

# Timothy

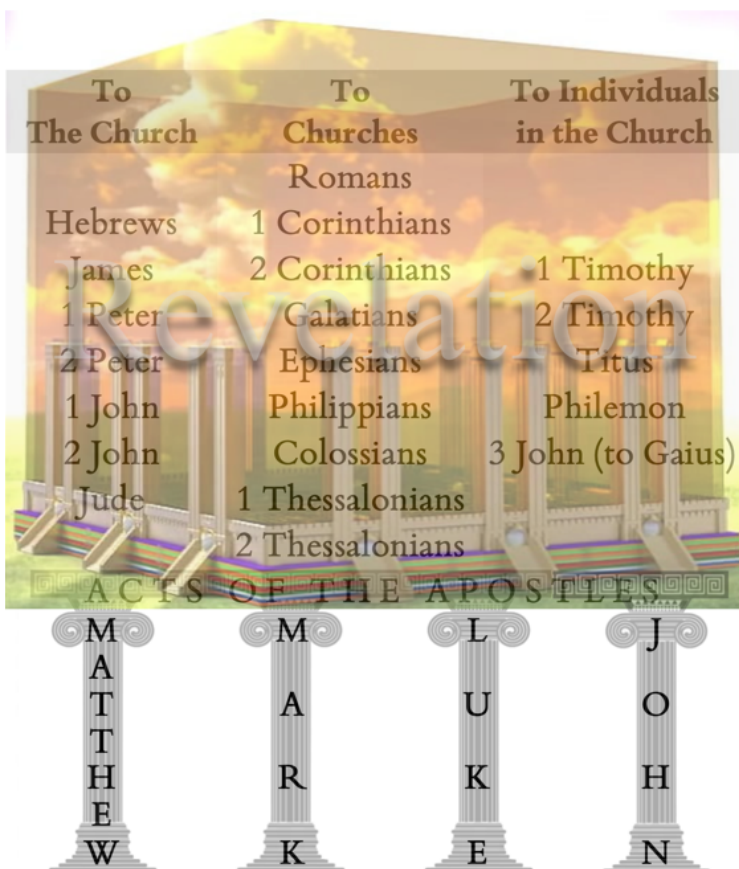
An Introduction and the Letters

## A Reason to Preach Timothy

Revelation describes the church as this spectacular, shining, golden, gem-laden, pearl-strewn city called the New Jerusalem. It comes down out of heaven to earth. Its foundations are the OT and NT—the twelve tribes and twelve Apostles. At its center is the throne of God and the Lamb. From the throne springs forth a river of the water of life. On either side there are branches of the tree of life, with fruit for the healing of the nations. This picture presents the Bride of Christ as a spotless, pure virgin, beautifully adorned and prepared for her husband on her wedding day. There is no hint of trouble, no sign of concern. Christ’s church is coming to men, and she will be unlike anything else in all the world.

And yet this does not at all appear to be what we see of the church with our physical eyes. As the song says, right now she is “**sore oppressed.**” She is “**rent asunder**” by **schisms** and **by heresies distressed.** She is in the midst of toil and

tribulation, both within and without her walls. Besides the Gospels and Acts, in the NT we have no fewer than **nine** books written to directly to churches, God's word to his Bride as a means of grace for her to actualize "down here" the reality that she is "up there." We have another **seven** written more generally to the church for the same purpose. And, we have **five** more directed as specific individuals within it.



The New Testament as an Earthly Working out of what Revelation sees as the Heavenly Church Come Down from Heaven

Having just finished Revelation, the thought struck me that **the book ends with the church**. So what would be a natural follow-up to such an ending? Anything having to do with *the church*! Then one of our members suggested the

letters of Timothy. I wasn't at all thinking this, but these letters do fit that. In fact, they do it in such a way that they really help us see what a church is supposed to be about. So, I thought, let's do it. Carson and Moo give us [several themes](#) of these two letters: [mentoring](#), [church leadership](#), [Christian living](#), dealing with [controversy](#) and [money](#), the centrality and [non-negotiability of the Gospel](#), [martyrdom](#), [sacrificial service to God](#), and [opposition](#).<sup>1</sup> In other words, the two letters explain the foundation of the church, how it is to operate, and how it is to exist in the midst of a broader hostile culture. They are extremely practical.

