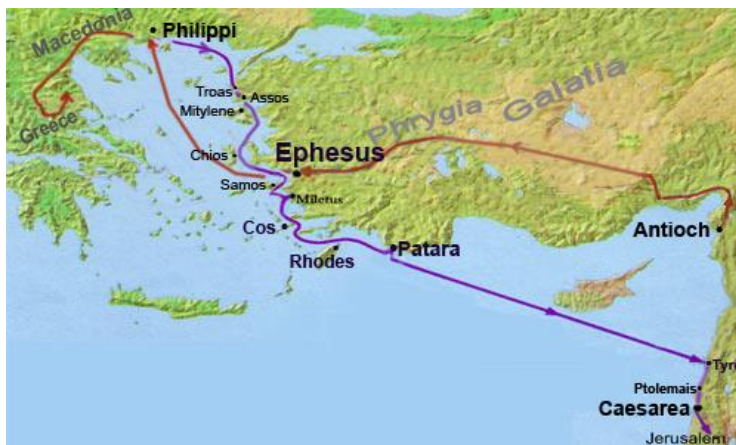


1 TIMOTHY

Bible Studies for Ashfield Presbyterian Church
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AUTHORSHIP

During Paul's missionary journeys, he traveled to Ephesus and ministered there for almost three years (Acts 20:31). After Paul departed from Ephesus, he left Timothy behind to combat false teaching (1 Timothy 1:3). At some later point, Paul wrote this letter while in prison either in Caesarea or Rome as one of his many "Prison Epistles" in A.D. 60-62.



Paul's third missionary journey

RECIPIENT

Timothy was the son of a Greek father and Jewish mother (Acts 16:1). No mention is made of his father being a Christian, but his mother Eunice and grandmother Lois were both known for their sincere faith (2 Tim 1:5), and they had already taught the Old Testament Scriptures to Timothy by the time Paul arrived in his hometown of Lystra during Paul's first missionary journey (Acts 14:6; 16:1). Paul took him on as a promising protégé, becoming like a spiritual father to the young man ("my true son in the faith" in 1 Tim 1:2 and "my dear son" in 2 Tim 1:2). Timothy's promise for the ministry was recognized early (1 Tim 1:18; 4:14). He also became Paul's faithful partner, representative, and messenger on multiple occasions (e.g. Acts 19:22; 1 Cor 4:17). Timothy had become so dear to Paul that his last letter to Timothy includes touching appeals for Timothy to join him in his final days of imprisonment (2 Tim 1:4; 4:9, 21).

PURPOSE

1 Timothy provides a glimpse of life inside a fledgling, first-century church. Paul writes to address a young pastor, Timothy, who must handle a series of issues which threaten the health of this church. Specifically, Timothy must guard against false teaching, maintain distinct roles for women and men within the worship service, appoint qualified elders and deacons, care for the vulnerable, encourage simplicity and contentment. All in all, sound doctrine is so vital to the health of the church that it is something to be pursued, fought for, and even suffered for.

DATE AND PLACE OF WRITING

Ephesus was a leading city on the west coast of Asia Minor. It essentially linked the western and eastern portions of the Roman Empire on the main highway and even possessed the most favorable seaport in the province of Asia. Due to its location within the Empire, Ephesus exerted great influence culturally, economically, and religiously. With a population over 300,000 people, Ephesus contained a theatre that seated an estimated 25,000 people. It became the center for worship of the goddess Artemis (Diana in Roman mythology), which often included temple prostitution. Her temple ranked as one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World and became not just a center for worship but also the primary banking institution for all of Asia Minor. As a result, Paul's apostolic ministry that turned people to Christ and away from Artemis represented a significant financial threat to temple-related businesses like that of the silversmith, Demetrius (Acts 19:23-41). Ephesus also became a center of occult practice as many used magic, witchcraft, and sorcery to manipulate hostile spiritual powers to their advantage (Acts 19:11-20).



