

Greetings:

The study that Pastor Pat brings on Sunday mornings is a reflection of the study for that week. It represents a lot of research. Not all of what he has prepared is communicated. In an attempt to continue the learning process, he is making available his study notes to the congregation.

These notes are edited, but not “book” ready. To the critical eye, mistakes can possibly be found. Therefore, he asks that you take the material with humility, teach-ability, and charity.

Enjoy and if you should have any questions or corrections, please do not hesitate to email him at pastorpat@waukeshabible.org.

Date: September 17, 2017

Sermon Title: **The Problem with Strange Teaching
and the Power of Sound Teaching**

Sermon Series: First Timothy

Text: 1 Tim. 1:3-11

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Waukesha Bible Church is a family of families seeking to live in **the Storyline of the Bible**. She is determined by design to have a **God-centered, Christ-exalting worship; a Word-centered teaching** focused on personal **discipleship** through intentional and systematic instruction; a **Global-impacting mission** that resolves to be a **church planting church**; and a **Grace-based fellowship** where disciples are invited to live under a **reigning grace** characterized by a **Gospel-driven sanctification** that celebrates a divine **monergism** to the Christian life.

Date: Sept. 17, 2017
Title: The Problem with Strange Teaching and the Power of Sound Teaching
Text: 1 Timothy 1:3-11
Theme: Concerning Strange Teaching

Introduction:

“The **blobfish** (*Psychrolutes microporosus*) is a deep sea fish of the family Psychrolutidae. It inhabits the deep waters off the coasts of mainland Australia and Tasmania, as well as the waters of New Zealand. Blobfish are typically shorter than 30 cm (12 in). They live at depths between 600 and 1,200 m (2,000 and 3,900 ft) where the pressure is 60 to 120 times as great as at sea level, which would likely make gas bladders inefficient for maintaining buoyancy.^[1] Instead, the flesh of the blobfish is primarily a gelatinous mass with a density slightly less than water; this allows the fish to float above the sea floor without expending energy on swimming. Its relative lack of muscle is not a disadvantage as it primarily swallows edible matter that floats in front of it such as deep-ocean crustaceans.”¹

“No, you cannot eat it. As others have said, there is no muscle, so you would be eating an extremely chewy and fatty mass. In addition, the blobfish has a natural defense of acid-like skin so predators do not continue to eat it. [It is] currently [an] endangered species.”²

For the significant majority of us looking at a blobfish, we wonder exactly what it is. No matter its reality, it is highly unusual and we might even think it is something made up. Yet, it is true. The strange teaching present within the church is highly unusual, without muscle, primarily a fatty mass, is acidic and should not be eaten. Despite all this, the strange teaching present in the Ephesian church is equally present in today’s church.

“When the Apostle and his disciple Timothy re-visited Ephesus, after the long Cæsarean and Roman imprisonment, they found the Church there distracted with questions raised by Jewish teachers. The curious and hair-splitting interpretation of the Mosaic law, the teaching concerning the tithing of mint and anise and cummin, which in the days of Jesus of Nazareth had paralysed all real spiritual life in Jerusalem, had found its way during the Apostle’s long enforced absence into the restless, ever-changing congregations at Ephesus.

Dangerous controversies, disputings concerning old prophecies, mingled with modern traditions, occupied the attention of many of the Christian teachers. They preferred to talk about theology rather than try to live the life which men like St. Paul had told them that followers of Jesus must live if they would be His servants indeed.

Unless these deadening influences were removed, the faith of the Ephesian Church threatened to become utterly impractical. The doctrine these restless men were teaching, and which St. Paul so bitterly condemns, seems to have been no settled form of heresy, but a profitless teaching, arising mainly, if not entirely, from Jewish sources.”³

In fact, on his final visit to them, Paul warned the Ephesian elders to look out for opposition. Let me read you what he said as he addressed the Ephesian elders:

²⁹ "I know that after I have gone, savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. ³⁰ Some even from your own group will come distorting the truth in order to entice the disciples to follow them. ³¹ Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to warn everyone with tears" Acts 20:29-31 (NRSV).

