

### **The Chief Of Sinners**

*“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.” I Timothy 1:15*

Let's focus on the words in this passage, “Of whom I am chief”. The word “Chief” in the Greek text literally means, “Foremost” or “First”. Paul in writing to Timothy concerning the mission of Jesus to save sinners, says that of those sinners I am first, I am before all others. Paul declares when it comes to being a sinner I am in first place!

Now if we believe that the Bible is a divine record written by the inspiration of God through the Holy Spirit, we must conclude then that this is not just Paul's estimate of himself, but this is the conclusion of God. So God is telling us in this passage, “I came to save sinners, and I have already saved the worst one”! And it is interesting that the person who is first among sinners was not a drunkard, a drug addict, or a prostitute, but was a self-righteous zealot who considered himself a defender of his faith!

Now many of you who have considered yourself the worst sinner who ever lived will have to give up the title. You are not the number one sinner! No matter how bad you have been there is at least one who was worse. No matter how far away you have gone there is one who traveled further. No matter how low you think yourself to be, there is one who is lower still.

So what does all of this mean for me? In the next verse Paul writes, *“I obtained mercy to be a pattern to those who follow”*. While Paul may have been foremost among sinners, he still however found that God's Grace was able to lift him up. And Paul is our pattern! The blood that cleansed the vilest can cleanse me! The mercy that touched the hardest heart can touch me! The love that loved the unlovable can love me! The grace that reached the lowest can reach me! There is no sinner beyond His reach. You may think you have gone too far but God has already reached past you and saved someone in worse shape! There is no excuse. Not one of us is beyond the loving arm of God.

There are some who resent the title of sinner at all. We want to believe that we are all OK. I'm OK and you're OK! But the fact remains that “all have sinned and fallen short of His glory”. We are not all OK. If we were all good than why the cross? Calvary is evidence that we needed a savior. The truth is we are all sinners. And sinners need a savior. And our Lord Jesus has proven He is up to the task of saving us by starting with the one in the worst condition!