

1 Timothy 1:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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;

Analysis

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; Paul continues his catalog of sins for which law exists. "Whoremongers" (pornois, πόρνοις) refers to those engaged in sexual immorality generally, including fornication and adultery. "Them that defile themselves with mankind" (arsenokoitais, ἀρσενοκοίταις) specifically describes homosexual practice—a compound word Paul likely coined from the Greek Septuagint's translation of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13, combining arsēn (male) and koitē (bed, sexual intercourse).

"Menstealers" (andrapodistais, ἀνδραποδισταῖς) are those who kidnap or traffic in human beings—slave traders. This condemns not merely the abuse of slaves but the entire slave trade based on kidnapping and forcibly enslaving free people. "Liars" (pseustais, ψεύσταις) are habitual deceivers who make falsehood their practice. "Perjured persons" (epiorkois, ἐπιόρκοις) are those who swear falsely, particularly in legal contexts, violating the ninth commandment.

Paul concludes with a comprehensive phrase: "if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine" (ei ti heteron tē hygiainousē didaskalia antikeitai, εἴ τι ἔτερον τῇ ὑγιαινούσῃ διδασκαλίᾳ ἀντίκειται). The phrase "sound doctrine" (hygiainousē didaskalia, ὑγιαινούσῃ διδασκαλίᾳ) literally means "healthy

teaching"—doctrine that promotes spiritual health rather than disease. This connects moral behavior with theological truth: ethics flow from doctrine.

Historical Context

Sexual immorality pervaded Greco-Roman culture. Temple prostitution was practiced in many pagan religions, including the cult of Artemis at Ephesus. Homosexual practice, particularly pederasty (relationships between adult men and adolescent boys), was accepted and even celebrated in Greek culture. Paul's clear condemnation of such practices stood in stark opposition to surrounding cultural norms.

The slave trade was a massive economic enterprise in the Roman Empire. While the New Testament doesn't directly call for abolition of slavery as an institution (which would have been politically impossible and socially revolutionary), it does condemn the kidnapping and selling of human beings. Early Christian teaching on human dignity (all made in God's image) and brotherly love ultimately undermined slavery's moral foundation.

Lying and false testimony were common in legal proceedings where witnesses could be bribed or intimidated. Business dealings often involved deception. Against this background, biblical standards of truth-telling and covenant faithfulness represented a radically different approach to human relationships. Christians were to be known for truthfulness and integrity.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How can Christians maintain biblical sexual ethics while demonstrating genuine love toward those whose lives contradict these standards?

2. In what ways does "sound doctrine" produce healthy spiritual life and moral behavior in your experience?
3. What contemporary forms of injustice and oppression should concern Christians committed to biblical standards of righteousness?

Interlinear Text

πόρνοις	ἀρσενοκοίταις	ἀνδραποδισταῖς
For whoremongers	for them that defile themselves with mankind	for menstealers
G4205	G733	G405
ψεύσταις	ἐπιόρκοις	καὶ
for liars	for perjured persons	and
G5583	G1965	G1487
τι	εἰ	τι
		ἄλλη
		ἄλλη
ἄγιαινούσῃ	διδασκαλίᾳ	ἀντίκειται
to sound	doctrine	that is contrary
G5198	G1319	G480

Additional Cross-References

Leviticus 18:22 (Parallel theme): Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination.

Romans 1:26 (Parallel theme): For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:

2 Timothy 4:3 (Parallel theme): 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;

Revelation 21:27 (Parallel theme): And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

1 Timothy 6:3 (Parallel theme): 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;

Titus 1:9 (Parallel theme): 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.

Jude 1:7 (Parallel theme): Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

Revelation 21:8 (Parallel theme): But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

Hebrews 13:4 (Parallel theme): Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.

Leviticus 20:13 (Parallel theme): If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them.