

## **THE EFFORT IN EPHESUS (1 Timothy 1:3-7)**

### **1. The charge (vs. 3-4a).**

1. It seems that when Paul left Ephesus due to the strife caused by Alexander the silversmith, he left Timothy to continue the work.
  1. The words “abide still” literally means “stay on” according to Hendrickson.
  2. Timothy must not have been the point of contention that Paul was with Alexander.
2. While in Ephesus Timothy was charged, given an order, by Paul to give an order to those who were teaching false doctrine.
  1. The charge was to teach nothing but pure doctrine.
  2. The Greek word translated “teach no other doctrine” has the prefix “hetero” meaning different.
  3. We use the term heterosexual to mean someone who is with a person of the different sex.
  4. In this case, the one doing the teaching is charged with not teaching another doctrine, only the one he had been previously taught.
3. The thesis of 1 Timothy states that the church is the pillar and ground of the truth.
  1. It cannot be such if the truth is not preached.
  2. The church is based on the doctrine of Christ and if the doctrine is changed the church fails to live up to its calling.
  3. If another doctrine is preached then the church becomes something other than the church belonging to Christ.
4. While preaching the gospel only, some things were to be avoided, or no regard given to them.
  1. Fables, which is the word from which we get “myth,” were to be avoided.
    1. The point of these fables was to deceive.
    2. This probably was a reference to Greek teaching, maybe even Gnosticism.
    3. Their teaching about the various emanations between God and men would come under this.
  2. The endless genealogies carries the idea of busying oneself about traditions of the past, based upon the slightest historical hints.
    1. The Jewish teachers did this.
    2. Any little thing that could bring one to some subject about Judaism was grabbed by them.
    3. They focused on little matters and kept the attention of people away from the gospel.

### **2. The challenge (vs. 4b-5).**

1. The challenge involved in avoiding these things was to edify people and not get involved in questions that had no good answers.

1. These fables and genealogies brought about nothings but disputes, which is the meaning of questions.
2. They served no good purpose, but only caused problems in the congregation.
3. They took the focus off the gospel and onto the questions.
2. Godly edifying takes place when faith is built.
  1. Faith is built when God's word is preached.
  2. Faith building is stunted when these type questions cause useless debate, or when past traditions that aren't biblical or necessary are constantly discussed.
3. Paul then gives us some insight into knowing when godly edifying is taking place.
  1. Love is produced.
    1. This would be a love for truth.
    2. It would also be a love for brethren and souls.
  2. Pure hearts are created and maintained.
    1. Obeying the gospel creates pure hearts.
    2. Pure hearts are maintained by faithfully following God's word and nothing else.
  3. Clear and good consciences are developed.
    1. The only way a good conscience can be developed is through a knowledge of God's word.
    2. It can be easily lost when God's word is left.
  4. A sincere faith is developed.
    1. This is one that is not fake, relying on others.
    2. This is one that is not easily moved.
    3. What is taught is truly believed and enacted.
4. This is the challenge of all congregations and preachers.
  1. That which tears a congregation apart is to be avoided and that which builds it up is to be extolled.
  2. Preachers need to be on guard that the sermons are full of truth and based on God's word and nothing else for this to take place.
3. **Some had changed (vs. 6-7).**
  1. Sadly, there were those in Ephesus who had turned from that which edified them.
    1. They once believed and obeyed or else they could not have left it or swerved from it.
    2. At one time this group mentioned had been obedient to the gospel but had left it.
  2. That for which they left the gospel was useless or vain talking.
    1. Anything that does not build up the soul is useless in the Lord's church.
    2. Those things that cause arguments and debates over nothing are harmful.
    3. Those that bring in these things are harmful.

3. Apparently, some in Ephesus had given in to the Judaizing teachers and Gnostics, leaving the gospel.
4. Some of those had decided to give themselves to what they believed was the teaching of the Law of Moses.
  1. They failed to understand the Law ended, or was completed, in Christ.
  2. They bound things found in it that had been fulfilled and nailed to the cross.
5. They had a desire to get the acclaim of teachers with knowledge of something.
  1. There are those in the church today that are that way.
  2. They want acclaim as great preachers or teachers but know more about philosophers and denominational teachers than about the gospel and Christ.
6. These type people don't know what they are talking about and don't understand the ramifications of what they are teaching.
  1. They don't have a grasp of the New Testament as they think they do.
  2. They are affirming things that lead to spiritual death and not life.
7. Just as some had changed in Ephesus, we have those who have changed in the Lord's church today.