



# 1 TIMOTHY

THE HOUSEHOLD OF GOD



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# INTRODUCTION TO 1 TIMOTHY

Of all Paul's ministry partners, there was no one like Timothy (Phil 2:20). Timothy was Paul's son in faith, selflessly concerned with the interests of Jesus Christ and the welfare of others (Phil 2:20-22).

This is one of the Pastoral Epistles, along with 2 Timothy and Titus.

By the time of writing, Timothy was responsible for the church in Ephesus, and so these letters provide instructions on how he is to conduct himself and build a team of leaders to share authentic Christian ministry.



It's difficult to precisely date 1 Timothy, though it's clear Paul is not in prison at this time. He has just left Timothy and plans to revisit him shortly (1 Tim 1:15).

## **WHY DID PAUL NEED TO WRITE?**

It looks like false teachers had made quite an impact, and Timothy was having some difficulty commanding the respect of the church (1 Tim 4:12). The letter then urges Timothy to act quickly and strengthens his authority as a representative of Paul.

## **THE PURPOSE OF 1 TIMOTHY**

The purpose of Paul's first letter to Timothy is to provide instruction for how the people were to live as members of God's household (1 Tim 3:14-15). God's purpose for the church was to be a pillar of truth, holding the Gospel of Christ aloft in a hostile world. This mission is threatened when members of God's household fail to live up to their calling.





## STUDY 1 || GUARD GOD'S TRUTH

### *1 TIMOTHY 1:1-11*

Paul kicks off his letter to his protegee, Timothy, by getting straight to the point - there are some serious gospel issues that he needs to address in the church in Ephesus. People are getting distracted from what's important and so Paul urges Timothy to stay in Ephesus to ensure God's truth remains central, and that the church remains healthy.

### **OPENING QUESTION**

Q1. When was the last time you received a handwritten, personal letter in the mail? How did you react?

### **READ THE PASSAGE**

1 Timothy 1:1-11

### **EXPLORE**

Q2. List all of the things "certain people" (v3) seem to be getting wrong from v1-7.

Q3. How does Paul want Timothy to respond to these issues?

Q4. What problems does Paul highlight about these false teachers' use of "the law"?  
- in v7?

- in v8-11?

## **DISCUSS**

Q5. In what ways do you think false teachers wander from the truth in our time? (e.g. false doctrines? Myths? Controversy? Meaningless talk??)

Q6. The word translated as "advancing God's work" in v4 is the greek word "*oikonomia*", which more literally refers to the stewardship or good order of a household (in this case, God's household - the church).

How might "controversial speculation" (v4) distract us from being attentive to God's church? Can you think of some examples?

Q7. What do you think is the relationship between "love" and "truth" here? Why?

## **APPLY**

Q8. What dangers can you think of in applying Paul's command to silence false teachers? How might we get it wrong? How might we get it right?

Q9. When it comes to following Jesus, do you ever find yourself getting distracted by or caught up in religious law-keeping or controversial teaching? What might this passage have to teach you in these moments?

## **PRAY**







## STUDY 2 || WORST OF ALL SINNERS

*1 TIMOTHY 1:12-20*

Here Paul tells Timothy that Jesus has given him strength and trusted him, even though he persecuted followers of Jesus. That grace was poured out on him abundantly. Jesus came to save sinners - even Paul who sees himself as the worst of all sinners. And so this faith is worth holding on to.

### OPENING QUESTION

Q1. When was the last time someone forgave you for something you've done?

### READ THE PASSAGE

1 Timothy 1:12-20

### EXPLORE

Q2. Jesus has entrusted Paul with the spread of the Gospel. What does Paul consider the very heart of the Gospel?

Q3. Why was Paul such an appropriate person for God to choose to preach the Gospel?

Q4. What does Paul want Timothy to hold to, in contrast to the false teachers?

## **DISCUSS**

Q5. Why do you think Paul reminds Timothy of these gospel truths in v12-17?

Q6. What is Paul's warning to Timothy in verses 18 – 20? How should he prevent this from happening?

## **APPLY**

Q7. What hope do verses 12 – 17 give us in our life, and how should that affect how we interact with others?

Q8. What would it look like for you to “fight the battle well, holding on to faith and a good conscience” in your day-to-day life?

**PRAY**





## STUDY 3 || WHAT PLEASURES GOD IN THE CHURCH

### *1 TIMOTHY 2:1-7*

After reflecting on the enormity of God's grace to sinners - of whom Paul says he is the worst - and charging Timothy to hold onto faith in the gospel, Paul now moves on to give Timothy some instructions on how God's household - the church - should conduct itself so that God is pleased and sinners are saved.

