

FIRST



TIMOTHY

Chapter 1

Background

Following Paul's release (after Acts 28), Timothy again traveled with him but eventually stayed at Ephesus where Paul placed him in leadership of the Church to deal with the problems there, while Paul went on to Macedonia.

Paul typically uses the Greco-Roman format for letters from his era. This standardized format utilizes the following order to open a letter:

- It begins with the identification of the author
- It then addresses and identifies the recipient
- Then comes a greeting or salutation

1 Timothy 1:1 (NIV)

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

Apostle

The word itself means “one sent as a messenger.” When applied to the twelve apostles, it means that they were chosen by Jesus and sent into the world in his name and bearing his message.

Please turn to:

1 Corinthians 12: 27–30

1 Corinthians 12: 27–28 (NIV)

Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. And God has placed in the church first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, of helping, of guidance, and of different kinds of tongues.

Please turn to:
Ephesians 4: 11-13

Ephesians 4: 11-13 (NIV)

So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up

Ephesians 4: 11-13 (NIV)

until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

Please turn to:
Hebrews 3: 1

Hebrews 3: 1 (NIV)

Therefore, holy brothers and sisters, who share in the heavenly calling, fix your thoughts on Jesus, **whom we acknowledge as our apostle and high priest.**

Apostle

When applied to Jesus, it means that he was sent from the Father to be the Savior of the world.

1 Timothy 1:1 (NIV)

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

1 Timothy 1:2 (NIV)

To Timothy my true son in
the faith:

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

Question

What point is Paul making by calling Timothy his true son in the faith?

Question

How does this impact all of us today who are known as children of God?

Question

What typically happens to a Church when a influential, godly leader dies or from generation to generation?

Question

Would you say the churches in our nation have become more or less rooted in sound doctrine over the last 100 years?

Question

What are some changes
you have noticed?

1 Timothy 1:3 (NIV)

As I urged you when I went into Macedonia, **stay there in Ephesus** so that you may command certain people not to teach false doctrines any longer

Ephesus

A large modern costal city during the first century A.D. that was full of wealth, knowledge and pleasure.

Ephesus itself was a large, multi-ethnic center of trade, commerce and culture.

Ephesus

As the capital city of the Roman province of Asia, Ephesus had approximately a quarter of a million people and was an important seaport. It would be comparable to Los Angeles today.

Ephesus

Ephesus had lighted streets and a sophisticated water system, likely the most advanced aqueduct systems in the ancient world, with four aqueducts of various sizes to supply different areas of the city.

Ephesus

The following is a description of the temple of artemis in Ephesus as described by Antipater of Sidon, who compiled a list of the Seven Wonders:

Ephesus

“I have set eyes on the wall of lofty Babylon on which is a road for chariots, and the statue of Zeus by the Alpheus, and the hanging gardens, and the colossus of the Sun, and the huge labour of the high pyramids, and the vast tomb of Mausolus; but when I saw the house of Artemis that mounted to the clouds, those other marvels lost their brilliancy, and I said, 'Lo, apart from Olympus, the Sun never looked on aught (anything) so grand.'”
(Antipater, Greek Anthology [IX.58])













Culture in Ephesus

Ephesus was the center of environmentalism, witchcraft, paganism, sexual immorality, an excessive love of prosperity, and anti-Christian fervor.

Ephesus is like walking onto a 21st century college campus in America.

Morality in Ephesus

Some historians list it as the most immoral city of Asia Minor. Male and female roles were

interchanged. There were ritualistic orgies which included child molestation and bestiality.

Homosexuality and every other sexual perversion were common.

Morality in Ephesus

One philosopher, commenting on the moral climate in Ephesus, wrote that the inhabitants of the city were fit only to be drowned. He said that the reason he could never smile or laugh was because he lived amidst such terrible uncleanness.

Morality in Ephesus

In another example of the morality in Ephesus the historian Philostratus claims that Apollonius of Tyana found the city of Ephesus full of homosexuals in the second half of the first century A.D., which is Paul's era.

Morality in Ephesus

Paul wanted to create a sense of modesty. He mentioned dress, but the issue was much broader than that. It is hard for us to imagine how little modesty there actually was in Ephesus.

Morality in Ephesus

Public bathrooms, for example, gave new levels of meaning to the word public. The bathrooms were gender neutral where people of both genders and of all ages sat or stood in long rows with almost no space between the people when using the bathroom.

Morality in Ephesus

The baths in Ephesus were gender neutral. There would be a series of rooms with different temperatures of water. Each of the rooms would often be full of people of all sexes and ages who were all naked.

The people of Ephesus accepted this as normal.







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Religion in Ephesus

Ephesus was pluralistic in every way. Many ethnic and cultural backgrounds were represented, and religious pluralism was entrenched and embraced.

Religion in Ephesus

Moral beliefs, like religious ones, were diverse, and considerable moral depravity was accepted, perhaps considerably more so than in our modern American culture.

Religious pluralism is an attitude or policy regarding the diversity of religious belief systems co-existing in society and is represented by the following...

- One's religion is not the sole and exclusive source of truth.
- Two or more religions with mutually exclusive truth claims are equally valid. This is considered religious tolerance.
- The promotion of some level of unity, cooperation, and improved understanding between different religions.
- Pluralism maintains religious diversity and inclusion.

Watch and listen carefully to the next video which contains several clips of the leader of a nation speaking in public as a representative of that nation about the religious culture of the nation.

Questions

If you knew nothing about the United States of America, after watching the President speaking would you consider the nation pluralistic or monotheistic in regards to religion?

What would you consider the faith of the nation?

Watch and listen carefully
to the next two videos
which contains clips of
the leader of a nation
speaking in public as a
representative of that
nation.

