

The Book Of First Timothy

Timothy Was Influenced by

Godly Relatives

Compiled By Dr. Harold Bollinger

1 Timothy

OVERVIEW: WITHOUT trying, we model our values. Parents in particular demonstrate to their children what they consider important and valuable. “Like father, like son” is not just a well-worn cliché; it is a truth repeated in our homes. And experience proves that children often follow the life-styles of their parents, repeating their successes and mistakes.

Timothy is a prime example of one who was influenced by godly relatives. His mother Eunice and grandmother Lois were Jewish believers who helped shape his life and promote his spiritual growth (2 Tim. 1:5; 2 Tim. 3:15). The first “second generation” Christian mentioned in the New Testament, Timothy became Paul’s protege and pastor of the church at Ephesus. As a young minister, Timothy faced all sorts of pressures, conflicts, and challenges from the church and his surrounding culture. To counsel and encourage Timothy, Paul sent this very personal letter.

Paul wrote 1 Timothy in about A.D. 64, probably just prior to his final Roman imprisonment. Because he had appealed to Caesar, Paul was sent as a prisoner to Rome (see Acts 25-28). Most scholars believe that Paul was released in about A.D. 62 (possibly because the “statute of limitations” had expired), and that during the next few years he was able to travel. During this time, he wrote to Timothy and Titus. Soon, however, Emperor Nero began his campaign to eliminate Christianity. It is believed that during this time Paul was imprisoned again and eventually executed. During this second Roman imprisonment, Paul wrote 2 Timothy. Titus and the two letters to Timothy comprise what are called the “Pastoral Letters.”

Paul’s first letter to Timothy affirms their relationship (1 Tim. 1:2). Paul begins his fatherly advice, warning Timothy about false teachers (1 Tim. 1:3-11) and urging him to hold on to his faith in Christ (1 Tim. 1:12-20). Next, Paul considers public worship, emphasizing the importance of prayer (1 Tim. 2:1-7) and order in church meetings (1 Tim. 2:8-15). This leads to a discussion of the qualifications of church leaders—overseers and deacons. Here Paul lists specific criteria for each office (1 Tim. 3:1-16).

Paul speaks again about false teachers, telling Timothy how to recognize them and respond to them (1 Tim. 4:1-16). Next, he gives practical advice on pastoral care to

the young and old (1 Tim. 5:1-2), widows (1 Tim. 5:3-16), elders (1 Tim. 5:17-25), and slaves (1 Tim. 6:1-2). Paul concludes by exhorting Timothy to guard his motives (1 Tim. 6:3-10), to stand firm in his faith (1 Tim. 6:11-12), to live above reproach (1 Tim. 6:13-16), and to minister faithfully (1 Tim. 6:17-21).

First Timothy holds many lessons. If you are a church leader, take note of Paul's relationship with this young disciple—his careful counsel and guidance. Measure yourself against the qualifications that Paul gives for overseers and deacons. If you are young in the faith, follow the example of godly Christian leaders like Timothy, who imitated Paul's life. If you are a parent, remind yourself of the profound effect a Christian home can have on family members—a faithful mother and grandmother led Timothy to Christ, and Timothy's ministry helped change the world.

THE BLUEPRINT

Paul advised Timothy on such practical topics as qualifications for church leaders, public worship, confronting false teaching, and how to treat various groups of people within the church. Right belief and right behavior are critical for anyone who desires to lead or serve effectively in the church. We should all believe rightly, participate in church actively, and minister to one another lovingly.

1. Instructions on right belief (1 Tim. 1:1-20)

This letter is from Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus, appointed by the command of God our Savior and by Christ Jesus our hope.

[2] It is written to Timothy, my true child in the faith.

May God our Father and Christ Jesus our Lord give you grace, mercy, and peace.

[3] When I left for Macedonia, I urged you to stay there in Ephesus and stop those who are teaching wrong doctrine. [4] Don't let people waste time in endless speculation over myths and spiritual pedigrees. For these things only cause arguments; they don't help people live a life of faith in God. [5] The purpose of my instruction is that all the Christians there would be filled with love that comes from a pure heart, a clear conscience, and sincere faith.

[6] But some teachers have missed this whole point. They have turned away from these things and spend their time arguing and talking foolishness.

[7] They want to be known as teachers of the Law of Moses, but they don't know what they are talking about, even though they seem so confident. [8] We know these laws are good when they are used as God intended. [9] But they were not made for people who do what is right. They are for people who are disobedient and rebellious, who are ungodly and sinful, who consider nothing sacred and defile what is holy, who murder their father or mother or other people.

