

I Obtained Mercy

1 Timothy 1:12-17

- The Apostle Paul is writing to Timothy in the book we'll discuss today
- And Paul, in the short section we address, is praising God for His mercy
- He is reminding Timothy of the mercy he has received
- He is reminding anyone who reads it after Timothy of the mercy they have received
- Today, it serves as our reminder

- We're in 1 Timothy 1:12-17
- "I Obtained Mercy" is the theme

- The most unusual people are selected by God and used in His ministry
- This has been the case from the very beginning
- His mercy and grace are at play in the lives of all His servants
- And it is only by them that we are made usable

- Paul the Apostle was greatly used by God
- But look at his background
- He was hardly the ideal candidate by man's standards
- Perhaps he was the last one we would have imagined to be the servant he was
- What happened?

- Our text begins to explain...

1 Timothy 1:12

12 And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry;

- No one has a place in ministry that is not given by God
- We serve at His direction and at His choosing
- He knows our faithfulness or lack thereof and provides enablement
- All our resources for success come from Him
- For this, He deserves to be thanked

- Paul was thankful for his place of service
- Partially, because it was so unlikely
- Do you remember his testimony?

- He begins to explain...

1 Timothy 1:13

13 Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.

- When Paul was a religious, but lost man, he blasphemed against God, persecuted God's people, injuring them
- He deserved punishment for this, but received none
- This is mercy
- He did these things because he didn't believe in Jesus and because he was ignorant about who the Messiah was
- But he did it

- You don't have to be committing these types of sins to be considered "in need of mercy"
- All are sinners
- The wages of sin is death
- All must pay for their sin
- When we don't, it is because of God's mercy

- There was more at work here, just as there is more at work for any believer in Christ
- Let's read on...

1 Timothy 1:14

14 And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.

- The word for exceeding abundant is overflowing
- Grace is a gift from God, which we don't deserve
- And that gift overflowed in Paul's life
- And with the grace came the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus

- We're getting a picture of all God does when He saves us and sets us to work in the great commission
- No matter what our background or depth of entrenchment in sin
- He pulls us out
- Setting us aside for His use

- Because of mercy we avoid punishment
- Because of grace we are given an immeasurable gift
- All comes through God's son Jesus
- Who took the punishment we deserved for sin on the cross
- And it seems Paul is constantly aware of this...

1 Timothy 1:15

15 This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.

- Here is a true statement that should be accepted without question, Paul declares
- Jesus came into the world to save sinners
- Paul regards himself as the worst of them
- Chief of sinners
- But we are really no different

- We are all sinners by birth and sinners by choice
- Violating His law, missing the mark, acting as our own gods, far from Him
- For each of us, the story is different, but there is no human story without sin
- And this sin is more than enough to separate us from God for good
- For He is altogether holy
- Nothing defiled or unclean enters His presence
- This is the wonder of Jesus
- Leaving heaven to dwell among us
- A sinless man among none but sinners
- Submitting Himself to an unjust execution
- Willingly dying in our place and for our sins
- Paul had first-hand experience...

1 Timothy 1:16

16 Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.

- Paul is indeed an example to us
- A trophy of God's grace
- A testimony to the mercy and longsuffering of our God
- One who shows us no one is too far gone
- His grace extends even unto us
- For it extended to Paul, right?
- God deserves praise for all this...

1 Timothy 1:17

17 Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

- We know that this merciful God is the eternal King
- He rules forever
- He is not seen by mortal eyes
- The only-wise God
- Worthy of honor and worthy of glory
- Paul's personal testimony should remind us of this
- Our personal testimony should constantly remind us
- We are the recipients of wonderful gifts
- Gifts that can only come from Christ