The current state of much of the church is in such disrepair that many times it isn't right to even use this name to discuss what takes place there. Seeing the American version of the church around us, it is a simple thing to realize that things are not especially good. Simple to realize, that is, if you compare it with Scripture. There is massive [capitulation to the culture](#), deep [infection of bad doctrine](#), a profoundly entertainment oriented purpose for existence. Even the definition of "church" has been changed in recent decades. Its leadership and structure are in disarray. Its foundations have been eroded. Its pillars removed. Basic

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<sup>1</sup> D. A. [Carson](#) and Douglas J. Moo, *Introducing the New Testament: A Short Guide to Its History and Message* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010), 125–126.

morality, laws, and rules for operating that have been graciously given, believed in for 2,000 years, are totally ignored or thrown out the windows of the Ivory Towers, only to knock normal people out far below as it lands on their heads. The local church has become afterthought of what it really means to be a Christian. Basically, who even needs it for anything but going to a concert and getting a few tips for a happier life?

Obviously, this isn't everywhere. God always has his faithful bride on the earth. Often times in places many wouldn't even think to look. And when you find her, you see what a treasure she truly is. And this is just the point of the NT letters: in the midst of overwhelming difficulties, [here is how the Bride can continue her preparations for the Wedding Day](#), as she becomes the perfect glorious virgin in the Consummation to come.

## Placement in the Canon: Pastoral

[How can a new Christian](#) or one on the path to taking God's word seriously come to see the necessity, the beauty, the meaning, the purpose, and goal of the local church? Why should they even go to one? What should happen when they get there? What should they be looking for? What should

they expect when they get there? These are the kinds of questions that the letters to Timothy help us answer.

Along with Titus (which we may or may not do), the two letters to Timothy are located in a **very specific part of the NT canon**. A “canon” is basically the number of the books we have in the collection we call the Bible. Remember, the NT (like the old) is composed of books, not chapters. As the “Bible” (meaning “book”) was set into the current form, there was a certain logic and order to why they assigned certain books in certain places. 1 and 2 Timothy, along with Titus, are located in the section we call the “**Pastoral Epistles**.” “Epistles” meaning “**letters**.” Pastoral meaning “**shepherding**.”

This canon was not invented or created by men. Rather, these are books God wrote and as such the church merely recognized them for what they were. As our Confession teaches, “**The authority of the Holy Scripture, for which it ought to be believed, depends not upon the testimony of any man or church, but wholly upon God (who is truth itself), the author thereof; therefore it is to be received because it is the Word of God**” (LBC 1.3). As early as the Second Century it was recognized that they were put in this position because of their “**regulation of ecclesial discipline**.”

In the earliest known list of the Canon, the **Muratorian Fragment** tells us, “[Paul also wrote] out of affection and love one to Philemon, one to Titus, and two to Timothy; and these are held sacred in the esteem of the Church catholic for the regulation of ecclesiastical discipline.”<sup>2</sup>

## Author

Both letters identify the author as the **Apostle Paul**. “*Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by command of God our Savior and of Christ Jesus our hope*” (1Tim 1:1). “*Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God according to the promise of the life that is in Christ Jesus*” (2Tim 1:1). This has, however, been questioned by critical scholars, who classify them as pseudepigrapha—a falsely attributed name. They say that the vocabulary and syntax, the rhetorical style, the historical problems, the kinds of heresies discussed, and the theology are not usual or possible for it to have been Paul.<sup>3</sup>

Yet, all those objections are easily answered, especially if Paul is using a secretary or close friend to work out the

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<sup>2</sup> **Muratorian Fragment** (2<sup>nd</sup> Cent. A. D.) 61-63. You can read the entire short fragment here: <http://www.bible-researcher.com/muratorian.html>. It is very interesting and demonstrates just how long the church had this basic canon of Scripture. For a longer discussion see Bruce M. Metzger, *The Canon of the New Testament: Its Origin, Development, and Significance* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), 191-201, 305-07.