[10] These laws are for people who are sexually immoral, for homosexuals and slave traders, for liars and oath breakers, and for those who do anything else that contradicts the right teaching [11] that comes from the glorious Good News entrusted to me by our blessed God.

[12] How thankful I am to Christ Jesus our Lord for considering me trustworthy and appointing me to serve him, [13] even though I used to scoff at the name of Christ. I hunted down his people, harming them in every way I could. But God had mercy on me because I did it in ignorance and unbelief. [14] Oh, how kind and gracious the Lord was! He filled me completely with faith and the love of Christ Jesus.

[15] This is a true saying, and everyone should believe it: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—and I was the worst of them all. [16] But that is why God had mercy on me, so that Christ Jesus could use me as a prime example of his great patience with even the worst sinners. Then others will realize that they, too, can believe in him and receive eternal life. [17] Glory and honor to God forever and ever. He is the eternal King, the unseen one who never dies; he alone is God. Amen.

[18] Timothy, my son, here are my instructions for you, based on the prophetic words spoken about you earlier. May they give you the confidence to fight well in the Lord's battles. [19] Cling tightly to your faith in Christ, and always keep your conscience clear. For some people have deliberately violated their consciences; as a result, their faith has been shipwrecked. [20] Hymenaeus and Alexander are two examples of this. I turned them over to Satan so they would learn not to blaspheme God.

2. Instructions for the church (1 Tim. 2:1-3:16)

1 Tim. 2:1-3:16

I urge you, first of all, to pray for all people. As you make your requests, plead for God's mercy upon them, and give thanks. [2] Pray this way for kings and all others who are in authority, so that we can live in peace and quietness, in godliness and dignity. [3] This is good and pleases God our Savior, [4] for he wants everyone to be saved and to understand the truth.

[5] For there is only one God and one Mediator who can reconcile God and people. He is the man Christ Jesus. [6] He gave his life to purchase freedom for everyone. This is the message that God gave to the world at the proper time. [7] And I have been chosen—this is the absolute truth—as a preacher and apostle to teach the Gentiles about faith and truth.

[8] So wherever you assemble, I want men to pray with holy hands lifted up to God, free from anger and controversy. [9] And I want women to be modest in their appearance. They should wear decent and appropriate clothing and not draw attention to themselves by the way they fix their hair or by wearing gold or pearls or expensive clothes. [10] For women who claim to be devoted to God should make themselves attractive by the good things they do.

[11] Women should listen and learn quietly and submissively. [12] I do not let women teach men or have authority over them. Let them listen quietly. [13] For God made Adam first, and afterward he made Eve. [14] And it was the woman, not Adam, who was deceived by Satan, and sin was the result. [15] But women will be saved through childbearing and by continuing to live in faith, love, holiness, and modesty.

[3:1] it is a true saying that if someone wants to be an elder, he desires an honorable responsibility. [2] For an elder must be a man whose life cannot be spoken against. He must be faithful to his wife. He must exhibit self-control, live wisely, and have a good reputation. He must enjoy having guests in his home and must be able to teach. [3] He must not be a heavy drinker or be violent. He must be gentle, peace loving, and not one who loves money.

[4] He must manage his own family well, with children who respect and obey him. [5] For if a man cannot manage his own household, how can he take care of God's church?

[6] An elder must not be a new Christian, because he might be proud of being chosen so soon, and the Devil will use that pride to make him fall. [7] Also, people outside the church must speak well of him so that he will not fall into the Devil's trap and be disgraced.

[8] In the same way, deacons must be people who are respected and have integrity. They must not be heavy drinkers and must not be greedy for money. [9] They must be committed to the revealed truths of the Christian faith and must live with a clear conscience. [10] Before they are appointed as deacons, they should be given other responsibilities in the church as a test of their character and ability. If they do well, then they may serve as deacons.

[11] In the same way, their wives must be respected and must not speak evil of others. They must exercise self-control and be faithful in everything they do.

[12] A deacon must be faithful to his wife, and he must manage his children and household well. [13] Those who do well as deacons will be rewarded with respect from others and will have increased confidence in their faith in Christ Jesus.

[14] I am writing these things to you now, even though I hope to be with you soon, [15] so that if I can't come for a while, you will know how people must conduct themselves in the household of God. This is the church of the living God, which is the pillar and support of the truth.

[16] Without question, this is the great mystery of our faith:

Christ appeared in the flesh
and was shown to be righteous by the Spirit.
He was seen by angels
and was announced to the nations.
He was believed on in the world
and was taken up into heaven.

