

## **Using the Law Lawfully: A Short Study on Paul and the Law in 1 Timothy**

Greg A. Couser

*Associate Professor of Bible and Greek*

*Cedarville University*

*Cedarville, OH 45314*

For someone who has been “laboring in the word and teaching,” or even just a good student of the Scriptures, to mention a given biblical book is to bring to mind a set of ideas, impressions, even events. For many, to think of the Pastoral Epistles is to think of “chair” passages in bibliology. Certainly at the top of the list would be the great passage of 2 Timothy 3:15-16 on the inspiration of the Scriptures. Closely associated may also be Paul’s admonition to “handle accurately the word of truth” (2 Tim 2:15). To these one could also add 1 Timothy 1:9, “the Law is good provided that it is used appropriately, since we know that the Law was not enacted for the righteous man . . . .” In this brief study, the goal is to probe this passage in order to see if it can contribute anything to the area of bibliology known as hermeneutics. What does this passage reveal about the principles guiding Paul in his interpretation of the Law? Does this passage or surrounding context actually illustrate how these principles function? In the process we will need to unpack some interpretively challenging issues in order to show that hermeneutics is at the heart of this passage. Then we will move on to try to surface the hermeneutical principles at work as well as any indications as to how these principles are actually worked out in the text. In the end, this will hopefully make a small contribution to that endless discussion on Paul and the Law as well as to the relationship of the approach to the Law in 1 Timothy to that of Paul elsewhere.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Space will not allow a full presentation of why this author sees the traditional view of Pauline authorship as the most *historically* plausible and convincing explanation for the production, content, and canonical status of these letters. For a thorough defense, as well as a nearly complete bibliography on the issue of the authenticity of these letters, see W. D. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, WBC 46 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2000), lxxxiii-cxxix. For a concise overview of the issues with penetrating insights, see S. E. Porter, “Pauline Authorship and the Pastoral Epistles,” *BBR* 5 (1995), 105-123, and “Pauline Authorship and the Pastoral Epistles: A Response to R. W. Wall’s Response” *BBR* 6 (1996), 133-138.

### Preliminaries: Hermeneutics at the Heart

Surprisingly for a passage that has received so little independent attention, 1 Timothy 1:8-11 is full of grist for the interpretive mill. And because the primary thrust of this paper is to get at the hermeneutical assumptions and principles at work here, there is a need to address a number of these interpretive issues to set a foundation for our discussion.

First, a careful attention to the thought flow of 1 Timothy 1:3-20 and a recognition of its connections with 3:14-16 and 6:2b-21 is necessary. To begin with 1 Timothy 1:3-20, we find that it is a distinct literary unit held together by an *inclusio* framework.<sup>2</sup> The framework is centered upon the “command” to Timothy given via prophetic utterance (1:18), elucidated initially in 1:3-5 and revisited in v. 18. With regard to the section that will occupy our attention, 1:8-11, this paragraph itself asserts the proper approach to the “Law” over against the aberrations of the antagonists attacked in vv. 3-7. Then the section immediately following, 1:12-17, goes on to elaborate on what Paul means by τὸ ἐπιτεῦχον τῆς μακαρίας ἐπιστολῆς σου (v. 11b).<sup>3</sup> As such, 1:12-17 not only explains what Paul means by “entrusted,” but this section also explicates the nature of the “gospel” which serves as the ultimate interpretive norm (κατὰ, v. 11a), in some sense, that moves Paul to condemn the opponents’ use of the Law in vv. 3-7.

