# 1Ti1abc Future church 1 A more loving community

# 1Timothy

## Part of the pastoral letters

### Letters about leadership

### Written Paul to Timothy in a troubled church in Ephesus

## Gnosticism was obscuring the truth

### It’s what you know that matters

### Spirit is good, flesh is evil

#### Ascetism (touched on in Ch 4)

#### Licentiousness

### The best argument won, so they argued

## Paul gives Timothy advice and says the future church will not be the same as it is now

### He focuses on God’s picture of the church

### Then he puts together a plan of how to get there

#### And the first step, given in Chapter 1, is of a loving community

# God wants a church where love is the goal

## Love coming from (1:5)

### A pure heart

### A good conscience

### A sincere faith

## All 3 are positive

### The overlap is the sweet spot of divine community

# God’s desire is based on God’s nature

## God is merciful

### Reasoned

## God is gracious

### Not reasoned

# The leader teaches the grace of God

### It’s at the heart of the gospel and the teaching

## Examples of teaching in such circumstances

### Paul (12-17)

### Hymenaeus & Alexander (19,20)

### Timothy

# Homegroup/Private study questions

# Background reading

### Paul visited Ephesus on his second journey (Acts 18:19) where he left Priscilla & Aquilla, then returned on the third journey (19:1ff) for a long visit (3 years). On his way back he sent for the elders of Ephesus to know of their progress and warn them (20:17ff)

# Church then and now

## How does the church get it’s ‘Christian’ values?

### Where do we find them?

### To what extent are they up for re-evaluation or negotiation or re-interpretation?

## How are Christian values different from society’s?

### You might want pick a couple of topics to examine and be specific: e.g. work, home-ownership, fashion, money, disability, sex outside of marriage, gender, religion, euthanasia, immunisation, prayer

## How is the modern church like the Ephesian one in being in a society that has different values?

### How should we be engaging with the world in discussing values

#### Should we be leading or reacting to those who want different values or ignoring the world’s values?

### If we just react, what reaction should we give?

# Love the goal

## Many things can be called ‘loving actions’ but often have other motives

### How astute do you believe Paul is by suggesting that there are 3 aspects that need looking at to test them: heart, conscience and faith?

#### Do you think this is better than just looking at one or two aspects? Explain your thinking

#### Does this preclude people without faith from testing actions? Explain your answer

### ‘Love that does not serve is no love at all’

#### How far do you agree with this?

## How does love based on grace change things in dealing with others?

### Explain your answer

## Will love based on mercy fail in the end?

### Explain your answer

# The church of the future

## How do you see HBC becoming a more loving community over the next few years?

### What will we need to do for that to happen?