<sup>3</sup> This is the summary from Carson and Moo, 123-24.

tedious mechanics of writing while he concentrated on communicating the substance of the letter. Paul did this often (1Cor 16:21; Gal 6:11; Col 4:18; 2Th 3:17; Phm 19), because as one writer notes, “Polished oratory was the main goal of ancient higher education and the epitome of civilized life; [especially with] written works ... designed to be read aloud in public.”<sup>4</sup> And polished they are. Indeed, it seems that Paul wanted this letter itself read in public as he commands Timothy, “Devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture,” and both letters end with the plural form of the word “you” (1Ti 6:21; 2Ti 4:22).

## Recipient and Date

That brings us to **the recipient**. If the letter ends, “Grace be with y’all” (that’s the best plural “you” we have in modern English), then these letters are **written to the churches**. However, formally speaking, unlike most of Paul’s letters, these are not *addressed* to a church, but to an individual within it. His name is **Timothy**.

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<sup>4</sup> S. M. Baugh, “1 Timothy,” *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary: Romans to Philemon*, vol. 3, ed. Clinton E. Arnold (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), 445 n. 2. Baugh cites this study: E. R. Richards, *The Secretary in the Letters of Paul* (WUNT 2.42; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1991).

“Timothy” means “Honored by God” or “Honoring God.” It is a very appropriate name for this amazing man. His name appears in 21 verses outside of these two letters (four times in them: 1Ti 1:2, 18; 6:20; 2Ti 1:2), often in the very first verse, meaning that he probably had some kind of role in their content, development, and writing. He appears in Acts (Acts 16:1, 3; 17:14, 15; 18:5; 19:22; 20:4), Romans (Rom 16:21), 1, 2 Corinthians (1Co 4:17; 16:10; 2Co 1:1, 1:19), Philippians (Php 1:1; 2:19), Colossians (Col 1:1), 1, 2 Thessalonians (1Th 1:1; 3:2, 2Th 1:1), Philemon (Phm 1:1), and Hebrews (Heb 13:23).

This proves that he was and incredibly well-known man to the churches of the New Testament. This is because he accompanied Paul everywhere. He was dispatched to Thessalonica (1Th 3:2); to Corinth (Acts 19:22); to Philippi when Paul was first arrested in Rome (Php 2:19), and to Ephesus as we will see in these letters. He was extremely trustworthy deeply respected.

We first hear of Paul meeting him on his Second Missionary Journey at Lystra, in Asia Minor, when he was, apparently, a boy. This would have been approximately the year 49-50 AD. But it is probable that Paul met him three years earlier on his First Missionary Journey because Luke



tells us that he was a “disciple” and “the son of a Jewish woman who was a believer, but his father was a Greek” and obviously not a Christian (**Acts 16:1**). We do not know when Timothy was converted, but it certainly could have been at this time. Perhaps Paul met him in a small house study and even lead him to the Lord. Paul recalls his baptism (**1Tim 6:12**), which is interesting to this Baptist considering that his mother and grandmother were already believers and that he had known the Scriptures since “infancy” (Gk: *brephos*; Lat: *infantia*, see discussion of this word below). Why wasn’t he infant baptized? Because he needed to be converted. “He was well spoken of by the brothers at Lystra and Iconium” (2). So his reputation preceded him. And it never failed him, as he was faithful to Paul from the very beginning to the very end of Paul’s life.



Paul's Second Missionary Journey

Biographers have called Timothy **shy** in character, prone to **abstention** of certain foods (probably because his mother was Jewish) and drink (which is why he had to be told to drink a little wine for his stomach problems; **1Ti 5:23**), and **probably a good athlete**, which is why he is told that “**bodily training is of some value**” (**4:8**). This last one fits well the setting of Ephesus, which is where Timothy was located when it was written, as Ephesus had one of the great gymnasiums of the ancient world (this gym was built in the second century, but others existed prior to it).



