

Books of the Bible Series

I Timothy

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I and II Timothy and Titus are the pastoral letters, the only books that are to someone else personally. To understand this, **I Tim 2:9** says we are a chosen people and royal priesthood. Priests are actually very important pastors, making people who follow Jesus very important pastors. Since these are *pastoral* letters, these letters have things to say to *us* as pastors: how to operate in the church as pastors.

We know that Paul was in Ephesus (**Acts 16**) and that Timothy was a close follower of Paul who struggled with timidity. Actually Paul sent him on missions all over the place:

I Thes 3:2 We sent Timothy, who is our brother and co-worker in God's service in spreading the gospel of Christ, to strengthen and encourage you in your faith

I Cor 4:17 For this reason I have sent to you Timothy, my son whom I love, who is faithful in the Lord. He will remind you of my way of life in Christ Jesus, which agrees with what I teach everywhere in every church.

There are 2 reasons for this letter:

1. **(I Tim 1:3)** As I urged you when I went into Macedonia, stay there in Ephesus so that you may command certain people not to teach false doctrines any longer

Paul is sending Timothy to tell people to stop teaching false doctrines. There were myths using the Law which needed to be corrected. Also, genealogy was important to the Jews but this was also true with those worshipping Artemis. Their misunderstanding moved people away from the work of God. Everything that Paul says in this book will have to do with this reason and the next:

2. **(I Tim 3:14-15) 14** Although I hope to come to you soon, I am writing you these instructions so that, **15** if I am delayed, you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God's household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth.

Paul wants them to know how to conduct God's household, his FAMILY. You and I are family, sometimes even more than our original families who aren't believers. This household idea includes that the church is not a business but a family with authority structures. Of course, there are some crazy uncles within a family who need boundaries. For example, the Thessalongsians needed to know that they needed

to work. Timothy wants people to operate within the family boundaries so that they don't fall into a trap of making these household rules like the Jewish Law. He gives them a poem to clarify this:

I Tim 3:16

He appeared in the flesh,
was vindicated by the Spirit,^[d]
was seen by angels,
was preached among the nations,
was believed on in the world,
was taken up in glory.

Godliness all springs from JESUS: really, all the things Paul will invite Timothy to do spring this truth. This is the main point: It's not rules to follow (even if he says "I command you...")

Timothy is very meaty: I hope you will go back and reflect on these truths on your own. Here are some key words for each chapter:

Let's go through each of these chapters now:



Ch 1: False Doctrines, Grace

The goal is to **avoid false doctrines** stemming from love and a sincere faith. The point is not to overpower people.

key verse: **I Tim 1:5** The goal of this command is love, which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith).

As very important pastors, as we engage and our authority must come from our love.

Paul's testimony of grace: I Tim 1:12 I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength, that he considered me trustworthy, appointing me to his service. **13** Even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief. **14** The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.

15 Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst. **16** But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his immense patience as an example for those who would believe in him and receive eternal life. **17** Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

This is coming from someone in the place of humility as the worst of sinners. As you pastor, remember who is giving you this command.

Ch2: Prayer, Male/Female Roles

Key Verse: I Tim 2:5 “For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus.”

Prayer I Tim 2:1 I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people

Paul wants us to pray for leaders and for people to be saved because of I Tim 2:5 (above). We need to make prayer the central part of gathering together.

Men: Men need to raise their hands without anger. If you are chasing after false doctrines, you will tend to argue. Anger pushes aside the priority of prayer and getting it right becomes the focus instead of Jesus.

Women: In context, the directive for modesty should be applied to wealth: he's saying not to let others know you have money and are more important, therefore making you the center and not Jesus which distracts from prayer. Women should learn in quietness and submission: there is a theme of QUIETNESS. The issue is that when we are always trying to say the things WE think, we aren't praying. There is an invitation to everyone to have quiet spirits, which puts us in a position of learning and focus on prayer.

Ch 3: Overseers

Key verse: I Tim 3:15 If I am delayed, you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God's household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth.

I Tim 3:1 Here is a trustworthy saying: Whoever aspires to be an overseer desires a noble task.

Overseer means elder. We need those who will do this noble task. However, this doesn't make the rest of us NOT pastors: ***we are all very important pastors.*** This is actually an invitation for all of us to move in this direction.

In fact, we all need to be kind, gentle, a one-woman man, with the difference of being able to teach between elders and deacons. These are all qualities of people with good character:

Whatever you believe about marriage and leaders, Paul is saying that these leaders were experienced people to imitate. Their job is to mother and father you! Is this person a good father or mother? As you think about people who lead you, think about it in this context.

Ch 4: Myths, Youth

Key verse: I Tim 4:7 Have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives' tales; rather, train yourself to be godly.

Concerning myths and old wives tales: Artemis is the twin of Apollo, the mother of creation in Greek mythology. She is not a fertility goddess: her breasts are really magic sacks. The Amazons camped around her temple. She represented virginity and helped children be born. The prayers to Artemis include a girl giving all her childhood toys to Artemis when she came of age so she could be successful in childbirth. People all over worshiped her: Consider what would happen Paul wanted them to focus on focusing on godliness. Artemis wanted people to not get married and not eat certain foods. Instead he says:

I Tim 4:12: Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity.

Paul says if you are young (like Timothy), it is better not to tell people to stop doing certain things but to MODEL it.

Ch 5: Rebuke, Widows, Care of Pastor Teachers

Key verse: I Tim 5:1 Do not rebuke an older man harshly, but exhort him as if he were your father. Treat younger men as brothers,

Rebuke means direct someone from a distance; **exhort** is to come alongside someone. For a parent, **exhort** is more effective than **rebuke**. In fact, we can all respond this way: if you want to move someone, come alongside them to give courage. There are things we are all afraid to do: we need to speak courage gently as we walk alongside them.

Widows and their care: (I Tim 5:3-17).

There was an *Office of the Widow* in the early church. There is no Greek word for a single woman: there is only “widow” which means that every woman who is single is a “widow.” Paul is saying, if you’re young, you should get married. If you’re older and your family can take care of you, then they should do that. If a woman doesn’t have a family (similar to a nun), the church should take care of them. In fact, when the early church would gather i, they would wait outside the door and let the widows go first. These older women held a very important role.

Guidelines for elders: (5:17-25)

5:17 The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching.

People need to take care of those who teach them: we should also ask this question: are we taking care of those who lead and guide us?

Ch 6: Slaves & Masters, Wealth & Contentment

Key verse: I Tim 6:12: Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

Instructions for slaves and masters (I Tim 6:1-2) Paul doesn’t want Christianity to be linked to slave revolts. He wants the Gospel to be in the forefront, esp. If someone has a believing master. Notice that Paul doesn't encourage them to not own slaves.

Contentment I Tim 6:6 But godliness with contentment is great gain

Paul wants us to use wealth to advance the kingdom of God. If you have money, you should take care of the kingdom of God. We need to ask if our wealth is moving the kingdom of God forward.

If I were Timothy and sent to Ephesus to say these hard things, I might be overwhelmed at the prospect of saying hard things to people. This may be the source of his stomach problems. Paul wants Timothy to keep his focus on Jesus. **(I Tim 6:15b God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords,...)**

It’s easy to think we HAVE to get it right by knocking off a list of rules. Instead, we are going to get it wrong but NONE of it can knock God off his throne. Paul wants Timothy to keep going and have the big picture: his job is to move people toward Jesus.