Second, 1 Timothy 1:3-20 stands alongside 3:14-4:16 and 6:2b-21 in that each of these passages demonstrates a common arrangement of conceptual units.<sup>4</sup> Each passage begins by referring to some specific aspect of the danger threatening the Ephesian community (1:3-11; 3:14-4:5; 6:2b-10), continues with a reminder of the personal call/charge from God to Paul (1:18-20) or to Timothy (4:6-10; 6:11-16), and concludes with an encouragement to Timothy to stand strong in his opposition to the false teaching (1:18-20; 4:11-16; 6:17-21). At the same time, this rough parallelism gains additional depth by the fact that key concepts are developed and extended through them. So, e.g., when it is seen that the charge to promote the οἰκονομία σου (1:4) is recalled and elaborated on in the instructions on how to live as a member of God’s household (3:14), a household that has its possibility and

<sup>2</sup> I. H. Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1999), 361 and G. Couser, “God and Christian Existence in the Pastoral Epistles: Toward Theological Method and Meaning,” *NovT* 42/3 (2000), 273.

<sup>3</sup> G. Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus* (Peabody, MA: Hendrikson, 1984), 50.

<sup>4</sup> For a detailed development of the interconnections between these sections as well as of the theological development that results, see Couser, “Christian Existence,” 272-76. This builds off of (with some modification) the earlier work by P. Bush (“A Note of the Structure of 1 Timothy,” *NTS* 36 [1990], 152-156).

foundation in the christologically centered *to\ th=j eu0sebei/aj musth/rion* (3:16) and finds its life “now and to come” in the pursuit of *eu0se/beia* (4:7-8), one can understand how *eu0se/beia* can serve in the concluding section (6:6) as the shorthand, alternate designation of the life that promotes the *oi0konomi/an qeou=* of 1:4, even without a direct reference back to the household concept.<sup>5</sup>

Beside these structural considerations are a number of other foundational interpretive issues needing consideration. There has been some discussion concerning the nature of the “Law” in 1 Timothy 1:8 and 9 (cf. *nomodida/skaloi*, v. 7). What is the Law that Paul is referring to here? With regard to the reference in 1:8 there is very little doubt that Paul is speaking of the OT Law in some sense.<sup>6</sup> The discussion of the Law in 1:8 is set over against the misuse of the Law by false teachers in the Ephesian community (v. 7). The community context suggests “Scripture” to be the sense which we should attach to “Law.” Moreover, elsewhere in these letters, the Jewish character of the antagonists (*oi( e0k th=j peritomh=j*, Titus 1:10) and their interest in “Jewish myths,” myths being associated with the aberrant use of the Law in 1 Timothy 1:4, strongly point to the OT Law as the object whose use is at issue.<sup>7</sup> That is, the Law in the sense of the Mosaic Law is strongly suggested by the opponents interest in “genealogies” (1 Tim 1:4; cf. Titus 3:9), presumably the portions of the OT found in the Mosaic Law,<sup>8</sup> and by the implicit reference to the Decalogue in the “vice list” of 1 Timothy 1:9-10.<sup>9</sup> Interestingly enough, this implicit reference can be read as a bit of biting irony in that the Law to which the antagonists are appealing in their confident incompetence condemns them. They find themselves to be working against the Law in their opposition to “sound teaching” (1:10b) like the very types of people mentioned in the

<sup>5</sup> Couser, “Christian Existence,” 271-275.

<sup>6</sup> L. Donelson (*Pseudepigraphy and Ethical Argument in the Pastoral Epistles* [Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1986], 126) suggests that the false teachers, with their interest in “genealogies” and “myths,” might have been “puzzling out the difficulties in Paul with a detailed an aggressive hermeneutic of the OT” (cf. S. Westerholm, “The Law and the ‘Just Man’ [1 Tim. 1:3-11],” *ST* 36 [1982], 81).

<sup>7</sup> For the commonality of the heresy envisioned as threatening the communities at Ephesus and Crete (although noting some distinctions with regard to the latter), see Towner, *Goal*, 21-45. On the difference of approach between 1 & 2 Tim and Titus, the latter being more apotropaic in nature, see G. Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy and Titus* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1988), 11, and S. Cauley, “Fighting the Good Fight: The Pastoral Epistles in Canonical-Critical Perspective,” *SBLSP* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987), 561.