THE BIG PICTURE:

"Paul charges Timothy to deal with the false teachers (vv. 3-7), briefly corrects their understanding of the law (vv. 8-11), presents himself as an example of the intended effect of the gospel (vv. 12-17), and restates his basic charge with some specific examples of false teachers (vv. 18-20)."⁴

There is really two parts to our present paragraph. They will control much of what Paul addresses. For simplicities sake, let us divide our text into these two parts.

First, what is strange teaching (vv. 3-10a)?

Second, what is sound teaching (vv. 10b, 11)?

Sound teaching is the melody of God's overarching Song. It is the theme of His *Story*.

Strange teaching is any note that becomes the melody. Strange teaching makes much of the yellow tag, but fails to celebrate the actual trail. Strange teaching intentionally or by accident drowns out the melody. Strange teaching intentionally or by accident overrides the melody to the point where no one can sing the song.

When sound teaching is present, then we can hear all the various topics or themes and the sound heard is a beautiful thing.

"Exhorted (παρακάλεσα). In about sixty places this word has the sense of 'beseech,' 'entreat,' 'desire,' 'pray,' which is more suitable to this passage than the R.V. exhort. It is a strong expression, and seems to imply that Timothy had been anxious to go with St. Paul to Macedonia, to share his labors and wait upon him; but that St. Paul, with that noble disinterestedness which characterized his whole life, had, not without difficulty, persuaded him to abide at Ephesus."⁵

Paraggelia

"As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine" (1 Tim. 1:3).

"These things command and teach" (1 Tim. 4:11).

"And these things give in charge, that they may be blameless" (1 Tim. 5:7).

"I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession" (1 Tim. 6:13). {confession: or, profession}

"Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy" (1 Tim. 6:17). {uncertain...: Gr. uncertainty of riches}

Paraggello

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v. 3 Why Tim was left. It appears as if those teaching strange doctrine were open to receiving instruction. These individuals might very well still be in the local church. They were sincere but they began to make harmony the melody and it was creating confusion. We must always remember that the yellow marker is not the ice age trail. The ice age trail is the trail. The markers simply let you know that you are on the trail.

“He does not name any persons; the Judaizing teachers are generally supposed to be those intended; and the term *tisi*, some, certain persons, which he uses, is expressive of high disapprobation, and at the same time of delicacy: they were not apostles, nor apostolic men; but they were undoubtedly members of the Church at Ephesus, and might yet be reclaimed.”⁶

There is, however, a notable progression within the Letter itself. It is not as if the threat of falling away is not real. Apostasy is everyone’s problem. The glorious gospel compels us forward. Those who use grace as an excuse to participate in their debauchery are misguided. There is a real danger that such thinking will lead them to perdition. I know we would like to walk into the idea of eternal security versus the loss of one’s salvation, but let us simply accept the weight of the gospel in this matter.

This instruction had authority behind it. “This word implies authoritative instruction: ‘direct, command, give orders’ (cf. 1 Tim 4:11; 5:7; 6:13, 17). See BDAG 760 s.v. παραγγέλλω.”⁷

“The apostle had seen that a bad seed had been sown in the Church; and, as he was obliged to go then into Macedonia, he wished Timothy, on whose prudence, piety, and soundness in the faith he could depend, to stay behind and prevent the spreading of a doctrine that would have been pernicious to the people's souls.”⁸

I worry that we do not see the difference between strange teaching and sound teaching. There is a difference and the outcome and impact on one’s soul is notable.

Outline:

I. What is Strange Teaching (vv. 3-10a)?

This particular Greek word [**Heterodidaskaleo**] occurs twice in the NT. Both occurrences are used by Paul in 1 Timothy (1:3; 6:3).

Notice how Paul uses this word in Galatians 1:3-9.

- ³ “Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, ⁴ who gave Himself for our sins so that He might rescue us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, ⁵ to whom be the glory forevermore. Amen. ⁶ I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a **different** gospel; ⁷ which is really not another; only there are some who are disturbing you and **want to distort** the gospel of Christ. ⁸ But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, **he is to be accursed!** ⁹ As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to what you received, he is to be accursed!” (Gal. 1:3-9).

