

1 TIMOTHY

Main Theme: Paul's Pastoral Instruction to Timothy

Primary Reference Source: The McArthur Study Bible

Background: Timothy, a young man in his teens or early twenties, was from Lystra (Acts 16:1-3), a city in the Roman province of Galatia (part of modern Turkey). Paul met Timothy in Lystra on his first missionary journey (Acts 14:6-23). When Paul again came to Lystra on his second missionary journey, Paul chose Timothy to accompany him (Acts 16:1-3). Timothy was a friend, co-laborer, and disciple for the rest of Paul's life. He ministered with Paul in Berea, Athens, Corinth, and his final trip to Jerusalem which led to his arrest and his first Roman imprisonment. Paul often sent Timothy to churches as his representative. The epistle of 1 Timothy finds him on another assignment, serving as pastor of the church at Ephesus (1 Timothy 1:3).

Timothy ministered with Paul in:

Berea – Acts 17:14

Athens – Acts 17:5

Corinth – Acts 18:5, 2 Corinthians 1:19

Final trip to Jerusalem – Acts 20:4

Ephesus – Acts 19:21-22

Timothy was sent by Paul to minister to the churches as his representative, including:

Corinth – 1 Corinthians 4:17

Philippi – Philippians 2:19

Thessalonica – 1 Thessalonians 3:2

Ephesus – 1 Timothy 1:3

Overview of the Text: Paul's letter to Timothy is a practical letter containing pastoral instruction. The letter does not contain extensive doctrinal instruction, since Timothy was well versed in Paul's theology. The epistle addresses key issues which Timothy needed to keep in mind as pastor:

1. Keep the focus on the gospel (1 Timothy 1:3-17).
2. Know the qualifications for overseers and deacons (1 Timothy 3:1-13).
3. Warning to beware of apostates (1 Timothy 4:1-5).
4. Instruction for serving in the pastoral leadership position (1 Timothy 4:6-16).
5. Pursue the faith in word and in deed (1 Timothy 6: 11-16).
6. Show honor to true widows and the elders who rule the church (1 Timothy 5:3-25)
7. Guard the faith (1 Timothy 6:20-21)

SCRIPTURE VERSES AND SCRIPTURE TEXT FROM THE NEW KING JAMES VERSION BIBLE IN BOLD

1 Timothy Chapter 1

- 1. Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the commandment of God our Savior and the Lord Jesus Christ, our hope,**
- 2 To Timothy, a true son in the faith:**

Grace, mercy, and peace from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord.

1 Timothy 1:1-2 Paul opens his epistle to Timothy for instruction in the pastoral ministry by referring to his own apostleship which came by the command of God our Savior and the Lord Jesus Christ.

- 3. As I urged you when I went into Macedonia – remain in Ephesus that you may charge some that they teach no other doctrine,**
- 4 nor give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which cause disputes rather than godly edification which is in faith.**

1 Timothy 1:3-4 Paul gave Timothy specific instruction to stand firm in the gospel and instruct other leaders in the church to do the same. Paul's instruction also implied that Timothy was to take a stand against the false teachers.

- 5. Now the purpose of the commandment is love from a pure heart, from a good conscience, and from sincere faith,**

1 Timothy 1:5 The goal of effective preaching is to bring people to salvation through the gospel. This results in living a life characterized by love (self-denial & self-sacrifice). Conducting yourself in a manner which is pleasing to God produces a good conscience and demonstrates sincere faith.

- 6. from which some having strayed, have turned aside to idle talk,**
- 7. desiring to be teachers of the law, understanding neither what they say nor the things which they affirm.**

1 Timothy 1:6-7 Paul warns Timothy that there are those who have strayed from the faith engaging in meaningless conversation and pursuits. Men of this sort desire to be teachers because they enjoy the prestige.

- 8. But we know that the law is good if one uses it lawfully,**
- 9. knowing this: that the law is not made for a righteous person, but for the lawless and insubordinate, for the ungodly and for sinners, for the unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers,**

- 10. for fornicators, for sodomites, for kidnappers, for liars, for perjurers, and if there is any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine,**
11. according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God which was committed to my trust.