<sup>8</sup> J. N. D. Kelly, *The Pastoral Epistles* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1960), 45; Marshall, *Pastoral*, 366; E. Schlarb, *Die gesunde Lehre: Häresie und Wahrheit im Spiegel der Pastoralbriefe* (Marburg: Elwert, 1990), 83-93.

<sup>9</sup> N. J. McEleney, “The Vice Lists of the Pastoral Epistles,” *CBQ* 36 (1974), 206-210; R. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2000), 32.

Decalogue dependent vice list.<sup>10</sup> Or to put it another way, it confirms that these who would be *nomodida/skaloi* “do not know what they are talking about or what they so confidently affirm” (NIV; 1:7).

Although this reading of the passage argues strongly for understanding every reference to the “Law” in 1:8-11 as a reference to the Mosaic Law, not all commentators are convinced with regard to “law” in 1:9b. This use of “law” has been seen by some to be a more universalizing reference to law in general.<sup>11</sup> One might be excused for being puzzled at such an abrupt shift given that the immediate context deals so clearly with the Mosaic Law. Nonetheless, it is the text itself that gives commentators pause. To be specific, it is the apparent ambiguity of *dikai/w|* which gives rise to the shift. Is *dikai/w|* to be understood to refer to the “right-living” person in general (something akin to the modern “law-abiding citizen”) or to a Christian as a right-living person? Thus, we will need to decide on the referent of *dikai/w|* before we can remove any remaining ambiguity concerning the nature of the “law” in 1:9.

In the only known article that has undertaken a pointed study of 1 Timothy 1:8-11, S. Westerholm convincingly argues that the “righteous person” should be understood to be a “Christian as a right-living person.”<sup>12</sup> First, he notes that Paul is arguing against the applicability of his opponents’ esoteric treatment of the Law to the believers at Ephesus. This makes it very unlikely that he would shift his interest away from believers to the right-living person in general at this point. Second, he points out the contrast here is a contrast between the righteous person and all those opposed to the “sound teaching.” This suggests that it is a Christian who is being referred to because one of the marks of believers throughout 1 Timothy is their adherence to the sound teaching (cf. esp. 4:16). Third, Paul’s testimony that is closely juxtaposed<sup>13</sup> to 1:8-11 in 1:12-17 puts forward the mercy and grace of

<sup>10</sup> Cf. McEleney, “Vice Lists,” 210, and Marshall, *Pastoral*, 378.

<sup>11</sup> W. Lock, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1924), 12; B. S. Easton, *The Pastoral Epistles* (London: SCM, 1948), 110; M. Dibelius & H. Conzelmann, *The Pastoral Epistles* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1972), 22; Marshall (*Pastoral*, 377) seems to prefer this when he states that “there is a specific allusion to the false teachers’ misunderstanding of the OT law (1:8) followed by a universal reference to the law in general (1:9) so as to create the broadest possible denunciation of his opponents.”

<sup>12</sup> “Law,” 84. See also C. Spicq, “*di/kaioj*,” *Theological Lexicon of the New Testament*, trans. J. D. Ernest, vol. 1 (Peabody, MA: Hendrikson, 1994), 326; P. Towner, *The Goal of our Instruction: The Structure of Theology and Ethics in the Pastoral Epistles*, JSNTSup 34 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1989), 163; and Mounce, *Pastoral*, 34.

<sup>13</sup> See the discussion above of the structure of 1 Tim 1:3-21 which shows that the close relationship is not merely one of proximity but is explicit in that 1:12-17 is an explication of *to\ eu0agge/lion th=j do/chj tou= makari/ou qeou=*,

God (1:12-14,16) made manifest to him in the ministry of Christ.<sup>14</sup> It is this grace that schools Paul (cf. Titus 2:13; 2 Tim 1:9-11) in the Christian life and, thus, sets his life off over against those trying to live by the speculative treatment of the Law, a Law not read (in some sense) consistent with Christ. While the “blasphemer” Paul (1:13) had become a “pattern for those about to believe” (1:16), the opponents are those who must be disciplined *i#na paideuqw=sin mh\ blasfhmei=n* (1:20). Thus, it seems apparent that 1 Timothy 1:9 continues to deal with the believer and their relationship to the Law such that this issue is the consistent emphasis throughout this section (1:8-11).

### **Particulars: Issues Pertaining to Hermeneutical Principles Implied/Demonstrated**

Against this interpretive backdrop we are now ready to examine more closely the hermeneutical issues embedded in this passage. First, we will proceed by looking at some terms which reveal both Paul’s view of the Law as well as his approach which he claims is consistent with that view.

With the affirmation, “the Law is good,” in light of the usage of *kalol\j* elsewhere in the Pastorals, Paul seems to be saying something more than that the “Law is useful and leads to good results.”<sup>15</sup> Marshall, in his excursus on “Goodness and good works in the Pastoral Epistles,” demonstrates that something is good in the Pastorals primarily because it is something “ordained or approved by God.”<sup>16</sup> In addition, given the context of the proper use of the Law, *kei=tai* (v. 9a) adds to this impression of the law as something “ordained” *by God*. It is true that *kei=mai* and *no/moj* appear together regularly in Greek literature and take on the technical significance of “to be laid down, or given.”<sup>17</sup> Nonetheless, in this context it seems hard to resist the nuance that God was the one understood to have “laid down, or given” the Law. This thought, of course, is explicit elsewhere in the Pastorals (cf. 2 Tim 3:15-16). Moreover, since the phrase including *kei=tai* stands grammatically as the explication of what it means to *nomi/mwj*

---

o4 e0pisteu/qhn e0gw/.

<sup>14</sup> Westerholm, “Law,” 85.

<sup>15</sup> Lock, *Pastoral*, 22-23.

<sup>16</sup> *Pastoral*, 229 & 375. Marshall (227) sees this possibility in that *kalol\j* develops a technical sense “to refer to something specifically Christian,” e.g. “the good teaching” (1 Tim 4:6b); “the good warfare” (1:18); “the good fight of faith” (6:12a); “the good confession” (6:12b). See also G. Knight (*Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992], 81) who likens the affirmation in 1 Tim 1:8 with that of Paul in Rom 7:14,16, where it carries the sense of “intrinsically good because it is given by God.”

<sup>17</sup> F. Büchsel, “*kei=mai*,” *TDNT* 3 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965), 354.

xrh=tai,<sup>18</sup> the “lawful use” of the Law is to use the Law in accord with the divinely intended purpose for which it was given. Not only do both imply that the Law has “specific functions and limitations, and these must be respected,”<sup>19</sup> they also imply that those limitations have been shaped by authorial intent. The “goodness” of the Law is to be found “if” (e0a/n; v.8b) these proper limits govern its use. The broader context seems to lend weight to this view. The esoteric treatment of the Law by the antagonists had placed them in opposition to God’s saving work (oi0konomi/an qeou=, 1:4).<sup>20</sup> They have taken something “good,” when used in accordance with God’s intent for it, and twisted it. As a result, they (and those who follow them; cf. 2 Tim 2:18) were making use of the Law in a manner that not only undermined their faith in God (1 Tim 1:19; cf. 6:21), but led to the very slandering of God himself (1:20; cf.6:20).

The question before us at this point is to inquire into how the limitation found in God’s intent came to expression in Paul’s treatment of the Law. In other words, does this passage offer us any information concerning a clearer articulation of the intent and the actual effect of this intent as norm on his treatment of the Law? It is at this juncture that the relationship of kata\ to\ eu0agge/lion in 1 Timothy 1:11 to that which precedes is crucial. There is little need to discuss the sense of kata\ here, since it is generally agreed that it “designates the standard against which something is judged.”<sup>21</sup> However, the relationship of the prepositional phrase to that which precedes is controversial. What exactly is it that the “gospel” stands over against as a norm? There seems to be a division running basically along two lines.