The library in Ephesus

1 TIMOTHY 1: A PRECIOUS CARGO

1. Why is a firm foundation important in a building? In what ways are foundations made weak in buildings?
2. Read 1 Tim 1. In what ways is a solid foundation important for our faith?
3. What was harmful about the false doctrines being taught in the church at Ephesus? (1:3,4,5,6,19)
4. What did Paul mean by sound doctrine. (1:10)
5. How did the motivation of the false teachers (1:7) differ from the motivation of Paul (1:12)? What motivates you to teach others?
6. For what reasons could Paul's word and opinion be trusted above the false teachers?
7. What are some of the avenues that allow false teaching to enter a church today?
8. How could a church ensure sound doctrine while allowing freedom for discussion, questions and disagreement?
9. How can you know if your opinions, beliefs and interpretations of Scripture are going off course - clearly some did in Paul's time? (1:19-20)
10. Where can you go for answers if you have questions on doctrine? (2 Tim 2:2)
11. How can a person shipwreck their faith?

PRAYER POINTS:

1 TIMOTHY 2: AN ORDER OF SERVICE

The emphasis of this epistle is the promotion of *proper conduct* and *sound doctrine* in the churches of God. Sound doctrine was crucial at Ephesus because people were being led away from the faith. Most at Ephesus were Gentile Christians who did not have sound knowledge of the OT writings. We live in times where truth is considered relative and *feelings* are what lead people rather than their *convictions* and *obligations*. We must take added caution to preserve sound doctrine, keeping our faith foundation strong.

1. Is prayer an important part of church?
2. In what ways do prayers, intercessions, request, and thanksgivings differ? (v1)
3. What does Paul say is pleasing to God? (v3)
4. Is personal prayer sufficient? Why should believers be involved in congregational prayer as well?
5. What dangerous consequences might there be if a church spends little or no time together in prayer?
6. What should be the purpose of prayer in our worship? What should be our attitude?
7. What does it mean to pray without anger or disputing? In what ways could we violate these guidelines? (v8)
8. Why is it difficult to pray for governments? When Paul wrote this letter the churches were under the tyranny of the Roman Empire and yet Paul asked that the people pray for those in authority. Does this knowledge help us to see why Paul is asking us to pray? (v2)
9. Do we as a Church pray enough? Should we try to improve?

People who live in countries of persecution to their faith certainly value prayer more highly than we do. Most people when asked what they enjoy at the service would put the sermon or praise above

corporate prayer. But prayer is a vital part of worship and we should treasure the opportunity. (Further study: Matthew 6:1-15)

Read 1 Tim 2:9-15

10. Was Paul the Apostle, as some say today, a male chauvinist?

11. What does it mean to dress modestly in a time of changing tastes, fashions and sensibilities? Why is dressing modestly important?

12. How do we dress with good deeds? Does this apply to men as well?

13. What does it mean to live in quietness and full submission?

14. Why were women not permitted to teach? What does this mean for today?

Some will say that women should never teach but Priscilla is included in the teaching of Apollos, (Acts18:24-26) and older women are instructed to teach the younger women. (Titus 2:3,4) Note the many female names mentioned by Paul as *ministers* (diakonos) or *workers in the Lord* (Romans16), and the lack of distinction in their roles. Also, women were prophesying in the Corinthian church (1 Corinthians 11:5) It is evident that there were many ministry opportunities for women in the early church.

15. What are the opportunities available to women to serve God in your local church?

16. What does it mean "women will be saved through childbearing." (Note the context with Eve sinning in v14)

17. How does a person continue in faith, love and holiness with propriety?

Further study: 1 Corinthians 11:1-16

PRAYER POINTS:

1 TIMOTHY 3: LESSONS FOR LEADERS

To be a Church leader is a heavy responsibility because the Church belongs to the living God. Church leaders should not be elected because they are popular, nor should they be allowed to push their way to the top. Instead they should be chosen for their respect for truth, both in what they believe and how they live. The family is a training class and proving ground for leaders in the church. We can determine much about an individual's fitness to lead by how he conducts his home life. The church is God's family and those who feel led to be leaders should start at home. This chapter shows the church how to choose leaders for God's church.

1. What is a Bishop/overseer?

What is a Deacon?

Do all churches need these offices?

2. What is meant by (a) blameless (b) the husband of one wife?
3. What does it mean to manage families well? Does this include how we earn and spend money, morality, how we teach our children. This is a very important point when choosing leaders. What are some of the important and relevant aspects of managing one's family?
4. How do the qualifications for a Bishop and a Deacon differ?
5. What other considerations should the church take into account when choosing leaders?
6. Discuss the characteristics a leader is to have? Can any man attain to these standards?