1 Timothy 1:8-11 The law is good since it reflects God's righteous standard. The law being discussed here is the Jewish Mosaic law. The purpose of the law is to show people that they are sinners by nature and that they are in need of salvation. The law was not made for righteous people because none are righteous. If people were truly righteous, there is no need for any law. The Pharisees taught that they were righteous because they followed their own prescribed religious system. This is a false sense of righteousness and a misuse of the law.

- 12. And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry,**
13. although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.
14. And the grace of our Lord was exceedingly abundant, with faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.
15. 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.

1 Timothy 1:12-15 Paul's work in the ministry is not something that Paul made happen. According to Paul's own testimony, his labor in the gospel ministry is a gift of grace. His abilities as a leader and an apostle were given to him by the Lord. In his own words it was the Lord Jesus Christ who enabled him. Paul knew he did not deserve this enabling because he was a sinner. Paul identified himself as the chief of sinners because he persecuted the church.

- 16. However, for this reason I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show all longsuffering, as a pattern of those who are going to believe on Him for everlasting life.**

1 Timothy 1:16 By Christ showing mercy and grace to him (Paul), the chief of sinners, the grace of the Lord is made manifest.

- 17. Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.**

1 Timothy 1:17 After plumbing the depths of God's grace, Paul concludes this section (Verses 12-17) with a benediction extolling the ultimate majesty, preeminence, and supremacy of God.

- 18. This charge I commit to you, son Timothy, according to the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you may wage the good warfare,**
19. having faith and a good conscience, which some having rejected, concerning the faith have suffered shipwreck, of whom are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I delivered to Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme.

1 Timothy 1:18-19 Standing for the truth of the gospel is not an easy task. As Paul knew well, this meant battling against lies and false doctrine. Those who reject the Christian gospel suffer spiritual catastrophe (shipwreck in the faith). In context with the gospel rejecting theme, Paul holds out Hymenaeus and Alexander as examples. Paul put both of these men out of the church.

1 Timothy Chapter 2

- 1. Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men,**
- 2. for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence.**
- 3. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior,**
- 4. who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.**
- 5. For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus,**
- 6. who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time,**
- 7. for which I was appointed a preacher and an apostle – I am speaking the truth in Christ and not lying – a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.**

1 Timothy 2:1-7 Paul instructs Timothy to pray for all men and for those in authority. The prayers and supplications should be for their eternal deliverance (that all may be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth) and the good providence of God in this temporal world. This prayer life reflects the character of God who desires that all men be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. This is why the Lord Jesus gave Himself as a ransom for all people (1 Timothy 2:6). Christ's death was sufficient to cover the sins of all people who would believe in Him.

- 8. I desire therefore that the men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting;**
- 9. in like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing,**
- 10. but, which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works.**
- 11. Let a woman learn in silence with all submission.**
- 12. And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence.**

1 Timothy 2:8-12 Paul provides some basic instruction to Timothy concerning the conduct of men and women in the church. Men are to be focused on prayer, which includes the study of scripture. The women are to conduct themselves in humbleness, learning the faith quietly, and not functioning as a pastor or teacher. The women should be alert to avoid extravagance. Women can easily go overboard with braided hair, gold, pearls, and costly clothing.

- 13. For Adam was formed first, then Eve.**
- 14. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.**

1 Timothy 2:13-14 Paul gives two reasons why women cannot be leaders in the church (Pastors, Teachers, & Elders):

1. Man is created and designed by God to be the spiritual head.
2. Adam was not deceived but the woman was deceived by Satan and ate the forbidden fruit.

The fall of man corroborates God's divine plan. When Eve left Adam's protection and listened to the serpent and did not consult Adam, she usurped his headship. This resulted in her fall, which demonstrates how important it is for women to stay under the protection and leadership of their husbands.

15. Nevertheless she will be saved in childbearing if they continue in faith, love, and holiness, with self-control.

1 Timothy 2:15 The Greek text for will be saved is better translated will be preserved. "Paul is not advocating that women are eternally saved from sin through childbearing or that they maintain their salvation by having babies, both of which would be clear contradictions of the New Testament teaching of salvation by grace alone through faith alone (Romans 3:19-20) sustained forever (Romans 8:31-39). Paul is teaching that even though a woman bears the stigma of being the initial instrument who led the race into sin, it is women through childbearing who may be preserved or freed from that stigma by raising a generation of godly children."

1 Timothy Chapter 3

- 1. This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work.**
- 2. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach;**
- 3. not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous;**
- 4. one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence**
- 5. (for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?);**
- 6. not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil.**
- 7. Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.**

1 Timothy 3:1-7 The New Testament uses bishop (overseer), elder, and pastor interchangeably. Bishops, pastors, and elders are responsible to lead, preach, and teach. Verses 1-7 can best be described as the qualifications to lead the church as a bishop, pastor, or elder. Timothy was instructed by Paul in this section concerning what to look for when selecting a church leader.

- 8. Likewise deacons must be reverent, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy for money,**
- 9. holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience.**
- 10. But let these also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons, being found blameless.**
- 11. Likewise, their own wives must be reverent, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things.**
- 12. Let deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.**
- 13. For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a good standing and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.**

1 Timothy 3:8-13 Verses 8-13 can best be described as the qualifications for serving the church as a deacon. Timothy was instructed by Paul in this section concerning what to look for when selecting a church deacon. “Deacons serve under the leadership of elders, helping them exercise oversight in the practical matters of church life. Scripture defines no official or specific responsibilities for deacons; they are to do whatever the elders assign them or whatever spiritual ministry is necessary.” The term deacon means to serve. In Acts 6:1-4 deacons were assigned the task of serving food during the love feasts of the early church.

- 14. These things I write to you, though I hope to come to you shortly;**
- 15. but if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.**
- 16. And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness:**

**God was manifested in the flesh,
Justified in the Spirit,
Seen by angels,
Preached among the Gentiles,
Believed on in the world,
Received up in glory.**

1 Timothy 3:14-16 Paul writes to Timothy so that he may know how to conduct himself as a leader of the church of God. This is a sacred trust since the church is the foundation of truth. The foundational truth of the church, which Paul describes as a great mystery, is as follows:

God was manifested in the flesh – Jesus Christ manifested the invisible God of mankind. Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, willingly took upon Himself our humanity through the incarnation (being born of the virgin Mary).

Justified in the Spirit – Justified means righteous. Christ was absolutely righteous (sinless) spiritually.

Seen by angels – Christ’s victory over sin and death was witnessed by both fallen and elect angels.

Preached among the Gentiles – The mission of the church is to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ to the unbelieving world, even to those who are outside of God’s chosen nation Israel.

Received up in glory – “Christ’s ascension and exaltation showed that the Father was pleased with Him and accepted His work fully.

1 Timothy Chapter 4

- 1. Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons,**
- 2. speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron,**
- 3. forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth.**
- 4. For every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving;**
- 5. for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.**

1 Timothy 4:1-5 The latter times refers to the period of time from the first coming of Christ to His second coming. To apostatize means to move away from an original position. Apostates are professing believers who associate with those who truly believe the gospel, but defect because they believe lies and deception, thus revealing their true nature as unconverted. Since the birth of the church, apostasy has always existed, but it will climax shortly before Christ returns. Timothy, as pastor of the Ephesian church, needed to be aware of this as well.

- 6. If you instruct the brethren in these things, you will be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished in the words of faith and of the good doctrine which you have carefully followed.**
- 7. But reject profane and old wives fables, and exercise yourself toward godliness.**
- 8. For bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come.**
- 9. This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance.**
- 10. For to this end we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of those who believe.**
- 11. These things command and teach.**

1 Timothy 4:6-11 Paul instructs Timothy to reject all false teaching which leads to apostasy. Rather, Timothy is to preach the gospel that God alone is Savior of all men, especially of those who believe. All men enjoy God’s salvation in the temporal sense, since we all receive His temporal benefits known as common grace. However, those who believe the gospel are joint heirs with Christ to inherit eternal life and an eternal Kingdom which will never end.

- 12. Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity.**
- 13. Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.**
- 14. Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership.**

15. Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all.

16. Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.

1 Timothy 4:12-16 “Greek culture placed great value on age and experience. Since Timothy was in his thirties, still young by the standards of that culture, he would have to earn respect by being a godly example.” Since Timothy had been with Paul since he was a teenager, he had received much teaching and had much practical experience in the ministry. In verses 12-16, Paul instructs Timothy to continue to grow by giving attention to reading, exhortation, and doctrine, as follows:

Reading – Refers to the custom of public reading of Scripture in the church’s worship service.

Exhortation – Challenging those who hear the word of God to apply it in their daily lives.

Doctrine – Refers to systematic instruction from the word of God.

Through careful study and reflection of scripture teaching, Timothy would perfect himself in the faith and others who hear his teaching. Perseverance in the faith always accompanies genuine salvation. For those who do not know the gospel, Timothy was the instrument that God used to save those who heard him. “Though salvation is God’s work, it is His pleasure to do it through human instruments.”

1 Timothy Chapter 5

- 1. Do not rebuke an older man, but exhort him as a father, younger men as brothers,**
- 2. older women as mothers, younger women as sisters, with all purity.**

1 Timothy 5:1-2 All believers are to be exhorted (challenged) in a positive way not rebuked negatively. Older men are to be exhorted as fathers, younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters. Exhortation should be done with all purity.

- 3. Honor widows who are really widows.**
- 4. But if any widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show piety at home and to repay their parents; for this is good and acceptable before God.**
- 5. Now she who is really a widow, and left alone, trusts in God and continues in supplications and prayers night and day.**
- 6. But she who lives in pleasure is dead while she lives.**
- 7. And these things command, that they may be blameless.**
- 8. But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.**

1 Timothy 5:3-8 Older women who have been widowed, who have children and grandchildren, should be provided for by this younger generation when they cannot take care of themselves. When a son or a daughter does not provide for his aging parent, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

- 9. Do not let a widow under sixty years old be taken into the number, and not unless she has been the wife of one man,**
- 10. well reported for good works: if she has brought up children, if she has lodged strangers, if she has washed the saints' feet, if she has relieved the afflicted, if she has diligently followed every good work.**

1 Timothy 5:9-10 The church provided support for widows sixty years old or over. Further qualifications include having been the wife of one man; having been hospitable to the saints (those who believe the faith), strangers, and the afflicted; having brought up children; and having pursued every good work. The older widows who meet these qualifications make good commitments to the ministry and work effectively.

- 11. But refuse the younger widows; for when they have begun to grow wanton against Christ, they desire to marry,**
- 12. having condemnation because they cast off their first faith.**
- 13. And besides they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house, and not only idle but also gossips and busybodies, saying things which they ought not.**
- 14. Therefore I desire that the younger widows marry, bear children, manage the house, give not opportunity to the adversary to speak reproachfully.**
- 15. For some have already turned aside after Satan.**
- 16. If any believing man or woman has widows, let them relieve them, and do not let the church be burdened, that it may relieve those who are really widows.**

1 Timothy 5:11-16 On the contrary, the younger widows do not make long lasting commitments to the ministry and tend to fall away from their pledge. These women soon have strong desires to get married again and raise a family. Until they do, they are idle, gossips, and busybodies. Such women should be cared for by family members, so the church can relieve and work with the older widows. In verse 15, Paul had experienced some of the young widows following false teachers or marrying unbelievers and bringing disgrace to the church.

- 17. Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine.**
- 18. For the Scripture says, "You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain," and, "The laborer is worthy of his wages."**
- 19. Do not receive an accusation against an elder except from two or three witnesses.**
- 20. Those who are sinning rebuke in the presence of all, that the rest also may fear.**

1 Timothy 5:17-20 The elders, those who minister the word of God, are worthy of their wages and should be treated with utmost respect. Accusations against an elder must be by two or three witnesses, consistent with Matthew 18:15-20. Elders who continue in any kind of sin after confrontation by two or three witnesses, must be confronted publicly to call him to repentance (Matthew 18:17).