On the one hand, most commentators have suggested that it stands in a loose relationship to vv. 8-10.<sup>22</sup> In this connection this phrase indicates that the whole of the discussion concerning the proper use of the Law in these verses is consistent with the gospel entrusted by God to Paul. In other words, Paul is declaring that his interpretive stance toward the Law is a specifically *Christian* approach.<sup>23</sup> Furthermore, on this view the “sound teaching” in v. 10 does not provide the guidance for the use of

<sup>18</sup> Knight, *Pastoral*, 82.

<sup>19</sup> Mounce, *Pastoral*, 31.

<sup>20</sup> For the significance of this phrase, see Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy*, 42, 48, 92; Donelson, *Pseudepigraphy*, 133; and F. Young, *The Theology of the Pastoral Epistles* (Cambridge: CUP, 1994), 55.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 42; cf. BDAG, 512, and M. J. Harris, “kata\,” *NIDNTT* 3: 1200-1201.

<sup>22</sup> Marshall, *Pastoral*, 381; cf. N. J. D. White, *The First and Second Epistles to Timothy and the Epistle of Titus* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1910), 96; Lock, *Pastoral*, 13; J. Roloff, *Die Erste Briefe an Timotheus*, EKKNT 15 (Zürich/Neukirchen-Vluyn: Benziger/Neukirchener, 1988), 79.

<sup>23</sup> Westerholm, “Law,” 85.

the Law, it merely stands over against the various vices in the sense that its ethical dimensions would be opposed to such behavior. It is a simple but effective way to extend and amplify the vice list. In short, its relationship to the subject at hand, the “lawful use of the Law,” is primarily incidental.

On the other hand, others see a more direct connection to the *th=| u(giainou/sh| didaskali/a|* of v. 10, given their close proximity.<sup>24</sup> Knight, in particular, notes that the other uses of *kata\ to\ eu0agge/lion* in Paul suggest that this phrase usually “indicates the norm for the main thought in closest proximity to it” (cf. Rom 2:16, 11:28; 16:25; 2 Tim 2:8).<sup>25</sup> Romans 2:16 is particularly instructive, according to Knight. There, as in 1 Timothy 1:11, the phrase occurs at the end of a longer passage and is used in relationship to the Law. In Knight’s view, the phrase modifies the nearest main idea, “that God will judge,” and does not refer back to the beginning of the section nor does it give the direct norm for his instruction about the Law. Knight also points to the *kata/* phrases in the Pastorals (e.g. 1 Tim 6:3; Titus 1:9) to indicate uses similar to the present passage. Given this backdrop, Knight views the phrase in 1 Timothy 1:11 as a validation of the sound teaching’s congruence with the gospel. Now what this suggests is that Paul’s “sound teaching,” unlike the false teaching of the antagonists, does not press the Law into service in a manner inconsistent with its relationship to God’s saving plan in Christ, the gospel.<sup>26</sup> Thus, the “sound teaching” fills a more central role. Governed as it is by the “gospel,” the “sound teaching” is that which invalidates and opposes the teaching of the false teachers, including their own use of the Law.

Marshall attempts to resolve this issue by suggesting that it is “not so much a question of the position of the phrase in relation to its referent . . . as it is the kind of material it validates.”<sup>27</sup> In other words, the real question is whether the author is trying to validate the substance of the sound teaching or his interpretive approach to the Law. Given the development of the argument up to this point, Marshall contends, it would seem most crucial that the author validate his view of the Law. The more direct grounding of Paul’s approach in the gospel, being viewed as more authoritative than “sound teaching,” makes better sense in a context condemning the heretical use of the Law. In addition, Marshall points to the similar phrase in 2 Timothy 2:8, *kata\ to\ eu0agge/lion mou*, arguing that there the phrase validates the kerygmatic material that precedes: “Remember Jesus Christ, raised from

<sup>24</sup> Knight, *Pastoral*, 89-90; Mounce, *Pastoral*, 42.