But as we just saw, Timothy was also **young**. Paul encourages him in his letters to, “**Let no one despise you for your youth**” (1Ti 4:12). Most people date 1 Timothy to the **early-mid ‘60s**, sometime between Paul’s first and second imprisonments in Rome. The second letter is written just a couple of years later while Paul has been arrested and awaits the trial that will see him put to death. Let’s put the date for the first letter at **65 A.D.** for sake of argument.

Tradition tells us that he was beaten, dragged through the streets, and stoned to death by a mob of angry pagans in **97 A.D.** in Ephesus, where he was the Bishop, after he tried to halt a procession in honor of Artemis-Diana by preaching the Gospel. (I’m sure that we will run into his goddess again as we look into the letters more deeply.) That same tradition (The Acts of Timothy) tells us that he was 80 at the time. This would put his birth at 17 A.D., which would in turn make him **48 years old** when Paul wrote to him. It’s **difficult for me to say that this made him a “young man”** who people looking down their snobbish older noses at. This age of his death is clearly wrong, though there is no reason to deny the year of his death.

Instead of almost 50, **Stott**<sup>5</sup> and **Kistemaker** put Timothy at the **mid-thirties** when Paul wrote this letter.<sup>6</sup> **McArthur** puts him “**late thirties**.”<sup>7</sup> That still seems a little old, but perhaps not as old as you think. There was a general consensus in the ancient world about the “stages” of a man’s life. Many put the list at **seven**: **nativity** (*nativitatis*), **infancy** (*infantiae*), **boyhood** (*pueritiae*), **youth** (*adolescentiae*), **young-manhood** (*juventutis*), **mature age** (*perfectae ætatis*), **death** (*occasum*, lit. “sunset”).<sup>8</sup> Comparing the Latin words, the parallel stage for “**young**” (Gk. *neotētos*) is **the fourth** or middle stage: *adulescentiam* (Vulg.). That age ranged between 23-41 with the ideal (Philo) being the 28<sup>th</sup> year (7 stages of seven years each).

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<sup>5</sup> **John R. W. Stott**, *Guard the Truth: The Message of 1 Timothy & Titus*, The Bible Speaks Today (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 35–37.

<sup>6</sup> **Simon J. Kistemaker** and William Hendriksen, *Exposition of the Acts of the Apostles*, vol. 17, New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1953–2001), 578.

<sup>7</sup> **John MacArthur**, *Qualities of an Excellent Servant* (Chicago: Moody, 1987), 64.

<sup>8</sup> **Victorinus**, *On the Creation of the World* (with Latin here on p. 7, [http://www.documentacatholicaomnia.eu/02m/0200-](http://www.documentacatholicaomnia.eu/02m/0200-0300_Victorinus_Petavionensis_Episcopus_De_Fabrica_Mundi_[Fragmentum]_MLT.pdf)

[0300\\_Victorinus\\_Petavionensis\\_Episcopus\\_De\\_Fabrica\\_Mundi\\_\[Fragmentum\]\\_MLT.pdf](http://www.documentacatholicaomnia.eu/02m/0200-0300_Victorinus_Petavionensis_Episcopus_De_Fabrica_Mundi_[Fragmentum]_MLT.pdf)).

These seven were roughly speaking shared by **Philo**, **Hippocrates**, **Aristotle**, and **Ptolemy**. See the fascinating article, Peter Kirby, “Taking Irenaeus Seriously,” *Peter Kirby* (Nov 4, 2013), <https://peterkirby.com/taking-irenaeus-seriously.html>. It was Stott whom I originally saw cited Irenaeus on this.

**Irenaeus** lists five, but clearly shares the same worldview. It was an Irenaeus quote and note in the Church Fathers (**Irenaeus**, *Against Heresies* 2.22.5) that sent me looking at this. He says, “**Now, that the first stage of early life embraces thirty years, and that this extends onwards to the fortieth year, every one will admit; but from the fortieth and fiftieth year a man begins to decline towards old age.**” The note says the Latin is “almost impossible to translate,” but insists, “**The meaning clearly is, that *the age of thirty* marked the transition point *from youth* to maturity” [emphasis mine].**

Stages of a Man's Life in the Ancient World					
Age	Hippocrates Philo (Aristotle?)	Age	Ptolemy	Victorinus	Irenaeus
0-7	Infancy	0-4	Infancy (moon)	Nativity ( <i>nativitas</i> )	Infancy ( <i>infantia</i> )
7-14	Childhood	5-14	Childhood (Mercury)	Infancy ( <i>infantia</i> )	
14-21	Boyhood	15-22	Impetuous Lover (Venus)	Boyhood ( <i>pueritia</i> )	Children ( <i>parvulus</i> )
21-28	Youth	23-41	Young Manhood (Sun)	Youth ( <i>adulescentia</i> )	Boys ( <i>pueros</i> )
28-49	Manhood	42-56	Manhood (Mars)	Young-manhood ( <i>iuventus</i> )	Youths ( <i>iuventus</i> )
49-56	Middle age	57-68	Elderly (Jupiter)	Mature Age ( <i>perfecta aetas</i> )	Old men ( <i>senior</i> )
56+	Old age	69+	Old Age (Saturn)	Sunset ( <i>occasus</i> )	

Red: Used by Paul of Timothy

Given that Paul has in mind [Leviticus](#) in this section of his letter,<sup>9</sup> it is interesting that priests and Levites began serving between 25 ([Num 8:24](#)) to 30 ([Num 4:2-3](#)), right at the age of “youth.” If we say that Timothy was 30, that certainly would have fit Paul’s exhortation. It would have put Timothy at 12-13 when Paul went on his First Missionary Journey when he was possibly converted.<sup>10</sup> This in turn would put him around [16-18](#) when he joins Paul and Silas on the Second Missionary Journey.<sup>11</sup> Certainly not

<sup>9</sup> The online Interlinear Bible has under its heading “A Good Minister of Jesus Christ”: Leviticus 21:1-17. [https://biblehub.com/interlinear/1\\_timothy/4.htm](https://biblehub.com/interlinear/1_timothy/4.htm).

<sup>10</sup> I say “possibly,” because we are told that his mother was a devout Jewish Christian. Was she converted during Paul’s first visit? Probably. However, we cannot rule out the possibility that she was actually converted sometime prior to this as there were many Jews “from every nation under heaven,” including Asia. It is possible she was converted by one of them. I’ll bring this up at a later time when we consider Timothy’s baptism.

<sup>11</sup> See the interesting slide-show here: [August McKenzie](https://slideplayer.com/slide/7740190/), “A Few Facts About Timothy,” <https://slideplayer.com/slide/7740190/>.

unreasonable. This means he would have died at around 62 years of age.<sup>12</sup>

## Themes, Structure, and Occasion

We've briefly discussed some of the themes in these letters. But what is its main purpose? For that, we need to understand **the occasion**, that is the reason Paul is writing to Timothy. Again, Timothy is in Ephesus, but the first letter (and we will only look at it today) is now (probably) 10 years after Ephesians was written. This tourist mecca with its Great Wonder of the World, the Temple of Artemis, was as pagan as ever. And many in the churches were seeking ways of mixing Christianity with various forms of paganism and Judaism.

Thus, Paul is writing his coworker and friend about concerning issues that he saw from afar. The letter begins and ends with **false teachers and heresies**. This is no accident. In the structure of the letter, which seems to be chiastic, this both bookends and is the center of the letter (see chiasms below). These false teachings were both destroying the

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<sup>12</sup> A reconstruction of Timothy's timeline at only four years older than I have him is his once-in-a-thousand-years biographer **Lance Pierson**, *In the Steps of Timothy* (Grand Rapids, MI: IVP, 1995), 14-17.

<https://archive.org/details/instepsoftimothy0000pier/page/14/mode/2up?view=theater&q=training>.

message of the Gospel, but also the order of the church and Christian behavior in the process, because as James says, “Faith without works is dead.” And its corollary is really that without faith, there are no Christian works possible.