Unfortunately, we allow and ultimately embrace a gospel that is not the gospel at all. This is our tragedy and to our eternal detriment.

A. Their confusion [mere speculations].

They are majoring on minor notes. Looking for things that are not there. Refusing to believe the simplicity of the gospel.

“. . . To pay attention to myths and endless genealogies, which give rise to mere speculation rather than furthering the administration of God which is by faith.”

What is the danger? Such a pursuit makes the note the melody. It replaces the trail with a tag.

This is nowhere seen more than in the area of eschatology or when an attempt is made to decode the Bible. The Bible does not need to be decoded and because we try to spiritualize the Bible, we have made a mess of it.

“If the plain sense makes common sense, seek no other sense.” If you need to go to a special school to figure out how to read and understand the Bible, then you are fixating on the harmony and not the melody.

Notice the copious nature of this problem.

- “But reject **irreverent and silly myths**. Instead, train yourself for godliness” (1 Tim. 4:7).
- “he is conceited and understands nothing. Instead, he has an **unhealthy interest in controversies and semantics**, out of which come envy, strife, abusive talk, evil suspicions” (1 Tim. 6:4).
- “But reject **foolish and ignorant speculation**, for you know that it breeds quarreling” (2 Tim. 2:23).
- “So they will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to **myths**” (2 Tim. 4:4).

- “and will **pay no attention to Jewish myths or to the commands of men** who have rejected the truth” (Titus 1:14).
- “But **avoid foolish controversies, genealogies, arguments, and quarrels about the Law**, because these things are pointless and worthless” (Titus 3:9).
- “For **we did not follow cleverly devised fables** when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty” (2 Pet. 1:16).

“*Myths and interminable genealogies.* These *myths* were legendary tales characteristic of the false teachers in Ephesus and Crete. See parallels in 1 Tim 4:7; 2 Tim 4:4; and Titus 1:14. They were perhaps built by speculation from the patriarchal narratives in the OT; hence the connection with *genealogies* and with wanting *to be teachers of the law* (v. 7).”⁹

B. Their content [the law / Christian’s must obey the law].

They have made a note of harmony into disharmony by replacing or forgetting the melody.

They were misapplying the law. Christians do not “keep” the OT Law. This, however, does not mean Christians are lawless. The sins of the flesh noted in the following verses occur in the absence of grace, not law. Grace calls us to deny all ungodliness. I do not believe Christians are under the law, but I equally do not believe Christians are lawless. Christians are moral, legal, and ethical. They are such because Jesus is and the Jesus seed produces Jesus fruit. It is for this reason Paul binds inseparably our conduct with our confession in 3:14-16.

The Law binds up / constrains sinners.

The Gospel builds up / compels saints (2 Cor. 5:14).

C. Their conduct [they dismiss unethical and immoral acts as non-consequential].

“Such myths were often used to excuse immoral behavior.”¹⁰

“The implication throughout is: well, if they want to teach the law, that’s fine, but it presumes that their hearers are people of this sort – whereas, if they are working in a Christian community, their hearers ought not to be people of that sort!”¹¹

“The list begins by naming six general sins, and then specifically refers to dark sins that break the fifth through ninth commandments – which have to do with the ways ungodly people sin against each other. But Paul caps the list with a summary that also is worded in terms that set up by contrast the bright hope of the gospel: ‘and whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine, in accordance with the gospel of the glory of the blessed God with which I have been entrusted’ (vv. 10-11). ‘Sound doctrine’ that is ‘in accordance with the gospel’ is literally ‘healthy doctrine’ – that is, life-giving doctrine. The gospel, entrusted to Paul and to us, is the only answer to the dark, impossible, sin-sick pathology of the human heart. All healthy, life-giving theology accords with this glorious gospel of grace.”¹²

Cmp. v. 3 w/ vv. 10, 11

Strange teaching = heteros + didaskalos is anything other than the glorious gospel. In this case, it appears a wrong application or usage of the Law became a strange. Such deviation fell into the category of mere speculation and fruitless discussion. It would not build up the oikonomia [only time used in the NT and it is here] administration of God].

v. 6 some men . . . cf. vv. 18-20.

v. 8 cf. Rom. 7:12

Regardless of whatever note we sound, if it does not align with or if it overshadows and drowns out the melody, it is a strange teaching.