- 21. I charge you before God and the Lord Jesus Christ and the elect angels that you observe these things without prejudice, doing nothing with partiality.**
- 22. Do not lay hands on anyone hastily, nor share in other people's sins; keep yourself pure.**
- 23. No longer drink only water, but use a little wine for your stomach's sake and your frequent infirmities.**

1 Timothy 5:21-23 Some additional admonitions to Timothy include not to ordain men to the ministry hastily, maintain one's purity, and use wine medicinally for the stomach and other infirmities.

- 24. Some men's sins are clearly evident, preceding them to judgment, but those of some men follow later.**
- 25. Likewise, the good works of some are clearly evident, and those that are otherwise cannot be hidden.**

1 Timothy 5:24-25 The sins of some men are manifest for all to see, providing obvious disqualification from serving in ministry as an elder. The sins of other candidates come to light in time through involvement in ministry or even during the evaluation process. The same logic can be applied to good works. "The same is true of good works. Some are evident others come to light later. Time and truth go hand in hand. The whole emphasis in this instruction regarding choosing elders, according to the qualifications of 3:1-7, is to be patient, fair, impartial, and pure (verses 21-25). Such an approach will yield the right choices.

1 Timothy Chapter 6

- 1. Let as many bondservants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor, so that the name of God and His doctrine may not be blasphemed.**
- 2. And those who have believing masters, let them not despise them because they are brethren, but rather serve them because those who are benefited are believers and beloved. Teach and exhort these things.**

1 Timothy 6:1-2 Paul exhorts masters and slaves to serve each other in a spirit of love. Slaves who are believers are to especially serve well their masters who are believers,

- 3. If anyone teaches otherwise and does not consent to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which accords with godliness,**
- 4. he is proud, knowing nothing, but is obsessed with disputes and arguments over words, from which come envy, strife, reviling, evil suspicions,**
- 5. useless wranglings of men of corrupt minds and destitute of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain. From such withdraw yourself.**

1 Timothy 6:3-5 Paul instructs Timothy that believers are to be characterized by wholesome words and wholesome living. Anyone who opposes this and is obsessed with arguments over small matters is proud and is to be avoided. False teachers who do not know the truth obsess over terminology and attack the reliability and authority of scripture.

- 6. Now godliness with contentment is great gain.**
- 7. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.**
- 8. And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content.**
- 9. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition.**
- 10. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.**

1 Timothy 6:6-10 Christians should be satisfied with the basic necessities of life. Those who love money are greedy and constantly want more but are never satisfied. Greed for money will cause a person to be pierced through with many sorrows in this life, and it will cause a person to stray from the faith resulting in eternal destruction in hell.

- 11. But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness.**
- 12. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.**
- 13. I urge you in the sight of God who gives life to all things, and before Christ Jesus who witnessed the good confession before Pontius Pilate,**
- 14. that you keep this commandment without spot, blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ's appearing,**
- 15. which He will manifest in His own time, He who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords,**
- 16. who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see, to whom be honor and everlasting power. Amen.**

1 Timothy 6:11-16 As a pastor, Paul states that Timothy must fight the good fight of faith. This includes the pursuit of righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, and goodness. Timothy must keep this command without wavering, which includes the faithful teaching of the word of God, until Christ's appearing. Christ is the only power (Potentate), the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see, to whom be honor and everlasting power.

- 17. Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy.**
- 18. Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share,**
- 19. storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.**

1 Timothy 6:17-19 "Paul counsels Timothy what to teach those who are rich in material possessions, those who have more than the mere essentials of food, clothing, and shelter. Paul does not condemn such people, nor command them to get rid of their wealth. He does call them to be good stewards of their God-given resources." "'Storing up' can be translated 'amassing a treasure,' while 'foundation' can refer to a fund. The idea is that the rich in this world should not be concerned with receiving a return on their earthly investment. Those who make eternal investments will be content to receive their dividends in heaven."

20. O Timothy! Guard what was committed to your trust, avoiding the profane and idle babblings and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge ---

21. by professing it some have strayed concerning the faith. Grace be with you. Amen.

1 Timothy 6:17-19 The church's main responsibility is to guard and proclaim the truths of Scripture. Paul instructs Timothy to avoid all false teaching which contradicts scripture