3. Instructions for leaders (1 Tim. 4:1-6:21)

Now the Holy Spirit tells us clearly that in the last times some will turn away from what we believe; they will follow lying spirits and teachings that come from demons. [2] These teachers are hypocrites and liars. They pretend to be religious, but their consciences are dead.

[3] They will say it is wrong to be married and wrong to eat certain foods. But God created those foods to be eaten with thanksgiving by people who know and believe the truth. [4] Since everything God created is good, we should not reject any of it. We may receive it gladly, with thankful hearts. [5] For we know it is made holy by the word of God and prayer.

[6] If you explain this to the brothers and sisters, you will be doing your duty as a worthy servant of Christ Jesus, one who is fed by the message of faith and the true teaching you have followed. [7] Do not waste time arguing over godless ideas and old wives' tales. Spend your time and energy in training yourself for spiritual fitness. [8] Physical exercise has some value, but spiritual exercise is much more important, for it promises a reward in both this life and the next. [9] This is true, and everyone should accept it. [10] We work hard and suffer much in order that people will believe the truth, for our hope is in the living God, who is the Savior of all people, and particularly of those who believe.

[11] Teach these things and insist that everyone learn them. [12] Don't let anyone think less of you because you are young. Be an example to all believers in what you teach, in the way you live, in your love, your faith, and your purity. [13] Until I get there, focus on reading the Scriptures to the church, encouraging the believers, and teaching them.

[14] Do not neglect the spiritual gift you received through the prophecies spoken to you when the elders of the church laid their hands on you. [15] Give your complete attention to these matters. Throw yourself into your tasks so that everyone will see your progress. [16] Keep a close watch on yourself and on your teaching. Stay true to what is right, and God will save you and those who hear you.

[5:1] Never speak harshly to an older man, but appeal to him respectfully as though he were your own father. Talk to the younger men as you would to your own brothers. [2] Treat the older women as you would your mother, and treat the younger women with all purity as your own sisters.

[3] The church should care for any widow who has no one else to care for her. [4] But if she has children or grandchildren, their first responsibility is to show godliness at home and repay their parents by taking care of them. This is something that pleases God very much.

[5] But a woman who is a true widow, one who is truly alone in this world, has placed her hope in God. Night and day she asks God for help and spends much time in prayer. [6] But the widow who lives only for pleasure is spiritually dead.

[7] Give these instructions to the church so that the widows you support will not be criticized.

[8] But those who won't care for their own relatives, especially those living in the same household, have denied what we believe. Such people are worse than unbelievers.

[9] A widow who is put on the list for support must be a woman who is at least sixty years old and was faithful to her husband. [10] She must be well respected by everyone because of the good she has done. Has she brought up her children well? Has she been kind to strangers? Has she served other Christians humbly? Has she helped those who are in trouble? Has she always been ready to do good?

[11] The younger widows should not be on the list, because their physical desires will overpower their devotion to Christ and they will want to remarry. [12] Then they would be guilty of breaking their previous pledge. [13] Besides, they are likely to become lazy and spend their time gossiping from house to house, getting into other people's business and saying things they shouldn't. [14] So I advise these younger widows to marry again, have children, and take care of their own homes. Then the enemy will not be able to say anything against them. [15] For I am afraid that some of them have already gone astray and now follow Satan.

[16] If a Christian woman has relatives who are widows, she must take care of them and not put the responsibility on the church. Then the church can care for widows who are truly alone.

[17] Elders who do their work well should be paid well, especially those who work hard at both preaching and teaching. [18] For the Scripture says, "Do not keep an ox from eating as it treads out the grain." And in another place, "Those who work deserve their pay!"

[19] Do not listen to complaints against an elder unless there are two or three witnesses to accuse him. [20] Anyone who sins should be rebuked in front of the whole church so that others will have a proper fear of God.

[21] I solemnly command you in the presence of God and Christ Jesus and the holy angels to obey these instructions without taking sides or showing special favor to anyone. [22] Never be in a hurry about appointing an elder. Do not participate in the sins of others. Keep yourself pure.

[23] Don't drink only water. You ought to drink a little wine for the sake of your stomach because you are sick so often.

[24] Remember that some people lead sinful lives, and everyone knows they will be judged. But there are others whose sin will not be revealed until later. [25] In the same way, everyone knows how much good some people do, but there are others whose good deeds won't be known until later.