7. How should prospective Deacons be tested and who should test and assess them?

8. Why is it important for the wife of a Deacon / Leader to meet these standards?

9. Who should choose the leaders in the Church of God?

These verses show how integral the family is to the whole matter of leadership in the Church. Christian volunteers sometimes make the mistake of thinking that their work is more important than their family, and give little time for their family. Spiritual leadership must begin at home and if a man is not willing to care for, discipline, and teach his own children he is not qualified to lead a church. So we must not let our voluntary work distract us from family responsibility.

PRAYER POINTS:

1 TIMOTHY 4: TRAIN YOURSELF TO BE GODLY

Read 1Tim 3:14-16 & 4:1-16

1. We are in the later times? How do deceiving spirits cause people to abandon their faith today? 2 Thess 2:1-15
2. What do you think it means to have your conscience seared with a hot iron? Is there hope for a person who has not kept good conscience? Heb 10:26-31
3. How should we train ourselves in godliness? Why are people more concerned with physical fitness than spiritual?
4. What are some of the alternatives to placing our hope in God?
5. Is it going to be easy to have our hope set in the living God?
6. What do you see here as the duties of a Pastor? How should the Church help Pastors to fulfill these duties?
7. What should be the role of public reading of Scripture? Could it be more effective in the Church?
8. What seems to be the point of the laying on of hands?
9. What is the message for YOU of “do not neglect your gift”?
10. What is the significance of others seeing our faith-progress?

It is very important to uphold God’s standard and to be firmly established in the fundamentals of our faith in these end times, not only for Pastors but all Christians. Paul exhorts, "Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; continue in these things, for in so doing this you will save both yourself and your hearers."

PRAYER POINTS:

1 TIMOTHY 5:1-16: WHO CARES?

Read: 1 Timothy 5:1-16

1. What is the difference between exhorting/entreating and rebuking? (Cf. verse 20).
2. What does it look like to treat older men as fathers?
3. What is the right attitude to have when you are encouraging anyone to greater godliness? (Read Gal 6:1-5 as well)
4. What difference does it make in your attitude to people to treat them as members of the family? In what situations might this be especially helpful to remember?
5. What apparent abuses and problems were there in the Ephesian Church concerning widows?
6. In the context of the church, if children are not looking after parents should the church help out?
7. What are Paul's criteria to qualify as "a widow indeed"? How does this problem relate to the social conscience of the church today?

PRAYER POINTS:

1 TIMOTHY 5:17-25: ACCOUNTABILITY COUNTS

1. What does it mean to give an elder double honour?
2. Why is preaching and teaching held in such high honour by Paul?
3. What is the process for bringing an accusation against an elder (verse 19) and to whom should such an accusation be brought?
4. How should leaders in the church publicly rebuke those who persist in sin? (verse 20) What was the purpose of so doing? How does work in this modern age? How could it be done in appropriately?
5. Why does Paul advise Timothy not to “lay hands on anyone hastily” and what does this term mean?
6. What does this passage teach us about Timothy’s role/position in the church at Ephesus? Should we call him the Overseer, the Pastor, the Minister or give him some other title?

In the ideal family there is respect for each other in each one’s various role. So it is in the Church. We need wisdom in our relationships. We should treat everyone in the Church with respect. We are reminded of our obligations to our fellow Christians and to their various areas of responsibility in the church. We cannot be rude, inconsiderate or disrespectful to one another.

PRAYER POINTS:

1 TIMOTHY 6: A WEALTHY LIFE

Read: 1 TIMOTHY 6

Wanting more and more money is not just a disease of the wealthy. When is enough enough? The problem is not how *much* you have but how *much* you want it? Most people would not say no to a bit more money and an opportunity to make more cash. So we all have to review our motives when looking at money because the love of it can lead to many kinds of sin.

1. What is the connection between false doctrine and desire for financial gain?
2. How did Paul recommend that Timothy deal with the temptation of money?
3. How can the love of money weaken your faith and lead to all kinds of evil?
4. How can we know whether we love money excessively or not?
5. How can we learn to be content with what we have?
6. When is the desire for more money sinful or unhealthy? When is it right for you to need more money? Where do we draw the line between need and greed?
7. What does it mean to fight the good fight?
8. How should we command those who are rich not to put their hope in riches? How wealthy do you have to be before this command applies to you?
9. Why is it so difficult to give away our money even when we have more than enough to live on? Should we give away when we ourselves are in debt?
10. How do we lay up treasures in heaven?
11. Can you identify any modern counterparts of “profane and idle babblings and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge”? (v 20) How could these cause a person to stray from the faith?

PRAYER POINTS: