



the point Paul was trying to emphasize. Paul uses verses 12-13 to show how thankful he is that Christ used him in the service. After all, we remember what Paul was before his conversion. **“I was formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor”** (1 Timothy 1:13). We are told that Paul was converted while he was **“still breathing threats and murders against the disciples of the Lord”** (Acts 9:1-2).

Despite all that Paul did to destroy the work of the Lord, he said, **“I was shown mercy... and the grace of our Lord was more abundant”** (1 Timothy 1:13-14). The question might

be posed, why did Jesus save Paul? After all, this was the foremost of all sinners. Paul writes, **“For this reason I found mercy, so that in me as the foremost, Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life”** (1 Timothy 1:16). Paul was shown mercy to demonstrate the extent of Jesus’ patience. If the mercy of Jesus can pardon the sins of Paul, how much more can He show mercy to you?

CONCLUSION

Paul wrote for our encouragement **“a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all”** (1 Timothy 1:15). Do not be deceived by those who would tell you these things are lies. They are truths that have been handed down to us from the mind of God. Christ came to the earth for the purpose of saving sinners like Paul. If Christ came to save **“the foremost of all”** sinners, his mercy can certainly reach all men. What a wonderful thought in which to have trust!

What does that mean for us? Since the mercy of Christ can pardon even the vilest of sinners, it can pardon your sins. All that is required is that we do the will of the Father (Matthew 7:21-23). It ought to be our intense desire to live every day following the words of God. Only then will we experience the salvation that Paul experienced. Only then will we be able to say with Paul, **“To the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.”** (1 Timothy 1:17).



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Services

Sunday: 9:30 AM

10:20 AM

6:00 PM

Wednesday: 7:00 PM



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Jeff Nunn
Kyle Pope

Deacons:

Dean Bowers
Eddie Cook
Steve Dixon
Jack Langley
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Brady McAlister
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Lance Purcell
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Evangelists:

Kyle Pope
Andrew Dow

A Trustworthy Statement (1 Timothy 1:15)

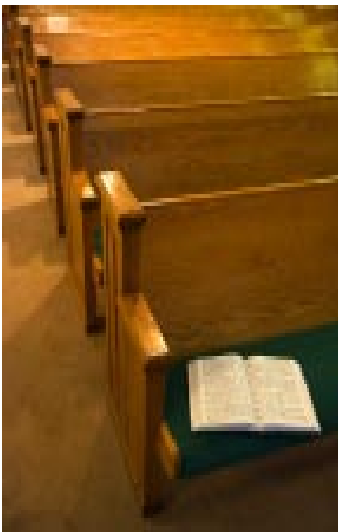
By Andrew Dow

In his first epistle, Peter wrote that the epistles of Paul contain **“some things hard to understand”** (1 Peter 3:15-16, NASB). One doesn’t need to read many of Paul’s letters to see what Peter is getting at. Paul definitely had an amazing mastery of Old Testament Scriptures and used them frequently in his outstanding, sometimes dizzying arguments. I would suggest, however, that while Paul certainly wrote some difficult things, there were other times when Paul was quite plain about what he meant.

As Paul writes to the young preachers, Timothy and Titus, he gives them instructions that they are to use as they work with various congregations of God’s people. Within these letters there are at least five occasions in which Paul makes his point blatantly clear. In each case he uses the phrase, **“It is a trustworthy statement”** (1 Timothy 1:15; 3:1; 4:9; 2 Timothy 2:11; Titus 3:8). Two of these passages add that the saying is **“deserving full acceptance”** (1 Timothy 1:15; 4:9). By using these phrases Paul removes any doubts the reader might have concerning the importance of what was just said or what was about to be said. Since Paul, guided by the Spirit of God, writes so emphatically by

using these statements, it would only be wise for us to consider some things to which these statements refer.

In the very first of these “trustworthy statements,” Paul writes, **“It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all”** (1 Timothy 1:15). Notice this isn’t just a “trustworthy statement,” but it is one “deserving



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full acceptance.” What then is this statement that Paul emphasizes for us? It is threefold: (1) Christ came into the world; (2) He did so in order to save sinners; (3) of all the sinners Christ has saved, Paul considered himself the worst. Let’s examine these three things further.

CHRIST CAME INTO THE WORLD

The first part of Paul’s “trustworthy statement” in this text is the simple fact that Jesus entered the world. There is an implication within this statement that is important to note. That Christ came into the world indicates that He must have come *from* elsewhere. Jesus was not, as some would have us believe, merely a man who taught good, moral lessons in the first century. To the contrary, Jesus humbled Himself from His lofty position in heaven to come and dwell among men. Paul encouraged the Philippians to imitate Christ’s attitude of humility. Christ **“did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself”** (Philippians 2:6-7). Jesus gave up the position He held—equality with God—by coming into the world, becoming flesh, and dwelling among sinners (John 1:14). Furthermore, Jesus clearly tells Pilate near the end of His life, **“My kingdom is not of this world”** (John 18:36).

The fact that Jesus came into the world is necessary for the entirety of the gospel to be true. In 1 Corinthians 15, Paul demonstrates the gospel he preached. He does so in the context to argue that the resurrection is something in which we can have hope and confidence. But a similar argument can be made to show that Jesus did indeed come to the world. If Jesus never humbled Himself by coming into the world, He would never have been sacrificed for our sins, buried, and raised (1 Corinthians 15:3-4).

Despite what some may say to tear down our faith, we can remain confident that Jesus did come into the world. Matthew and Luke give accounts of our Lord’s miraculous entrance into this world (Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 2:1-20). Each verifies the other and shows Jesus’ birth to be historically factual. Christ came into the world, but what He came to do is of much more importance.

CHRIST CAME TO SAVE SINNERS

“Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners” (1 Timothy 1:15). How great a Savior we have, that He would humble Himself **“by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross”** (Philippians 2:8). Christ did not, however, die in vain or without cause. **“Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God”** (1 Peter 3:18). This was the plan of God all along. Jehovah prophesied through Isaiah of Jesus, **“He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, and by His scourging we are healed... the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him”** (Isaiah 53:5-6). It was always God’s intention to offer a more perfect sacrifice than any of the animal sacrifices of the Old Law (Hebrews 9:13-14). What a blessing it was for John to finally announce, **“Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”** (John 1:29).

Perhaps Jesus summed it up best in His encounter with Zaccheus. When Jesus insisted that he must stay at Zaacheus’ house that day, the crowd **“began**

to grumble, saying, ‘He has gone to be the guest of a man who is a sinner’” (Luke 19:7). After hearing Zaccheus’ repentant plea and announcing salvation had come upon his house, Jesus made the powerful statement, **“The Son of Man has come to seek and save that which was lost”** (Luke 19:10). Why did Christ come into the world? To save sinners. How blessed we are to have the confidence that this statement is trustworthy!

CHRIST SAVED EVEN PAUL

Paul could have said, **“Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners,”** and stopped there. Certainly that alone **“is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance.”** However, the inspired apostle goes on to explain that of the sinners Christ saved, **“I am foremost of all”** (1 Timothy 1:15). A look at the context shows that this is