### **OPENING QUESTION**

Q1. If you had to list three things that "please God", what would they be?

1. -----

2. -----

3. -----

### **READ THE PASSAGE**

1 Timothy 2:1-7

### **EXPLORE**

Q2. What things does the passage tell us are in v1-2 are "good and pleasing to God" (v3)?

Q3. In v4, what does Paul say that God wants? How might the things the church is called to do in v1-2 have an impact on this?

Q4. In v5-6, Christ is described in four ways. How is each of these important for understanding the gospel? (Have a think for yourself before reading the extra passages for help).

*Christ the mediator* (Heb 9:13-15)

*Christ the man* (Rom 1:3; Heb 2:14, 17-18)

*Christ the ransom* (Mark 10:45; Titus 2:14)

*Christ the testimony given at the proper time* (Gal 4:4; Heb 1:2-3)

## **DISCUSS**

Q5. What does Paul seem to suggest should be our motivation to pray for everyone?

Q6. What do you think it might look like for us to “live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness”?

## **APPLY**

Q7. How does this passage encourage us to pray? How might it impact your own prayer life?

Q8. Think of some people who are in authority over you - your boss, parents, church leaders, even politicians. How could you be praying for them?

## **PRAY**







## STUDY 4 || MEN & WOMEN IN THE CHURCH

### *1 TIMOTHY 2:8-15*

This passage is one that a lot of people find difficult to understand and for women it can be one that is very difficult to read. The important thing to remember in studying this passage is that it is in the context of the whole letter and the culture it was written to. Alongside this is the fact that it is written to encourage believers in faith so that they might continue to grow and function well as a church.

### **OPENING QUESTION**

Q1. What are typical things we think men and women do?

### **READ THE PASSAGE**

1 Timothy 2:8-15

### **EXPLORE**

Q2. What activity are men called to do in this passage and how are they called to do it?

Q3. What activity are women called to do in this passage and how are they called to do it?

Q4. Why does Paul link teaching and authority in verse 12 with creation and fall in verses 12 and 13?

## **DISCUSS**

Q5. What do you think it means to pray with holy hands and dress with good works?

Q6. This passage talks about the conduct of both men and women in the church. What is the underlying message Paul is trying to teach them?

## **APPLY**

Q7. What does it look like for men and women to pray in the way this passage instructs us to now?

Q8. When it comes to our conduct in the church, how should each of us act?

Q9. How can we help both men and women to flourish and grow in faith in our churches while upholding the different roles we were created for?

**PRAY**





## STUDY 5 || MANAGING GOD'S HOUSEHOLD

### *1 TIMOTHY 3:1-16*

In these verses, Paul is advising Timothy on what it takes to lead God's church. It's like a checklist for Timothy in his search for church leaders in Ephesus.

#### **OPENING QUESTION**

Q1. Have you ever been presented with a list of skills or qualities that were required to do a job? What was the role? What were the requirements? (Perhaps you've had to assess if you have the qualities to do a certain job?)

#### **READ THE PASSAGE**

1 Timothy 3:1-16

#### **EXPLORE**

Q2. Paul gives Timothy the requirements for 3 different sets of people. Who are they?

Q3. What are these requirements?

Q4. Do any of these requirements overlap or appear to be the same?

## **DISCUSS**

Q5. Why do you think Paul gives Timothy this list of requirements for these people?

Q6. What do you think is meant by verse 6?

Q7. How do you think this will help Timothy as he leads the church?

## **APPLY**

Q8. Do you think these requirements are still relevant today or should they be changed to suit our times?

Q9. How do you think using these requirements helps us with our church today?

**PRAY**







## STUDY 6 || THE SERVANT'S PRIORITY

### *1 TIMOTHY 4:1-16*

Chapter 3 ends with Paul telling Timothy why he has written - the instructions he gives for the church are based on the truth of the gospel. In fact, the church becomes the bedrock of gospel truth in the world. In this next section, Paul reminds Timothy that this truth is constantly under attack, and it's important for the church to "watch your life and doctrine closely."

### **OPENING QUESTION**

Q1. Are there any myths in our culture that we see tearing people away from the truth of the gospel?

### **READ THE PASSAGE**

1 Timothy 4:1-16

### **EXPLORE**

Q2. What are the false teachers teaching and why are they in the wrong (v1-5)?

Q3. What is it that we are to have nothing to do with and what are we to train in?

Q4. In verses 11-16 there are 10 commands given for a good servant of Christ Jesus. List them out together:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

## **DISCUSS**

Q5. How does the life of a good Christian servant differ from that of the false teachers?

Q6. How is the training in godliness that we are called to similar to physical training yet more valuable? Why is the striving in this training not in vain?

## **APPLY**

Q7. How can we practice verses 4 and 5? Think of some things that are created by God that you can thank him for now.

Q8. Verses 8-10 help us to remember the hope we have and why we should be focusing on training in godliness as a high priority. How might a refocus on training in godliness impact areas in your life such as raising your children, work, church?

Q9. From the 10 commands we saw in verses 11-16, are there one or two you might focus on doing this week?

## **PRAY**





## STUDY 7 || CARING FOR THE POWERLESS

### *1 TIMOTHY 5:1-16*

As he continues, Paul outlines for Timothy how people from all stages of life in the church - old men, young women, widows and slaves - should be treated, and how they should treat others. Paul's generalising here, but it's not black & white - he also gives some specific examples so that the church might exercise gospel wisdom as they care for a diverse range of individuals in the household of God.

### **OPENING QUESTION**

Q1. Do you relate differently to different people in your life? If so what are the differences?

### **READ THE PASSAGE**

1 Timothy 5:1-16

### **EXPLORE**

Q2. What instructions does Paul give to Timothy for the way to relate to others in God's household?

Q3. How is the church instructed to look after widows?

Q4. Have a look back at what Paul said about women in 1 Timothy 2:9-11 and compare it with verses 9-10 and 14 here. Is there a difference between the way women in general and widows are to behave?

## **DISCUSS**

Q5. Why do you think Paul gives the instructions he has in verses 1 and 2?

Q6. Why does the behaviour of these widows matter?

Q7. We don't have the same societal structures as the community did in the church Timothy was a part of. we are blessed to have government payments that help widows and others. But does that mean we no longer have a responsibility for looking after widows and others in need in the church?

## **APPLY**

Q8. Does it matter how we treat each other in the church? How might we put verses 1 and 2 into action?

Q9. How can we be helping others in our church as they face hard times in life such as losing a loved one, homelessness etc.?

## **PRAY**







## STUDY 8 || RESPECT FOR LEADERS

*1 TIMOTHY 5:17-6:2A*

Paul hasn't left Timothy to sort things out for himself. As a good disciple-maker, he gets alongside Timothy through his letters, giving him advice here on 2 groups of people seemingly very distinct from each other.

### OPENING QUESTION

Q1. Are there times when you've had trouble respecting those in authority and showing the right amount of devotion to work you have been set, maybe in your job?

### READ THE PASSAGE

1 Timothy 5:17-6:2a

### EXPLORE

Q2. How is Paul asking Timothy to deal with the elders of the church in verses 17-20?

Q3. What do you think is expected of Timothy in verses 21-25?

Q4. How would you summarise what Paul is saying in v24-25?

Q5. What does Paul say about those who are in slavery?

**DISCUSS**

Q6. Why do you think Paul is asking Timothy to consider all of the things in verses 17-25?

Q7. What's the reason those in slavery should be respectful of their masters?

## **APPLY**

Q8. Do you feel these standards for those in positions of responsibility within the church still apply today?

Q9. How do you think the passage about slavery may still be applicable to us in this day and age?

## **PRAY**





## STUDY 9 || GODLY CONTENTMENT

### *1 TIMOTHY 6:2B-21*

Some Christians give the impression that poverty is good and wealth is evil - living as a monk is the height of spiritual virtue. Others think the opposite is true - that God demonstrates his blessing through wealth and riches.

Here, Paul encourages Timothy and his church to maintain a heavenly perspective on wealth, godliness and contentment.

### **OPENING QUESTION**

Q1. Do you think it is better to be rich or poor in this world?

### **READ THE PASSAGE**

1 Timothy 6:2b-21

### **EXPLORE**

Q2. How does Paul describe the person who teaches a different doctrine to what he has taught?

Q3. In contrast, what does godliness look like in this passage?

Q4. What instructions are given to the rich?

## **DISCUSS**

Q5. Why does Paul say money is a root of evil? Does it mean that if we are wealthy that is a problem?

Q6. What does it mean to be content according to this passage?

Q7. Paul charges Timothy to “guard what has been entrusted to [his] care” in verse 20. What do you think this means?

## **APPLY**

Q8. If you were stripped of your wealth and only had food and clothing left, do you think you could be content?

Q9. How has this passage and study encouraged you to hold firm to the gospel and grow in godliness? Is there 1 thing you might put into practice this week from it?

**PRAY**





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