

A Reformed and Covenantal Perspective

".....when a local number of believers comes together to form a church, they are to think something like this; we are bound to God by the new covenant; and not only that, since we are bound to God by that covenant, we are bound to each other by that covenant too. The covenant that makes us belong to God makes us belong to each other. Therefore our commitment to each other in a local church is a covenant commitment. Our covenant relationship to God implies a covenant relationship to each other. God's covenant with us creates and shapes our covenant with each other." John Piper

1. What is a reformed and covenantal perspective?
2. Who was Timothy? What was going on in the church in Ephesus?
3. What is 'Paul's preoccupation' in this first chapter?
4. In what ways was the law of God being misused by the false teachers about whom Paul writes?
5. Timothy possesses two valuable things which he must carefully guard.
6. What are the three things that Paul says God has given him in verse 12?

Nuggets to ponder

The Law (1st Timothy 1:9,10)

It is only because as fallen human beings we have a natural tendency to lawlessness (for 'sin is lawlessness') that we need the law at all. The key antithesis, that the law is not for the righteous but for lawbreakers (9), cannot refer to those who are righteous in the sense of 'justified', since Paul insists elsewhere that the justified do still need the law for their sanctification. Nor can it be taken to mean that some people exist who are so righteous that they do not need the law to guide them, but only that some people think they are. Similarly, when Jesus said, 'I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance', he did not mean that there are some righteous people who do not need to be called to repentance, but only that some think they are. In a word, 'the righteous' in these contexts means 'the self-righteous'.

Stott, John. The Message of 1 Timothy & Titus: Guard the Truth (The Bible Speaks Today Series) (Kindle Locations 740-746). InterVarsity Press. Kindle Edition.

Timothy and the good fight (1:18–20)

What this 'good fight' is Paul does not specify. But since in 6:12 he urges Timothy to 'fight the good fight of the faith', it is reasonable to conclude that he means the same thing here. Certainly to defend the revealed truth of God against those who deny or distort it, and to 'demolish strongholds' of error, is to engage in a dangerous and difficult fight, which demands spiritual weapons, especially 'the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God'. *Stott, John. The Message of 1 Timothy & Titus: Guard the Truth (The Bible Speaks Today Series) (Kindle Locations 917-921). InterVarsity Press. Kindle Edition.*

The Christian and the Law

It is particularly noteworthy that sins which contravene the law (as breaches of the Ten Commandments) are also contrary to the sound doctrine of the gospel. So the moral standards of the gospel do not differ from the moral standards of the law. We must not therefore imagine that, because we have embraced the gospel, we may now repudiate the law! To be sure, the law is impotent to save us, and we have been released from the law's condemnation, so that we are no longer 'under' it in that sense. But God sent his Son to die for us, and now puts his Spirit within us, in order that the righteous requirement of the law may be fulfilled in us. There is no antithesis between law and gospel in the moral standards which they teach; the antithesis is in the way of salvation, since the law condemns, while the gospel justifies.

Stott, John. The Message of 1 Timothy & Titus: Guard the Truth (The Bible Speaks Today Series) (Kindle Locations 782-789). InterVarsity Press. Kindle Edition.