Two Examples of the Chiasm of 1 Timothy	
<p><b>A. 1:1-2.</b> Paul greets Timothy as a true child of the Faith, and blesses with grace, mercy, and peace.</p> <p><b>B. 1:3-7.</b> Timothy is urged to command against <b>heresy</b>.</p> <p><b>C. 1:8-11.</b> The reason the Law is established. List of sins.</p> <p><b>D. 1:12-17.</b> Jesus came to save sinners. Doxology.</p> <p><b>E. 1:18-20.</b> Wage the good war.</p> <p><b>F. 2:1-8.</b> Pray, lifting up holy hands without anger or quarreling.</p> <p><b>G. 2:9-15.</b> Instructions to women.</p> <p><b>H. 3:1-7.</b> Concerning bishops.</p> <p><b>I. 3:8-13.</b> Concerning deacons and deaconesses.</p> <p><b>J. 3:14-16.</b> Instructions to Timothy as a pastor in the Household of God.</p> <p style="padding-left: 2em;"><b>K. 4:1-5.</b> Heresies will arise.</p> <p style="padding-left: 2em;"><b>K'. 4:6-10.</b> Teach against heresies.</p> <p><b>J'. 4:11-5:2.</b> How Timothy should conduct himself as a pastor.</p> <p><b>I'. 5:3-16.</b> Concerning widows.</p> <p><b>H'. 5:17-25.</b> Concerning elders.</p> <p><b>G'. 6:1-2a.</b> Instructions to bondservants.</p> <p><b>F'. 6:2b-11.</b> Against <b>heresy</b> caused by envy and greed. Quarrelling.</p> <p><b>E'. 6:12.</b> Fight the good fight.</p> <p><b>D'. 6:13-16.</b> Keep the commandment. Doxology.</p> <p><b>C'. 6:17-19.</b> Store up treasure with God, so to take hold of true life.</p> <p><b>B'. 6:20-21a.</b> Timothy commanded to guard against <b>heresy</b>.</p> <p><b>A'. 6:21b.</b> Grace.<sup>13</sup></p>	<p><b>A)</b> 1 Tim 1:1-2, Paul to Timothy, a true son: Grace, mercy, peace from God our Father and Jesus Christ;</p> <p><b>B)</b> 1 Tim 1:2-20, Timothy's charge: <b>guard sound doctrine</b> from which some have strayed:</p> <p><b>C)</b> 1 Tim 2:1-8, Prayers + intercession for those in authority (exercise of authority):</p> <p><b>D)</b> 1 Tim 2:9-15, Proper exercise/ care of church authority:</p> <p><b>E)</b> 1 Tim 3:1-13, Qualification of bishops + deacons:</p> <p><b>F)</b> 1 Tim 3:14-15, I write that you may know how to conduct yourself in the house of God; <b>central axis of the book) 1 Tim 3:16, "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;"</b></p> <p><b>F')</b> 1 Tim 4:1-16, Instruction for Timothy as church pastor:— 1b.4) 1 Tim 1:7b-8a, Exercise</p> <p><b>E')</b> 1 Tim 5:1-19, Qualifications of true widows/ treatment of elderly + elders:— 1c) 1</p> <p><b>D')</b> 1 Tim 5:20-25, Proper exercise/ care of church authority;</p> <p><b>C')</b> 1 Tim 6:1-2a, Proper honor between bondservants and masters (exercise of authority);</p> <p><b>B')</b> 1 Tim 6:2b-21a, Timothy's charge: <b>teach sound doctrine</b> from which some have strayed:</p> <p><b>A')</b> 1 Tim 6:21b, Grace be with you. Amen.<sup>14</sup></p>

<sup>13</sup> Joseph Norris, “Heretics in the Latter Days: The Structure of 1 Timothy, Part I,” *Theopolis* (June 4, 2014), <https://theopolisinstitute.com/heretics-in-the-latter-days-the-structure-of-1-timothy-part-i/>.

<sup>14</sup> Christine Smith, “Book of 1 Timothy Chiastic Structure,” *A Little Perspective* (Nov 4, 2013), <https://www.alittleperspective.com/book-of-1-timothy-chiastic-structure/>. Many more have seen this, though they vary in the way they flesh it out. See for example Welch in I. Howard Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, ICC (London: T&T Clark International, 1999), 32. [https://www.google.com/books/edition/The\\_Pastoral\\_Epistles/jA7UAAQBAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1&dq=1+timothy+chiasm&pg=PA32&printsec=frontcover](https://www.google.com/books/edition/The_Pastoral_Epistles/jA7UAAQBAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1&dq=1+timothy+chiasm&pg=PA32&printsec=frontcover); Marko A. Nagasawa, “The Implications of the Chiastic Structure of 1 Timothy on the Question of Women in Church Leadership,” *New Humanity Institute* (July 13, 2021), [http://www.newhumanityinstitute.org/pdfs/paul\\_1timothy-chiasm-&-women-as-elders.pdf](http://www.newhumanityinstitute.org/pdfs/paul_1timothy-chiasm-&-women-as-elders.pdf).

The ESV Study Bible says, “The theme of 1 Timothy is that the gospel leads to practical, visible change in the lives of those who believe it. It is often thought that the theme is church order, but the discussion of church offices is simply a piece of the larger argument that the true gospel, in contrast to false teaching, will always lead to godliness in its adherents.”<sup>15</sup> But we can be more specific. Because of the structure, Joseph Norris notices, “The theme of 1 Timothy is the distinction between the true children in the Household of God and false children who really belong to the household of Satan.” Furthermore, “In 1:2, Paul calls Timothy, ‘a true child in the Faith’ ... In the context of the Epistle, even within the first several verses, we see the contrast of the true child in the Faith and the false child.”<sup>16</sup>

In other words, a letter to be read publicly in churches, addressed to one of its pastors, is a lesson to people in the church not merely on church itself, but on how they may discern true from false believers. Growing up in a church no more makes you a true son of God than growing up a Jew made you a believer in Jesus. Being raised with the Scriptures and godly parents does not make you a Christian.

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<sup>15</sup> Crossway Bibles, *The ESV Study Bible* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2008), 2322.

<sup>16</sup> Joseph Norris, “Heretics in the Latter Days: The Theme of 1 Timothy,” *Theopolis* (June 18, 2014), <https://theopolisinstitute.com/heretics-in-the-latter-days-the-theme-of-1-timothy/>.



Coming to the worship service, going to Sunday School, none of that is what saves you. On the other hand, how much harder is it to be saved apart from the church, apart from the Scriptures, with no desire to be with God's people? That's how the theme and the audience of the letter work together.

With that by way of introduction, and as we saw both earlier and last week the NT letters were meant to be read aloud together, let's spend some time getting acquainted with this letter by reading it together. May God bless the hearing of this word.

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## **1 Timothy *ESV***

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by command of God our Savior and of Christ Jesus our hope,  
To Timothy, my true child in the faith:  
Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

As I urged you when I was going to Macedonia, remain at Ephesus so that you may charge certain persons not to teach any different doctrine, nor to devote themselves to

myths and endless genealogies, which promote speculations rather than the stewardship from God that is by faith. The aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith. Certain persons, by swerving from these, have wandered away into vain discussion, desiring to be teachers of the law, without understanding either what they are saying or the things about which they make confident assertions.

Now we know that the law is good, if one uses it lawfully, understanding this, that the law is not laid down for the just but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who strike their fathers and mothers, for murderers, the sexually immoral, men who practice homosexuality, enslavers, liars, perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine, in accordance with the gospel of the glory of the blessed God with which I have been entrusted.

I thank him who has given me strength, Christ Jesus our Lord, because he judged me faithful, appointing me to his service, though formerly I was a blasphemer, persecutor, and insolent opponent. But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief, and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ

Jesus. The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost. But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life. To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

This charge I entrust to you, Timothy, my child, in accordance with the prophecies previously made about you, that by them you may wage the good warfare, holding faith and a good conscience. By rejecting this, some have made shipwreck of their faith, among whom are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme.

First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus,

who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time. For this I was appointed a preacher and an apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

I desire then that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands without anger or quarreling; likewise also that women should adorn themselves in respectable apparel, with modesty and self-control, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly attire, but with what is proper for women who profess godliness—with good works. Let a woman learn quietly with all submissiveness. I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet. For Adam was formed first, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. Yet she will be saved through childbearing—if they continue in faith and love and holiness, with self-control.

