

Listen, watch, or read the sermon on the website if you missed it. Turn to the back for an outline of the sermon.

Ice Breaker: Share one way you have seen and acknowledged the mercy of God this week.

1. Read 1 Tim 1:1-2 together.
  1. How does God as our Savior and Christ as our hope correlate to the unique greeting the Paul gives in saying “Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord”?
  2. We may more readily imagine Paul using the word “faith” in place of “mercy” in this description of the gospel (cf. Eph 2:8). How do mercy and faith relate here in Paul’s use?
    1. Imagine being one of the few Aaronic high priests in Israel’s history and having to enter the holy of holies to make atonement for the nation of Israel. What would be your hope of surviving this encounter with God? Consider the name of the object that separated the priest from the tablets of the law as you ponder this.
2. Read verses 3-4 together. Here Paul give an exhortation to guard the teaching and makes some reference also to guarding the reaction or response or what people devote themselves to as he describes some that focused on what he calls myths and endless genealogies.
  1. If God is the authorizing source of the gospel, and the apostles and prophets are the authorized messengers, and trust in the mercy of God in Christ is the authorized message, then what is our role in receiving this message? In other words, what does Paul call us to do with the authorized message that God has delivered to us?
  2. What are ways that we can steward the true gospel with our voices and with our lives? Give examples from your life of how you can responsibly show the true gospel to others...one that is all of mercy.
3. Read verses 5-7 together. Paul defines the goal of his exhortation to be that people would love with a right kind of love that he describes here.
  1. From your experience, how has the message of free mercy in Christ resulted in your loving God and others with the sort of love that Paul describes?
4. Read verses 8-11 together. Paul tells us that the law is good and Jesus told us that he would not get rid of the law but that he would fulfill it.
  1. What does Paul say the law is good for? Recall the example of how the rich young man in Mark 10 used the law. Is there a clue in what Jesus says to the rich young man in Mark 10:18?
  2. Are there ways in your life that you have mistakenly used the law (moral expectations of God) in an unlawful way? Share if you are willing.
5. Read verses 12-17 together. Paul identifies himself with sinners here and he paints a picture of his demerit and in the end he rejoices in the mercy of God in Christ.
  1. Using a hymnal or by opening this link (<https://youtu.be/0aGJwAENQuk>), take a few minutes to praise God for his mercy in the blood of Jesus by singing “Nothing but the Blood of Jesus” together.

**Sermon Idea:** “Declare the true gospel, in doctrine and practice, which is righteousness in Christ alone by the mercy of God and not by any merit of man, which rightly results in love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.”

- I. There is an authorizing source, an authorized messenger, and an authorized message that defines the true gospel. (vv1-2)
  - A. The message is of salvation by grace, through mercy, and for peace, which requires our hope to be in Christ alone.
- II. Paul’s exhortation to guard the gospel. (vv3-4)
  - A. We need to guard our beliefs.
  - B. We need to guard our response.
- III. The aim is that understanding the right gospel and having a right response would lead us to have...(vv5-11)
  - A. The right kind of love, which comes from...(vv5-7)
    - 1. Proper motives (pure heart)
    - 2. Proper actions (good conscience)
    - 3. Proper object of trust (Sincere faith)
  - B. The right use of the law, resulting in...(vv8-11)
    - 1. Our surrendering to mercy, rather than fighting for justice.
    - 2. Our declaring the righteousness of Christ, rather than my own.
- IV. The gospel is all of mercy or it is blasphemy and a denial of the very glory of God. (vv12-20)
  - A. Genuine faith exalts the King of the ages.