



**Faith Baptist Church of Cabot, Arkansas**  
**Pastor's Mid-Week Bible Study**  
**October 7, 2009**

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**Lesson Four – Exceedingly Abundant Grace**  
**1 Timothy 1:12-17**

And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because He counted me faithful, putting *me* into the ministry, although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy because I did *it* ignorantly in unbelief. And the grace of our Lord was exceedingly abundant, with faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. 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. However, for this reason I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show all longsuffering, as a pattern to those who are going to believe on Him for everlasting life. Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise, *be* honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

### Introduction

The Apostle Paul has left his son in the faith, Timothy, in Ephesus to deal with issues in the church there. In particular, he wants Timothy to confront the law teachers who were in reality ignorant of the true purpose of the law, particularly in relation to the Gospel. Paul was himself once a man of the law, ignorantly persecuting those who declared the Gospel of grace. As he contemplates the law and the Gospel, Paul is overcome with gratitude to God for delivering him from his ignorance and changing him from persecutor of the Gospel to preacher of the Gospel.

### Exegesis

- ❖ Placed into ministry
  - Counted faithful

Paul says that Jesus Christ counted him faithful when He put him into the ministry. But on what basis was he counted faithful? Why was confidence put into Paul? Was it Paul's strength and abilities that warranted such confidence? No. Paul was enabled by the Lord. Jesus was confident in Paul because Jesus was Paul's strength.

- Converted from insolence

Before his conversion, Paul slandered the Lord Jesus Christ, put believers to flight and treated Christianity with contempt. There was nothing remotely admirable in Saul (pre-conversion name of Paul) from a Christian viewpoint. His conversion and calling were enabled only by the mercy of Jesus Christ. Such it is for all of us.

- ❖ Plucked out of unbelief
  - The ignorance of unbelief

In Acts 9, the persecutor Saul was breathing threats and murder against the disciples of Jesus Christ as he set out to Damascus to arrest any belonging to "the Way." He did not believe in Jesus as the Christ, but rather was "sold out" to the Judaism in which he was

raised. He saw Christianity as a threat against the faith in which he was raised. He was ignorant of the truth of Jesus.

On that road to Damascus, everything changed. Jesus revealed Himself personally to Saul and Saul was converted. When Saul realized that Jesus was indeed the Christ, the Messiah, he believed. And though he lost his physical sight for a while, his eyes were fully opened to behold the beauty of the Savior.

➤ The exceedingly abundant grace of Jesus

In the revelation of Jesus on the road to Damascus, grace overflowed into Saul's life. With that grace came faith and love. Grace brought Saul to faith in Jesus as the Christ and brought the love of God to Saul changing the hate filled murderer into a loving and compassionate preacher of the Gospel. The Apostle Paul takes no credit for his conversion, but credits it all to the grace of Jesus.

❖ Providing an example

The Apostle wanted everyone to know and accept Jesus Christ as the Savior of sinners. Reflecting on his life, Paul says "I am chief." Paul saw himself as standing head and shoulders above anyone else when it came to sin. Yet Paul had experienced the mercy of Christ.

Paul's experience of mercy became an example to others. His conversion demonstrates the patience of God in dealing with sinful humanity. No one should despair of mercy. Paul's life makes it clear that Jesus came to save any sinner regardless of how great his sin may be perceived by himself or others.

❖ Praising the King

It is as if while considering the richness of Jesus' mercy and grace in his life, Paul cannot contain himself. He must praise the God who provided his salvation.

### **Application**

1. The message for the unbeliever: there is a Savior for you. It matters not the extent of your sins. Do not reject the revelation of Jesus in your life. Receive His mercies while they are available. Believe in Jesus the Christ.
2. The message for the believer:
  - a. Do not discount anyone as being unworthy of the grace of God or beyond the call of God.
  - b. Do not view your experience of grace as a sign of personal superiority. Paul said "I am chief" not "I was chief but have now become something special."
  - c. Do not give up praying for the salvation of sinners in your family, your work place, your circle of friends, etc.

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This lesson was prepared by Brent D. Summerhill, Pastor of Faith Baptist Church in Cabot, Arkansas. Permission is granted to reproduce this lesson, but please do not alter the content.

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