“There is no definite article (“the”) with this word in Greek and so the inherent quality of the OT law as such is in view. But the OT law is still in mind, since the types of sinful people surveyed in vv. 9b-11a follow the general outline of sins prohibited in the Decalogue.”¹³

D. Their consequence (vv. 18-20).

There is a viable threat to one’s soul when embracing strange teaching. There are some ideas within Evangelicalism that allow for some disagreement. Nevertheless, there are others centering on the gospel that cannot tolerate any variation. The outcome of rejecting the gospel is death.

II. What is Sound Teaching (vv. 10b, 11)?

A. The Consequence of Sound Teaching (vv. 4, 5).

The outcome or fruit of sound teaching [i.e. the gospel] promotes the spread of the gospel and the building up of the church. It is the exact opposite of strange teaching (v. 4).

1. The gospel is self-perpetuating [Furthering the administration of God which is by faith (v. 4)]

“*God’s redemptive plan.* The basic word (οικονομία, oikonomia) denotes the work of a household steward or manager or the arrangement under which he works: “household management.” **As a theological term it is used of the order or arrangement by which God brings redemption through Christ (God’s “dispensation, plan of salvation” [Eph 1:10; 3:9]) or of human responsibility to pass on the message of that salvation (“stewardship, commission” [1 Cor 9:17; Eph 3:2; Col 1:25]).** Here the former is in view (see the summary of God’s plan in 1 Tim 2:3-6; 2 Tim 1:9-10; Titus 3:4-7), and Paul notes the response people must make to God’s arrangement: It is “in faith” or “by faith.””¹⁴

- NET Bible
nor to occupy themselves with myths and interminable genealogies. Such things promote useless speculations **rather than God’s redemptive plan that operates by faith.**

Verse 5 Paul uses “end.” The word “end” is telos. And it means “end” or “goal.” It has the idea of “the point aimed at as a limit, i.e. (by implication) the conclusion of an act or state.”

2. The gospel is self-stabilizing / placating / purifying (v. 5)

- a. Love from a pure heart and (v. 5)
- b. A good conscience and
- c. A sincere faith.

What are these “things?” These “things” are fruits of the gospel. We will read of their opposite in 1:18-20. Cf. 1 Tim. 3:9.

B. The Content of Sound Teaching (vv. 5, 11).

v. 5 provides the outcome or fruit of the gospel. All three statements are synonymous. Verse 5 contrasts with **heteros**.

Sound teaching = **hugiaino** + **didaskalia**

The word “sound” occurs twice in 1 Timothy.

- “For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to **sound** doctrine” (1 Tim. 1:10).
- “If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to **wholesome** words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness” (1 Tim. 6:3).

“The healthful (hugiainō, old word for being well, as Lu 5:31; 3Jo 1:2, in figurative sense in N.T. only in the Pastorals) teaching.” See Tit 1:9; 2Ti 4:3.”¹⁵

“Sound doctrine” The participle of the Greek verb here translated ‘sound,’ includes the idea of ‘health’ (in the sense of ‘healthy’ or ‘health giving’ doctrine), and in 2 Timothy it contributes to an extended metaphor in which false doctrine spreads poison insidiously through the body (‘like gangrene,’ 2 Tim. 2:17) while true doctrine makes the body healthy.”¹⁶

- “And Jesus answering said unto them, They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick” (Luke 5:31).
- “And they that were sent, returning to the house, found the servant whole that had been sick” (Luke 7:10).
- “And he said unto him, Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound” (Luke 15:27).
- “For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine” (1 Tim. 1:10).
- “If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness” (1 Tim. 6:3).

- “Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus” (2 Tim. 1:13).
- “For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears” (2 Tim. 4:3).
- “Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers” (Titus 1:9). {as...: or, in teaching}
- “This witness is true. Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith” (Titus 1:13).
- “But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine” (Titus 2:1).
- “That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience” (Titus 2:2). {sober: or, vigilant}
- “Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth” (3 John 1:2). {wish: or, pray}

Sound teaching is the glorious gospel (vv. 10, 11).

