**Perfect Patience: Pg1**

Welcome:

* Great congregation in the Name of the Lord
* Thank Malcolm and the Worship Team
* Thanks for the support
* Please come support the “new” preachers on the last Sunday of every month. 25 Feb - Jarred

Intro: Pg2

There is someone in my life who is very close to my heart. I love him. But his stubbornness frustrates me no end. He is stubborn in almost every aspect of his life, but what frustrates me the most is his stubbornness towards Jesus. He is stubborn atheist. I spoken to him about faith, Christianity, Christ…Melodie has given him the Gospel. He has even had relative strangers in his house witnessing to him, but he still denies Christ. I have prayed for him and shown him the love of Christ for years, but his stubborn and manipulative ways have tired me to the point of giving up on a few occasions. Do you have someone in your life that you love dearly, but is continually denying Christ? Today I would like to share some hope with you, from 1Tim.

Pray:

Read: 1Tim1:12-17 Pg3-6

**Sermon:**

The posture of Paul’s heart: Pg7

 If you recall, the previous passage (vs8-11) dealt with the law, specifically the lawful use of the law. As a Pharisee, Paul would have studied the law and he would have had a very good understanding of it, especially now that he had the blessing of the Holy Spirit. He would have known where he stood in terms of the law and more specifically where he would have stood in front of the Lord in terms of the law, had it not been for the saving grace of His precious blood. Vs 12 to 17 is how he responds to all of this.

It is important to note how Paul describes his former self – blasphemer, persecutor, an insolent opponent. Imagine having those sins on your conscience. Paul goes as far as describing himself as the foremost / chief of sinners.

Vs 13 describes his former self, Saul, the sins of his past, but vs 15 is present tense – of whom I am the foremost / I am the chief. Why? He has already been washed clean by the Blood of Christ. Paul is not describing the position he holds before the Lord, rather he is describing the condition of his heart the way he sees himself– where he preaches from, where he ministers from, where he is writing this letter to Timothy from – from humbleness, a contrite heart – and thankfulness and joy, which we shall see later. He is fully aware of the penalty of the Law, which he deserves. Just because the he has been judged faithful (vs 12), doesn’t mean that he can be boastful, or aloof. This is very important when you are ministering to others, showing them their sin, showing them their depravity, showing them their need for repentance and possibly the need for a Saviour if they are not saved already. Lawful use of the law. Not only that, but it is a good place for all of us to be – continually searching your heart, searching for hidden sin in your life and asking for forgiveness.

 Pg8

Despite all of this – despite having persecuted the early Believers, despite being a insolent opponent to them and more importantly to Jesus and thereby blaspheming Him, God has judged Paul as faithful! What an amazing God we serve! No matter how great your sin – the Precious Blood of Christ can wash you clean. All you need to do is accept Him as your Saviour and repent of your sins. This fills Paul with so much joy he can barely contain himself.

Balance of emotions – contrite heart and strength / righteousness in the Lord.

The reason for mercy: Pg9

The one verse I really struggled with while preparing for this sermon was vs13b.

But I received mercy because I acted ignorantly and in unbelief…..

So if Paul received mercy because acted ignorantly and in unbelief, why are we, as Christians called to spread the Gospel and make disciples of all nations? If the unsaved continue to act in ignorantly and in unbelief, why should they not receive mercy as Paul did? It seems to totally contradict the Gospel. Is Paul contradicting himself (1Cor15:1) Now I would remind you, brother, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand and by which you are being saved….) and the rest of Scripture?

This is the inspired Word of God! And by inspired I don’t mean like an artist is inspired by a stunning sunset to paint a beautiful painting. I mean that every word in the Bible is God breathed – every word is God’s word. And God does not contradict Himself. Therefore, the problem is not with the words that I was reading, but the way in which I was reading them, the way in which I was interpreting them.

And so began my grappling. I read different translations - the NIV, the KJV, the NKJV, etc. I read commentaries. I just wasn’t getting it. I came knocking on Malcom’s door more than once. And Malcolm, bless him, spoke Greek to me – literally. With prayer and much patience, he started getting through to me, but it took some more meditation on the Word and grappling for me to eventually understand.

Because – Hoti – that, because, since Pg10

But I received mercy (since / that) I had acted ignorantly and unbelief

*Clearer picture – still muddy*

Ignorantly and unbelief – was the cause of his sin – caused him to blaspheme, persecute the believers and be an insolent opponent.

But I received mercy since / that I had sinned

*Clearer*

Paul is saying that the reason why he needed mercy was because he had sinned. Put it this way – If he had acted knowingly and in belief, really intimately knowing and believing that Jesus was the Messiah he would not have required mercy. He would not have sinned, because he would not have persecuted the Believers, he would not have blasphemed and have been an insolent opponent.

 Pg11

The second mistake I had made was the way I was reading the second part of the sentence, vs 14. I was reading it as a separate idea.

*And the grace of our Lord overflowed in me for with faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.*

**But I received mercy because I acted ignorantly and unbelief (I had sinned (Pauls actions), therefore I needed mercy)** and **the grace of our Lord overflowed in me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus (God’s response).**

**This too me a while to grasp, so if you are still struggling to grasp this, please come talk to me afterwards so that I can try and help you.**

Picture: Faith counteracts unbelief

 Love counteracts ignorance.

Vs 13b gives us the reason why he needed mercy

Vs14 shows us how God applied that mercy

Vs16 shows us why God gave him mercy

*But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost (*of sinners / chief of sinners), *Jesus Christ may display his perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life.*

I am not sure how old Paul was at the time of his conversion, but most of the commentators that I looked at said he was bet 25 to 30, some even a little older -35. Either way Paul was an enemy of the Cross for a number of years.

Application: Pg12

1. **The Believer:**
* Don’t give up on those who you are praying for to come to Christ – Perfect Patience!
* Continue showing them the love of Christ. Don’t stop praying for them. Don’t give up.

 Pg13

1. **For the unbeliever / those who have not come to know the love of Christ:**

- It is not too late! God is patiently waiting for you 1Pet3:9 *The Lord is not slow to fulfil his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.*

- And in case you may think that your sin is too great for the Lord to forgive – look at Paul – not only was he a blasphemer, insolent opponent and a persecutor, but he was a willing participant in the murder of Stephen (see Acts 7 and first part of 8)

Pg14

1. For the Christian who is struggling in sin and feeling of depravity when confronting that sin

– look to the Lord for your strength. Neh8:10 tells us that the joy of the Lord is our strength. Remember: balancing righteous nous/strength in the Lord & contrite heart?

Church Hx full of stories like Pauls. From Paul to C.S Lewis, John Stott, Polycarp, John Calvin Martin Luther, etc. Church Hx is the story of how God works through fallen, broken people, sinners like you and I to keep a remnant for Himself through every generation. That is I am excited about our next Bible Study. If he can take a Pharisee who was an insolent opponent, blasphemer and a persecutor and turn him into a great apostle, what is going to do with a paramedic who used to mock Christians? What is he going to do with an unemployed game ranger who used to be a rebel? What is he going to do with you? Today, tomorrow, or the next. I am excited about my future in Christ.

Overwhelming Joy Pg15

Knowing his sin, knowing where he used to stand according to the Law, knowing the sacrifice God made for him, knowing where he now stands with the Lord and what the Lord was doing for him, Paul was overcome with joy and thankfulness, he could not contain himself, his heart was bursting, he just had to call out –

*To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honour and glory forever and ever. Amen.*

Pray.