<sup>25</sup> *Pastoral*, 90.

<sup>26</sup> For “gospel” in the Pastorals, see esp. Towner, *Goal*, 121-24.

<sup>27</sup> *Pastoral*, 382.

the dead, descended from David (NIV).”<sup>28</sup>

While agreeing with Marshall that the issue is not primarily the nearness of the referents but the nature of that which is being validated, there are structural grounds for seeing the “sound teaching” as that which is being grounded. In other words, there are reasons to suspect, when the immediate context and the overall structure of the letter is brought into view, that the grounding of the “sound teaching” in the gospel may be more central to Paul’s overall argument.

First, it is important to note that the “sound teaching” is that which places in bold relief the types of people for whom the Law is relevant. In short, the Law is relevant for all types of people who live in opposition to the “sound teaching” (eīl ti e3teron th=| u(giainou/sh| didaskali/a| a0nti/keitai, 1:10b). In other words, the “sound teaching” is that which plays the crucial role in how and when the Law is used. The “gospel” is related, but indirectly. This would then shift the need for validation to the “sound teaching” as that which governed the use of the Law, the very issue in question. Second, this also implies that the “sound teaching” is for the believer, the Christian living righteously, unlike the “Law.” Indeed, throughout these letters what seems distinctive about Paul’s use of *didaskali/a* is that it has a narrow focus on believers. In particular, it is instruction for believers that, as here (1:12-17), is likely a drawing out of the implications of God’s saving acts in Christ for living (cf. Titus 2:1-15).<sup>29</sup> Thus, the “sound teaching” provides the alternative to the “Law” as that which directly and immediately guides the believer. Indeed, this is reinforced by the testimony of Paul in 1:12-17. Paul powerfully highlights the mercy and grace of Christ as that which made him into a pattern for all those yet to believe in Christ. It is the grace of God in Christ that takes center stage in shaping the life of the believer (cf. Titus 2:11-12). There is an implicit reference to an epochal shift in regard to that which forms the primary source of guidance for the believer. Third, this is the first time that “sound teaching” is mentioned in the letter, and, if it is being grounded in the gospel here, it would better explain how Paul could use it without but the vaguest of qualifications in 1 Timothy 4:6, 13, and 16. In these passages it is an essential to the life of *eu0se/beia*, the melding of a proper understanding of God’s saving work in Christ with living, which is essential for “life now and to come.”<sup>30</sup> This is also in line with what was earlier observed regarding Paul’s penchant for inter-relating key

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Towner, *Goal*, 123; H. von Lips, *Glaube-Gemeinde-Amt: Zum Verständnis der Ordination in den Pastoralbriefen*, FRLANT 122 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1979), 30.

<sup>30</sup> For this understanding of *eu0se/beia* see Towner, *Ibid.*, 147-52.

concepts across the three interwoven sections of the letter directed primarily to Timothy's personal behavior. One could also argue that it would be more likely that, given the importance of teaching in Paul's response to the antagonists, he would introduce it with some qualification. Finally, it may be worthy to note here that when Paul does make use of the Mosaic Law in 1 Timothy 5:18 it is coupled with a dominical saying.<sup>31</sup> This may picture Paul's use of the Law in so far as it is congruent with the epochal shift of authority to Christ as the primary guide for "handling" the Law. Note also how the "sound words" to which the antagonists are opposed are attributed to "our Lord Jesus Christ." This is debated as to whether it is the actual words of Jesus<sup>32</sup> or words that have their authority in Christ, as coming from him.<sup>33</sup> In any event, at least it can be said that the association of these teachings with Christ is what gives them their authority and warrant for belief. One could also point to the descriptions of Paul (1:12) and Timothy (4:6) as "servants" of Christ, an idea which is carried forward in the final chapter where Timothy is reminded of the "good confession" he was called to give, the "good confession" Christ gave before Pilate.