The gospel is sound. The gospel is the benchmark for determining what sound doctrine is. Everything outside the gospel can become “another” gospel.

The gospel edifies / builds up (v. 4). Everything else tears down.

Sound teaching is spiritually healthy.

Strange teaching is spiritually unhealthy.

Sound teaching advances and promotes Christlikeness. Sound teaching is God-centered.

Strange teaching advances and promotes self-likeness. Strange teaching is man-centered.

v. 10 sinful behavior is contrary to sound teaching.

v. 11 Paul received the gospel. “Sound doctrine by definition is that which flows out of the gospel.”¹⁷

A.B. Simpson has said that the gospel “Tells rebellious men that God is reconciled, that justice is satisfied, that sin has been atoned for, that the judgment of the guilty may be revoked, the condemnation of the sinner canceled, the curse of the Law blotted out, the gates of hell closed, the portals of heaven opened wide, the power of sin subdued, the guilty conscience healed, the broken heart comforted, the sorrow and misery of the Fall undone. (Evangelism, A Biblical Approach, M. Cocoris, Moody, 1984, p. 29)”¹⁸

“The **counterfeit detector pen** solves the biggest counterfeiting threat today. It used to be that a counterfeiting operation used expensive presses and special inks and papers to create exact duplicates of the bills. Today, the threat is much more mundane -- people with color copiers and color printers try to create passable facsimiles of a bill. They are not trying to make an exact

copy. They are trying to create something close enough that people won't notice anything if they give the bill a passing glance. These folks are not particularly careful or meticulous, so they copy or print onto normal, wood-based paper.

The counterfeit detector pen is extremely simple. It contains an **iodine solution** that reacts with the starch in wood-based paper to create a black stain. When the solution is applied to the fiber-based paper used in real bills, no discoloration occurs. The pen does nothing but detect bills printed on normal copier paper instead of the fine papers used by the U.S. Treasury."¹⁹

Can you spot the counterfeit? The gospel is the pen and when you lay teaching against it, you will be able to tell if it is true or false, sound or strange.

Shepherding the Sheep: (What is the NEXT STEP?)

"Did you hear about the little boy who returned home after his first Sunday School class? His mother asked, 'Who was your teacher?' and the little boy answered, 'I don't remember her name, but she must have been Jesus' grandmother because she didn't talk about anyone else.' Does our conversation reflect our love of Jesus? Would our words give away our relationship with him? (Leadership Magazine)"²⁰

¹ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blobfish>

² <https://www.quora.com/Do-people-eat-Blobfish>

³ Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers on 1 Timothy 1:3.

⁴ ESV Study Bible on 1 Timothy 1:3-20.

⁵ Pulpit Commentary on 1 Timothy 1:3.

⁶ *Adam Clarke's Commentary* on 1 Tim. 1:3.

⁷ <https://net.bible.org/#!/bible/1+Timothy+1>

⁸ *Adam Clarke's Commentary* on 1 Tim. 1:3.

⁹ <https://net.bible.org/#!/bible/1+Timothy+1>

¹⁰ ESV Study Bible on 1 Timothy 1:4.

¹¹ N.T. Wright, *Paul, the Pastoral Letters / 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, p. 9.

¹² ESV Gospel Transformation Bible on 1 Timothy 1:3-11.

¹³ <https://net.bible.org/#!/bible/1+Timothy+1>

¹⁴ <https://net.bible.org/#!/bible/1+Timothy+1>

¹⁵ *A.T. Robertson's NT Word Pictures* on 1 Tim. 1:10.

¹⁶ ESV Study Bible on 1 Timothy 1:10.

¹⁷ ESV Study Bible on 1 Timothy 1:11.

¹⁸ <http://kevinpierpont.com/teach-sound-doctrine-1-timothy-13-11/>

¹⁹ <http://money.howstuffworks.com/question212.htm>

²⁰ <http://kevinpierpont.com/teach-sound-doctrine-1-timothy-13-11/>