[6:1] Christians who are slaves should give their masters full respect so that the name of God and his teaching will not be shamed. [2] If your master is a Christian, that is no excuse for being disrespectful. You should work all the harder because you are helping another believer by your efforts.

Teach these truths, Timothy, and encourage everyone to obey them. [3] Some false teachers may deny these things, but these are the sound, wholesome teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ, and they are the foundation for a godly life. [4] Anyone who teaches anything different is both conceited and ignorant. Such a person has an unhealthy desire to quibble over the meaning of words. This stirs up arguments ending in jealousy, fighting, slander, and evil suspicions. [5] These people always cause trouble. Their minds are corrupt, and they don't tell the truth. To them religion is just a way to get rich.

[6] Yet true religion with contentment is great wealth. [7] After all, we didn't bring anything with us when we came into the world, and we certainly cannot carry anything with us when we die. [8] So if we have enough food and clothing, let us be content. [9] But people who long to be rich fall into temptation and are trapped by many foolish and harmful desires that plunge them into ruin and destruction. [10] For the love of money is at the root of all kinds of evil. And some people, craving money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many sorrows.

[11] But you, Timothy, belong to God; so run from all these evil things, and follow what is right and good. Pursue a godly life, along with faith, love, perseverance, and gentleness. [12] Fight the good fight for what we believe. Hold tightly to the eternal life that God has given you, which you have confessed so well before many witnesses. [13] And I command you before God, who gives life to all, and before Christ Jesus, who gave a good testimony before Pontius Pilate, [14] that you obey his commands with all purity. Then no one can find fault with you from now until our Lord Jesus Christ returns.

[15] For at the right time Christ will be revealed from heaven by the blessed and only almighty God, the King of kings and Lord of lords. [16] He alone can never die, and he lives in light so brilliant that no human can approach him. No one has ever seen him, nor ever will. To him be honor and power forever. Amen.

[17] Tell those who are rich in this world not to be proud and not to trust in their money, which will soon be gone. But their trust should be in the living God, who richly gives us all we need for our enjoyment. [18] Tell them to use their money to do good. They should be rich in good works and should give generously to those in need, always being ready to share with others whatever God has given them. [19] By doing this they will be storing up their treasure as a good foundation for the future so that they may take hold of real life.

[20] Timothy, guard what God has entrusted to you. Avoid godless, foolish discussions with those who oppose you with their so-called knowledge. [21] Some people have wandered from the faith by following such foolishness.

May God's grace be with you all.

MEGATHEMES

THEME: Sound doctrine

EXPLANATION:

Paul instructed Timothy to preserve the Christian faith by teaching sound doctrine and modeling right living. Timothy had to oppose false teachers who were leading church members away from belief in salvation by faith in Jesus Christ alone.

IMPORTANCE:

We must know the truth in order to defend it. We must cling to the belief that Christ came to save us. We should stay away from those who twist the words of the Bible for their own purposes.

THEME: Public worship

EXPLANATION:

Prayer in public worship must be done with a proper attitude toward God and fellow believers.

IMPORTANCE:

Christian character must be evident in every aspect of worship. We must rid ourselves of any anger, resentment, or offensive behavior that might disrupt worship or damage church unity.

THEME: Church leadership

EXPLANATION:

Paul gives specific instructions concerning the qualifications for church leaders so that the church might honor God and operate smoothly.

IMPORTANCE:

Church leaders must be wholly committed to Christ. If you are a new or young Christian, don't be anxious to become a leader in the church. Seek to develop your Christian character first. Be sure to seek God, not your own ambition.

THEME: Personal discipline

EXPLANATION:

It takes discipline to be a leader in the church. Timothy, like all pastors, had to guard his motives, minister faithfully, and live above reproach. Any pastor must keep morally and spiritually fit.

IMPORTANCE:

To stay in good spiritual shape, you must discipline yourself to study God's Word and to obey it. Put your spiritual abilities to work!

THEME: Caring church

EXPLANATION:

The church has a responsibility to care for the needs of all its members, especially the sick, the poor, and the widowed. Caring must go beyond good intentions.

An invitation is given to open your heart's door.

Rev. 3:20

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

To ask Jesus to come into your heart please pray this Prayer:

Dear Lord Jesus, I believe you are the Christ, the Son of the Living God. I ask you to forgive me of my sins and coming into my heart. I accept you as savior and will follow you as Lord. Amen.

References:

Holy Bible: King James Translation

Holy Bible: Living Bible Translation

Additional comments and charts are taken from: *Life Application Study Bible*. Illinois: Tyndale House 2007. Print