

Dear friends and family,

Albert Einstein is attributed with the quote, “If you can’t explain something to a six year old, you don’t really understand it.” During my teaching days, I formulated a theory called the *Information Life-Cycle*. This theory differentiates between the aspects of *Learning*, *Knowledge*, *Wisdom*, and *Understanding*. A quick overview states that learning is the **intake** of information, knowledge is the **retention** of information, wisdom is the appropriate **use** of information, and understanding is **sharing** or adding to the pool of information. The point is, that when we truly understand something, we have a duty, an obligation, to share it with others.

No one understood this concept better than the Apostle Paul. For that reason, for the next several devotions, the focus will be a deep view into the Pastoral Epistles. These are the letters written by Paul to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon. Philemon isn’t really considered a Pastoral Epistle, as it’s more of a personal plea from Paul. However, it must be noted that Philemon did lead a house church in Colossae.

### **Pastor’s Point of View**

The question of the week: **What does it mean to understand salvation?**

*But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief, and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. 1 Timothy 1:13-14*

### **Day 1**

READ – Acts 16:1-5

Acts 16 highlights Paul first meeting Timothy. Scripture reveals that Timothy was the son of a Jewish woman who believed in Jesus as the Messiah. Scripture also reveals that Timothy’s father was a Greek man, therefore insinuating that Timothy was neither circumcised nor fully Jewish.

2 Timothy 1:5 states that both Timothy’s mother and grandmother accepted the Lord Jesus as Messiah and taught Timothy about Christ, leaving a Biblical legacy through their faith and understanding.

1. Is there importance in leaving a faith legacy? What does that look like?
2. How can you devote yourself to teaching your children and grandchildren faith in Christ?
3. What is something you can do this week to teach about Christ?
4. Is there an aspect of the gospel message that you long to more fully understand?

It’s interesting to note that Paul took it upon himself to circumcise an adult, Timothy (Acts 16:3). There is no record of how long Paul and Timothy cultivated their relationship. However, based on Paul’s words in 2 Timothy 1:5 and this account in Acts 16, Paul thought well of Timothy as “his son in the faith” (1 Cor. 4:17 & 1 Tim. 1:2). Certainly there had to have been a close knit, father-son relationship between the two for Paul to circumcise Timothy. Paul’s desire was to have Timothy accompany him on his missionary journeys and he wanted no stumbling blocks in their ministry.

## Day 2

READ – 1 Timothy 1:1-2

1. What does it mean that Paul is an apostle by command of God?
2. How important is it that he address Timothy as his true child in the faith?
3. Reflect on the virtues of grace, mercy, and peace. Are these things you are praying for God to have over your own children?

Throughout the Pastoral Epistles the different offices of the church are explored and explained. The first one introduced is the office of an apostle. The term apostle means “*a messenger, one sent on a mission.*” In the context of the New Testament, an apostle is one sent **by Christ Himself**. This is why Paul’s statement “apostle of Christ Jesus by command of God our Savior and of Christ Jesus our hope” here is so important. The office of apostle is closed today. It was a special office held by those who saw Christ and were commissioned by Him directly to start His church. Those who are called thereafter to serve the Lord in the church are Pastors, Elders, and Missionaries.

## Day 3

READ – 1 Timothy 1:3-11

1. How important does Paul say it is to understand the gospel?
2. Look at verses 3-4 and notice the negative connotation. Understanding the true gospel means we can pick out a false gospel and speak against it.
3. Paul then says our aim is love. But this is not the world’s love which is permissive and “tolerant” of every type of sin. Compare the world’s idea of love with God’s design for love. How do they seem the same? But how are they different?
4. What would gospel-centered love really look like from a pure heart, good conscience, and sincere faith?
5. Note the importance of teaching from a place of understanding. What does James tell us about the role of a teacher? (James 3:1)

The second office of the church introduced is that of a teacher. This is of utmost importance, that teachers understand sound doctrine.

## Day 4

READ – 1 Timothy 1:12-20

1. What does Paul teach us about the true gospel here?
2. Reflect on your past sinfulness. How have these three statements affected you?
  - a. I received mercy.
  - b. The grace of our Lord overflowed for me.
  - c. With the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.
3. How can you be an example of Jesus in his perfect patience to those who do not yet believe?

The priesthood of all believers is explained in an excerpt of an article by Timothy George:

*“John Calvin interpreted the priesthood of all believers in terms of the church’s participation in the threefold office of Christ as Prophet, King, and Priest. Specifically, **every Christian is mandated to be a representative of Christ in his redemptive outreach to the world**: “All believers ... should seek to bring others into the church, and should strive to lead the wanderers back to the road, should stretch forth a hand to the fallen and should win over the outsiders.” In other words, the priesthood of believers is not a prerogative on which we can rest; it is a commission which sends us forth into the world to exercise a priestly ministry not for ourselves, but for others—“the outsiders”—not instead of Christ, to be sure, but for the sake of Christ and at his behest.”*

To read the full article click here: <https://www.firstthings.com/web-exclusives/2016/10/the-priesthood-of-all-believers>

*Save Your people and bless Your inheritance;  
Be their Shepherd also, and carry them forever.  
Psalm 28:9*

Romans 3:23 – Romans 5:8 – Titus 3:5 – Ephesians 2:8-9 – Romans 6:23 – Romans 10:9-10 – John 3:16

I challenge you to review these Scriptures. Thank God in prayer for his salvation.

Repent, believe, study, and understand.

Spend time with the Lord in prayer.

Ask him to give you opportunities to share the saving gospel truth.

Reflect on what you have truly been given.

Then GO!

Share the gospel!

Make disciples!

Leave a faith legacy through the power of Christ!

Grace, Mercy, and Peace,

-Pastor Matt

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