Discussion Question

If you knew nothing about the United States of America, after watching the President speaking in the previous video:

would you consider the nation pluralistic or monotheistic in regards to religion?

What would you consider the faith of the nation?

In Ephesus the wide-ranging social acceptance of all beliefs was maintained in the name of tolerance. As a result, anyone claiming to have “the” right religion, “the” only god, and “the” ultimate truth was considered intolerant and bound to face acute rejection, social pressure and persecution.

As a result the people of the city of Ephesus were tolerant of all forms of sexuality and religion but were intolerant of Christians.

Ignatius called Ephesus the
“Highway of the Martyrs.”

Ignatius was a student of John
the Apostle. He wrote a series
of letters which have been
preserved as an example of very
early Christian theology.

According to Christian tradition
he met his martyrdom by being
fed to wild beasts.

Please turn to:
Revelation 2: 1-6

Message to the Seven Churches



A topographical map of the region of Asia Minor (modern-day Turkey) showing the locations of the Seven Churches. A light-colored line traces a path connecting the seven cities: Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodicea, Ephesus, and Smyrna. The map is rendered in shades of brown and tan, with a blue-tinted area in the upper right corner.

Pergamum • Thyatira • Sardis • Philadelphia • Laodicea • Ephesus • Smyrna

Chapter 2: Verses 1-3

“To the angel of the church in
Ephesus write:

These are the words of him
who holds the seven stars in
his right hand and walks
among the seven golden
lampstands

**and walks among the seven golden
lampstands**

This is the Hebrew phrase for
moving in the Churches.

Also note that in all instances
Jesus Knows what is going
on. He sees everything!

Question

What does it mean today
when someone says Jesus
is moving in a Church?

Revelation 2: 1-3

I know your deeds, your hard work and your perseverance. I know that you cannot tolerate wicked people, that you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them false. You have persevered and have endured hardships for my name, and have not grown weary.

you cannot tolerate wicked people

What is Jesus commending
His Church for doing?

I don't think it is just a
coincidence that the same
word (wicked) used here is
also used in Genesis 19:4-8.

Question

What does it mean to “*not tolerate*”?

you cannot tolerate wicked people

We must understand the importance of this today.

Jesus is telling us the Church is to be intolerant.

It is vital for Churches to understand this as this is extremely counter-culture today.

Chapter 2: 1-3

I know your deeds, your hard work and your perseverance. I know that you cannot tolerate wicked people, that you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them false. You have persevered and have endured hardships for my name, and have not grown weary.

Question

How does a Church

“test those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them false”?

Revelation 2: 4-6

Yet I hold this against you: You have **forsaken the love you had at first.**

Consider how far you have fallen! Repent and **do the things you did at first.** **If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place.** But you have this in your favor: **You hate the practices of the Nicolaitans,** which I also hate.

Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken the love you had at first

What is Jesus saying that the Church in Ephesus is guilty of here?

I think the Church in Ephesus was on fire for God when men like Paul were around, but now has become an organization or religion and not a church. It is doing things out of habit and tradition without spending time with Christ.

This church has lost the relationship with Christ. The members of this church just go to church on Sundays, because that is what they are supposed to do to fulfill their religious duties.

**Consider how far you have fallen! Repent
and do the things you did at first**

I believe Jesus is saying that they did have a loving relationship with him at one time and they need to return to the time when they first met Him and were excited about having a relationship with Him, were hungering for his Word and wanting to learn His Truths.

Question

How do you think they
can do this?

**I will come to you and remove your
lampstand from its place.**

What does this mean?

**I will come to you and remove your
lampstand from its place.**

The Church will be working on their own power only and Jesus will no longer be moving in their Church.

Note: Jesus is not removing their star from his hand, only the lampstand.

**But you have this in your favor: You
hate the practices of the
Nicolaitans, which I also hate.**

What does this mean?

Nicolaitans

Roman church historian Eusebius writes that Nicolas' fundamental doctrine appears to have been "the flesh must be treated with contempt."

Nicolaitans

Over the years, however, this teaching took on a more Gnostic spin: Since the flesh is unimportant, even contemptible, what one does in the flesh is of no consequence.

Nicolaitans

Spiritual life, growth and ultimately salvation occur in the soul, and since God is spirit, He has no regard for the flesh. Therefore Nicolaitans believed that it does not matter if one satisfies the flesh's desires.

Nicolaitans

According to the writings of the Early Church leaders, the Nicolaitans were also so immersed in occultism, Judaism, and Christianity that they had no problem intermingling these belief systems in various concoctions with Christianity.

Nicolaitans

They saw no reason why believers couldn't continue to practice their sexually immoral behavior associated with these beliefs.

Clement of Alexander wrote the following about the Nicolaitans:

“They abandoned themselves to pleasure like goats, leading a life of self-indulgence.”

Nicolaitans

I believe the Nicolaitans can be viewed today as churches who claim to be Christian but have become corrupted by society or other religions to accept or practice ungodly behavior.

1 Timothy 1:3 (NIV)

As I urged you when I went into Macedonia, stay there in Ephesus so that you may command certain people not to teach false doctrines any longer

Question

Do we have the same
problem today?

1 Timothy 1:4 (NIV)

or to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies. **Such things promote controversial speculations** rather than advancing God's work—which is by faith.

Question

Do we have the same
problem today?

Honi and his Magic Circle



BY Phillis Gershator
PICTURES BY Shay Rieger

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The previous photo was from a True Woman conference where the women attending the conference were sent home with little bags containing chalk so that they could immediately begin drawing prayer circles at home and perhaps at their churches.

1 Timothy 1:4 (NIV)

or to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies. Such things promote controversial speculations **rather than** **advancing God's work—** **which is by faith.**

Question

Who are we relying on for power when we allow faith to advance God's work?