The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task. Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his

own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church? He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil.

Deacons likewise must be dignified, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain. They must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. And let them also be tested first; then let them serve as deacons if they prove themselves blameless. Their wives likewise must be dignified, not slanderers, but sober-minded, faithful in all things. Let deacons each be the husband of one wife, managing their children and their own households well. For those who serve well as deacons gain a good standing for themselves and also great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.

I hope to come to you soon, but I am writing these things to you so that, if I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth. Great indeed, we confess, is the mystery of godliness:

He was manifested in the flesh,  
vindicated by the Spirit,  
seen by angels,  
proclaimed among the nations,  
believed on in the world,  
taken up in glory.

Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons, through the insincerity of liars whose consciences are seared, who forbid marriage and require abstinence from foods that God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, for it is made holy by the word of God and prayer.

If you put these things before the brothers, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, being trained in the words of the faith and of the good doctrine that you have followed. Have nothing to do with irreverent, silly myths. Rather train yourself for godliness; for while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come. The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance. For

to this end we toil and strive, because we have our hope set on the living God, who is the Savior of all people, especially of those who believe.

Command and teach these things. Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching. Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophecy when the council of elders laid their hands on you. Practice these things, immerse yourself in them, so that all may see your progress. Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers.

Do not rebuke an older man but encourage him as you would a father, younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, younger women as sisters, in all purity.

Honor widows who are truly widows. But if a widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show godliness to their own household and to make some return to their parents, for this is pleasing in the sight of God. She who is truly a widow, left all alone, has set her hope on God and continues in supplications and prayers night and day, but she who is self-indulgent is dead even while she lives.

Command these things as well, so that they may be without reproach. But if anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

Let a widow be enrolled if she is not less than sixty years of age, having been the wife of one husband, and having a reputation for good works: if she has brought up children, has shown hospitality, has washed the feet of the saints, has cared for the afflicted, and has devoted herself to every good work. But refuse to enroll younger widows, for when their passions draw them away from Christ, they desire to marry and so incur condemnation for having abandoned their former faith. Besides that, they learn to be idlers, going about from house to house, and not only idlers, but also gossips and busybodies, saying what they should not. So I would have younger widows marry, bear children, manage their households, and give the adversary no occasion for slander. For some have already strayed after Satan. If any believing woman has relatives who are widows, let her care for them. Let the church not be burdened, so that it may care for those who are truly widows.

Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and



teaching. For the Scripture says, “You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain,” and, “The laborer deserves his wages.” Do not admit a charge against an elder except on the evidence of two or three witnesses. As for those who persist in sin, rebuke them in the presence of all, so that the rest may stand in fear. In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of the elect angels I charge you to keep these rules without prejudging, doing nothing from partiality. Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands, nor take part in the sins of others; keep yourself pure. (No longer drink only water, but use a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments.) The sins of some people are conspicuous, going before them to judgment, but the sins of others appear later. So also good works are conspicuous, and even those that are not cannot remain hidden.

Let all who are under a yoke as bondservants regard their own masters as worthy of all honor, so that the name of God and the teaching may not be reviled. Those who have believing masters must not be disrespectful on the ground that they are brothers; rather they must serve all the better since those who benefit by their good service are believers and beloved.

Teach and urge these things. If anyone teaches a different doctrine and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching that accords with godliness, he is puffed up with conceit and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy craving for controversy and for quarrels about words, which produce envy, dissension, slander, evil suspicions, and constant friction among people who are depraved in mind and deprived of the truth, imagining that godliness is a means of gain. But godliness with contentment is great gain, for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs.

But as for you, O man of God, flee these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many

witnesses. I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, to keep the commandment unstained and free from reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, which he will display at the proper time—he who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone has immortality, who dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see. To him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen.

As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy. They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life.

O Timothy, guard the deposit entrusted to you. Avoid the irreverent babble and contradictions of what is falsely called “knowledge,” for by professing it some have swerved from the faith.

Grace be with you.

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