

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION
1 Timothy: God's Ministry Roles For Church Leaders And The Local Church
Part II: God's Edifying Calling For Today's Leaders In Needy Churches
(1 Timothy 1:3-4)

I. Introduction

- A. In today's era of growing apostasy, from all over the world, we consistently hear of concern Christians have for a Biblically credible leadership in their local churches. It is a crisis in spiritual oversight.
- B. Accordingly, church leaders, wherever they function, feel intense pressures amid spiritual warfare as the Evil One seeks to destroy their efforts as God's overseers in their respective churches.
- C. 1 Timothy 1:3-4 thus clarifies God's edifying calling for today's leaders in needy church situations such as Timothy faced. Both leaders and "laymen" alike must understand this to discern and work toward supporting a Biblically correct role for the leaders in the local church (as follows):

II. God's Edifying Calling For Today's Leaders In Needy Churches, 1 Timothy 1:3-4.

- A. Paul's instruction to pastor Timothy at the Christian church in Ephesus (1 Timothy 1:3; Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, p. 1708, "Introduction to the First Letter of Paul to Timothy: The Pastoral Epistles") is given against the background of ungodly teaching by errant men, 1 Timothy 3b.
- B. This was a big problem then, one that needed a quality ministry to counter as sin in Paul's telling Titus in Titus 1:9 to appoint elders in churches who would be able to counter errant teachers and their teachings.
- C. Well, as the pastoral epistles apply to local churches throughout Church History (2 Tim. 4:1-2), we view Paul's concise but very informative instruction on ministry in a needy local church in 1 Timothy 1:3-4:
 - 1. Church leadership in needy local churches requires a long-term ministry effort, 1 Timothy 1:3a:
 - a. Paul wrote in part to *repeat* his former command that Timothy **remain** (*prosmeno*, "remain longer, further," Arndt & Gingrich, A Grk.-Engl. Lex. Of the N. T., 1967, p. 724) at his calling in Ephesus.
 - b. Timothy was likely tempted to **leave** Ephesus due to its problems implied in 1 Timothy 1:3-4 et al., but a good shepherd does not flee trouble, but stays out of concern for the sheep, cf. John 10:11-13.
 - 2. Church leadership in needy local churches requires a gentle but clear counter of error, 1 Tim. 1:3b: Timothy was directed by Paul to stay on at Ephesus to charge (*paraggello*, "give orders," Ibid., p. 618) that men not teach errant doctrine. This must be done with tact, but the leader must thus counter error.
 - 3. Church leadership in needy local churches requires Bible exposition versus other preaching/teaching efforts that fail to give only Scripture content, 1 Timothy 1:4a:
 - a. The errant teachers Timothy faced were paying heed (*prosecho*, "pay attention to," Ibid., p. 721) to "endless fables and genealogies," an expression to be viewed as a unit, and it refers to stories the Jewish rabbis had invented "on the basis of what they considered some hint' supplied by the Old Testament," Wm. Hendriksen, Exposition of The Pastoral Epistles (NTC), 1974, p. 58-59.
 - b. These stories "were part of the regular bill of fare in the synagogue," Ibid., so Timothy faced men who were giving content that was not actual Bible content, but human ideas about Bible content, a problem we ab undantly face in Christendom today!
 - c. However, **God** in 1 Peter 4:11a NIV directed we proclaim **God's Words of Scripture, not extrabiblical ones!** ("If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God.")
 - 4. Church leadership in needy local churches requires teaching/preaching that dogmatically asserts God's truth that people might trust it and apply it rather than leaving them unsure and faithless, 1 Tim. 1:4b:
 - a. The "endless fables and genealogies" the errant men at the Church in Ephesus taught had only produced (*parecho*, "cause, give rise to," Ibid., Arndt & Gingrich, p. 631-632) "speculations" (*ekzetesis*, Ibid., p. 239) because their content was errant, unbiblical suppositions of mere men.
 - b. In contrast, God's Word taught or preached is to be **applied** by leaders to produce **lives of faith in God** as opposed to leaving hearers with unanswered questions that do not lead to living by faith!

Lesson: *In needy churches, as in all churches, leaders must (1) be devoted to a long-term effort that (2) gently but clearly counters error, that (3) gives Bible content and nothing else and that (4) applies it dogmatically to lead the hearer to live by faith, not leave him with unedifying questions.*

Application: *May we who lead practice this type of ministry, and may we who are in the pew support it.*