



# First Timothy

## Paul's Prayer

**Thanks For The Grace**

**I Timothy 1:12-17**

**Lesson Four**

*Mission Arlington/Mission Metroplex Curriculum*



# First Timothy

## A Study of the First Letter of the Apostle Paul to His Son in the Faith

### Paul's Prayer

As we saw last time, God condemns all kind of sin through the Law. Paul was demonstrating how bad people can become, and encouraging Timothy not to be like the false teachers, mentioned in verse seven. Paul inserts a prayer here. He picks up on his teaching in verse 18.

Read I Timothy 1:12-17.

This is Paul's prayer of thanksgiving. Notice in this case, he was not praying for others, he was thanking God for what God had done for him...for Paul.

He is thankful to Christ Jesus our Lord for several things:

1. For strength. (V. 12) Imagine the strength of character and physical strength necessary for Paul to do all the things he had to do. The travel across the Roman Empire, the times he had to do without the necessities of life, the beatings and time spent in jail, as well as what it took to teach and preach constantly. (For a more complete list of Paul's suffering, see II Corinthians 11:23-28) Only God could give him strength to deal with all that.
2. For considering him faithful. (V. 12) God trusted Paul. He trusted him with the message of the Gospel and with the missionary task that took him from Jerusalem to Spain. God trusted him to put into words the essential beliefs that Christians hold true to this day.
3. For appointing him to God's service. (V. 12) Paul realized what an honor it was for his Lord to trust him with the message of Jesus. He realized that it was a serious appointment.
4. For mercy. (V. 13) Even though Paul was a sinner, of the worst kind, God loved him and had mercy on him. Paul was a blasphemer. He denied that Jesus was the Messiah. He rejected salvation in Christ. He was a persecutor and he was a violent man. He tried to kill those who believed. That challenged Paul to be even more determined to share God's love.
5. For grace. (V. 14) He says that God poured out His grace abundantly. It's the picture of a great waterfall that sends water rushing down on whatever is below. God's grace (His undeserved goodness) is given in any amount necessary to do what God wants to do.
6. For faith. (V. 14) This is faith available to those who trust Jesus. Paul knew that he could never work up enough faith. He had to have help. So the faith with which he trusted Jesus was also a gift from Jesus. Some believe that he is referring here to those who worked with him and cared for him. He saw them as living out the faith of Christ in his life.
7. For love. (V. 14) Paul was certain of the love that Jesus poured out on him. We read so much about God's love in Paul's letters. He was passionate about the love of God which

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had come into his life and totally changed him. For understanding of what love meant to Paul, read I Corinthians 13. But also think of those who showed God's love to Paul. Think of Ananias, who gave Paul back his sight and who tutored him. Think of Barnabas who defended Paul with the Christians in Jerusalem and who led Paul into missionary ministry. Think of his dear friend Luke, the physician, who traveled with him and even stayed with him in prison. Think of the person to whom he was writing this letter, Timothy, his son in the ministry.

8. For unlimited patience. (V. 16) Paul said here that he was the worst of sinners. Yet Jesus showed patience that had no limits. He lived and died on this earth to be an example to us of patience. Paul says we can believe in that patience.

Verse thirteen is better understood when we remember that Paul's religious background had taught him that a sacrifice would satisfy God if you sinned. God would no longer be angry with you and you would have a good relationship with Him once again. The sacrifice was good for sins committed without knowing you were sinning. However, even the best sacrifice could not satisfy God when a person sinned on purpose. Also, when you offered your sacrifice you had to be truly sorry, or the sacrifice was no good. The value of the sacrifice depended on the condition of your heart. If your heart wasn't in it, then the sacrifice was a waste of time.

With that background, Paul is telling Timothy that he opposed Christ and persecuted Christians before he knew Jesus personally...before he became convinced of Christ's love. He wants Timothy, and anyone else who read this letter, to know that his sins of blasphemy and persecution were not on purpose. He needed the "grace of our Lord poured out on me abundantly, along with faith and love that are in Christ Jesus." (V. 14)

Paul's sin was not something that he tried to forget or ignore. He reminded himself constantly of where he had been, and who delivered him from that terrible past.

Remembering that caused Paul to break out in a beautiful benediction. Let's repeat it together: "Now to the King, eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen." (V. 17)

(Others who showed love to Paul: Priscilla and Aquila, Philippian Jailer, Silas, John Mark, Onesimus, etc.)

\*Underlined words and phrases are to be used in completing the *Student Worksheet*.

**Lesson Goal:** To teach students the kind of things for which Paul was thankful.

**Scripture Memory:** "Now to the King, eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen." I Timothy 1:17

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## Student Worksheet—Following Through

### The Law Is Good

Eight things for which Paul is thankful:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.

Who are the four people mentioned who showed God's love to Paul?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Can you think of others who showed God's love to Paul?

Paul's sin was not something that he tried to \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_.

Remembering that God's love saved Paul from his previous sinful life caused Paul to break out in a beautiful benediction: "**Now to the King, eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.**" I Timothy 1:17)

#### How to begin a Personal Relationship with God:

First, believe that the God of the Bible is the true God.

Second, believe that Jesus, God's Son, was sent to earth to die so that you can have a relationship with God.

Third, ask God to forgive your sins in Jesus' name. Jesus' death on the cross paid the price of every sin you commit.