God’s children to live like Him in the world (**vv. 11-14**).
  - E. **“not by compulsion but willingly” (1 Peter 5:2) – cf. Philemon 8-16** – especially **verse 14**
    - a. “‘Compulsion’ or constraint is a feeling that drives a reluctant draftee who is doing an irksome task because he feels he cannot escape it.” (Reese, 148)
    - b. This does not mean they feel no pressure to do it from the compelling force of the need expressed in the gospel.
    - c. **“the Holy Spirit has made you overseers” (Acts 20:28)** – Overseers are men who have died to themselves because Christ died for them. They are those who are constrained by the love of Christ, and live no longer for themselves, but for Christ who died for them to the extent that the very

will and work of Christ, the Shepherd and Overseer of souls, has so shaped their will and character that they cannot help but to devote themselves to such service in imitation of their Lord.

- d. Though one cannot force another to serve, does not the parable of the talents apply? (cf. **Matthew 25:14-30**)

V. He Remains Faithful (**2 Timothy 2:11-13**)

A. Context

- a. Paul has preached the gospel faithfully, and is in prison – **2 Timothy 1:8; 2:9**
  - i. His life is nearing its end – **2 Timothy 4:6**
- b. Paul is encouraging Timothy to be faithful in his ministry despite the immense suffering he could face – **2 Timothy 1:6-8; 2:1-7** – use your ability to preach, be willing to suffer, be strong, endure, focus, be faithful, give yourself to the word.
- c. Remember the resurrection power of the gospel – **2 Timothy 2:8-10** – Christ secured victory, the power of the gospel is undefeated, suffering is worth getting the gospel to those in need.
- d. With this, Paul reminds Timothy of what was likely a known set of statements among brethren, and which he confirms as trustworthy.

B. ***“For if we died with Him, We shall also live with Him.”***

- a. Almost exactly – **Romans 6:8**
- b. The death with Christ occurs in baptism – **Romans 6:3-4** – uniting with Christ’s cleansing death, raised to new life.
  - i. **(vv. 5-7)** – Baptism was the point at which our old man of sin died, and was put away, and our new life began – (**cf. Ephesians 2:6** – raised to sit in the heavenly places) – living separate from sin.
  - ii. **(vv. 8-11)** – Christ only came on account of sin once, and now lives forever never to die again – we should cease from sin and live for God with Him.
  - iii. **(vv. 12-14)** – this means faithfulness in the body to the Lord’s will – righteousness.
- c. In conflict, Timothy needed to remember that living with and for Christ, preaching His gospel, and walking in His will is a privilege! – To abandon it is to abandon the blessing that began at His baptism.

C. ***“If we endure, We shall also reign with Him.”***

- a. The life with Christ involves fellowship with His suffering – **Philippians 3:10-11** – in that fellowship is the hope of more, fellowship with His resurrection in the ultimate sense.

- b. **Romans 8:16-17** – we are heirs if we suffer with Him.
  - i. Glory awaits – **Romans 8:19, 21, 30**
  - ii. But we must persevere – **Romans 8:24-25**
- c. Endurance solidifies our hope – **Romans 5:3-5** – a reign with Him is a certainty if we endure the suffering.
- D. **“If we deny Him, He also will deny us.”**
  - a. On another occasion, the Lord Himself emphasized the need for faithful endurance during persecution – **Matthew 10:16, 22**
  - b. This included the need to confess Him before men – **Matthew 10:32-33** – failure to do this would result in His denial of us.
    - i. Not merely a verbal confession – **Matthew 7:21-23** – faithfulness, confession of life.
  - c. Paul would then warn Timothy of those who deny Him, and encourage his faithfulness – **2 Timothy 2:14-21**
- E. **“If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself.”**
  - a. Many use this to suggest that His promise of salvation cannot be missed through our shortcoming. This is not the context.
  - b. **“He also will deny us”** – is followed with an explanation.
    - i. Our denial of Him is the opposite of a confession of Him – a confession is faithfulness.
    - ii. The reason for His denial of us if we are faithless and deny Him is because He is true to His word, nature, and character, and cannot deny Himself!
  - c. **Romans 3:3-4** – if an individual is denied fellowship with God in eternity, it is not due to His unfaithfulness, but their unfaithfulness!
  - d. This encourages the faithful – **2 Timothy 2:19** – He knows who are His.
    - i. **2 Timothy 4:8** – He will give the crown to all who love Him, and are faithful to Him!

### Conclusion

1. In a world full of information, it is hard to always know what to trust. We can trust the gospel!
2. The statements of the Gospel are trustworthy, and deserve our full acceptance, attention, and application.
3. Will you trust these statements with your life?