In agreement with Knight and Mounce *kata\ to\ euoagge/lion* appears to be directly related to the "sound teaching." It stands as the norm against which the "soundness" of any teaching could be judged. In turn, the "sound teaching" stands as the norm for the life of the believer and their engagement with the Law. When we inquire into the intent of God with regard to the use of the Law, as found in the teaching governed by the gospel, it seems to be that the Law must be read in light of the epochal shift of the ministry of Christ. This is evidenced in the juxtaposition of Paul's testimony alongside the discussion in 1:8-11. This testimony serves to highlight the mercy and grace of God in Christ as that which now schools the believer into a faithful promoter of God's saving work. Not only is this Christ-centered hermeneutic strongly implied in the relationship between 1:8-11 and 1:12-17, but this is enforced by the coupling of a saying of Jesus with a passage from the Law in 5:18 and the constant references to the authority of and ministry as service to Christ as the hallmark of the teaching and life that promotes God's saving purposes, both for the servant of Christ and the ones he serves (cf. 1 Tim 4:16).

If we were to put such a stance toward the Law in terms of Paul's other writings which deal more explicitly with this issue, it stands

---

<sup>31</sup> So B. P. Wolfe, "Scripture in the Pastoral Epistles: Premarcion Marcionism?" *PRS* 16/1 (1989), 13; Marshall, *Pastoral*, 616-17; Mounce, *Pastoral*, 311.

<sup>32</sup> Roloff, *Timotheus*, 331.

<sup>33</sup> Easton, *Pastoral*, 24; Fee, *1 & 2 Timothy*, 141.

comfortably alongside the position articulated by D. Moo.<sup>34</sup> After a thorough treatment of the key passages Moo uses 1 Corinthians 9:21 as the “clearest statement of the situation of the Christian with respect to God’s law.”<sup>35</sup> Moo argues that the Law of Moses was a “specific codification of God’s will for a specific situation: Israel under the Sinaitic Covenant.”<sup>36</sup> It is not binding, then, for those who live under the new covenant inaugurated in the work of Christ. They are bound to the “Law of Christ.” This is composed of the “teaching of Christ and the apostles and the directing influence of the Holy Spirit” with a “strong continuity with the law of Moses” in so far as those laws are carried forward in the “law of Christ.”<sup>37</sup> In the earlier Paul, as well as in 1 Timothy, love is at the center (Gal 5:6; 1 Tim 1:5). This epochal shift brought about in the ministry of Christ de-centers the Mosaic Law as the direct and immediate authority in the life of the believer.

Finally, in conclusion, to note the passages which suggest the nature of God’s intent that stands over and conditions the use of the Law, we have at the same time seen possible glimpses of how such an intent would function interpretively, especially with regard to the relationship of the life and ministry of Jesus to the Law. As one last parting shot, could the very “vice list” within 1 Timothy 1:8-11 be an example of Paul reading the Law through the epochal shift of the ministry of Christ? McEleney has conclusively shown that this list “approximates the order of the Decalogue as it stands in the Hebrew texts, Josephus, and the LXX codices A and F.”<sup>38</sup> Nonetheless, the first three *kai* pairs (two terms connected by *kai*; cf. 1:9) are general references to the first four commandments dealing specifically with aspects of reverencing God (cf. Exod 20:3-11).<sup>39</sup> The general character preserves the importance of reverencing God without shaping such reverence in terms of Sabbath observance. Could Paul have chosen this list or developed it on his own with a view to the Decalogue read through the ministry of Christ?

---

<sup>34</sup> “The Law of Christ as the Fulfillment of the Law of Moses,” in *Law, the Gospel, and the Modern Christian: Five Views*, ed. W. Strickland (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1993), 319-76.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 368.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>38</sup> “Vice Lists,” 207.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*