

## **1 TIMOTHY 1**

The work in Ephesus was not easy, and Timothy wanted a new assignment; but Paul urged him to stay where he was and get the job done (1:3). The next time you want to abandon your assigned place, consider the arguments Paul gave Timothy for staying where he was.

***For the work's sake*** (1–11). What Paul warned the Ephesian elders about had come true: false teachers were in the church (Acts 20:28–30). The pastor's job is to warn them and teach the people the truth. If he abandoned the flock, Timothy would be a hireling and not a shepherd (John 10:12–13).

***For the Lord's sake*** (12–17). Jesus died to save sinners, and He lives to equip and enable His servants to do the work of the ministry. The same God who empowered Paul could empower Timothy—and can empower us today. God is faithful!

***For our own sake*** (18–20). God had equipped Timothy, called him, and given him a solemn charge. There was a battle to fight, and he dare not run away. If we flee the post of duty, we rob ourselves of opportunities to grow, to serve, and to glorify God.

When the winds of adversity blow, set your sails in the right direction, and let Christ handle the rudder. Otherwise, you may be shipwrecked.

## **1 TIMOTHY 2**

What is the most vital ministry of the local church? According to Paul, it is *prayer*. Prayer moves the hand that governs the world. We must pray for government leaders, that the doors of ministry will be kept open and souls will be won to Christ. Because God's people do not pray for people in authority, wars close mission fields, officials do not grant needed visas, and the work of the Lord suffers.

Paul reminds Christian men that Christian women are important to the Lord and to the work of the church. The gospel brought freedom to women in the Roman Empire, but some of them did not know how to handle it and went to extremes asserting their liberty. Hence, the reminder about the spiritual leadership of the men in the church.

Modesty, true spiritual beauty (1 Pet. 3:1–6), godliness, and good works—these will characterize the woman God blesses.

## **1 TIMOTHY 3**

Being a leader of God's people is a serious task, and no one should accept an office who is not qualified and willing to *use* that office to help the church.

***Watching*** (1–7). The title *bishop* means “overseer” and describes the work of the elder (Acts 20:17, 28). God's people are like sheep; they need shepherds to watch over them, protect them, and lead them. Pray for your spiritual leaders that they might more and more be what God wants them to be.

***Working*** (8–13). The word *deacon* means “servant.” The deacons assist the elders in carrying out the work of the church (Acts 6:1–7). As with the elders, the deacons should be qualified spiritually and set the right example in their homes.

**Worshipping** (14–16). The church is much more than a group of like-minded people who assemble from time to time. The living God is in their midst (Matt. 18:20), and the truth of God has been deposited with them! They worship the Son of God who alone is worthy of praise! Yes, it is a serious thing to be a part of a local church. Do you take it seriously?

## **1 TIMOTHY 4**

**Watch yourself** (1–5). Satan is at work spreading false doctrine, and his ministers are already in the church (2 Cor. 11:13–15). God’s servants must preach the truth and fight the devil’s lies. Declaring war may not make us popular, but it will keep us faithful.

**Exercise yourself** (6–10). If believers would put as much effort into the spiritual life as they do their recreation and hobbies, what a difference it would make! Physical exercise is important, but spiritual exercise is even more essential. Both discipline and devotion are needed to make a winning athlete and an effective Christian.

**Give yourself** (11–16). It takes real effort to grow in the Christian life and to be successful in Christian service. God asks for our wholehearted surrender, no matter what the cost. Ponder these admonitions that Paul wrote to Timothy and see how they apply in your life.

## **1 TIMOTHY 5**

What causes problems in churches? Often, it is people not getting along with each other. Brothers and sisters do not always dwell together in unity (Ps. 133).

Paul suggests that we treat other people the way we would treat members of our own family (vv. 1–2). If the older people complain about things, deal with them as you would your father or mother, and accept the younger believers as brothers and sisters. This is simply a call to love others as God loves you.

Not everybody who asks for help should receive it (vv. 3–16). Charity should begin at home (vv. 4, 16), and church leaders must exercise discernment lest they create more problems than they solve.

Sometimes trouble comes because we believe reports that cannot be verified (v. 19), or we show partiality (v. 21), or we make decisions before getting the facts (v. 22). Not every church member has a character as good as his or her reputation (vv. 24–25), so take care!

## **1 TIMOTHY 6**

**Watch your motives** (1–2). Be obedient so you do not bring reproach on the Word (v. 1; Titus 2:10) or show disrespect for persons in authority over you (v. 2). Never take advantage of fellow believers; rather, do all you can to help them.

**Watch your attitudes** (3–5). Do you enjoy arguing about the Bible? Then search your heart to see if any of these sinful attitudes are hiding there. You can never debate people into the kingdom or into a more sanctified life.

**Watch your values** (6–10, 17–19). Are you content with the necessities of life, or must God give you luxuries? God wants you to enjoy His gifts (v. 17) and employ them for the good of others; but beware when your heart is set on getting rich (Prov. 15:27; Eccles. 5:10).

**Watch your testimony** (11–16). Know the things you should flee, follow, and fight, and do not confuse them. When you think it too difficult to stand up for the Lord, remember how He stood up for you.

**Watch your stewardship** (20–21). You have a deposit of spiritual truth to guard and invest (1:18; 2 Tim. 1:14; 2:2), and the enemy wants to take it from you. Beware those who want to give you “new knowledge” beyond what God says in His Word.

## **2 TIMOTHY 1**

Perhaps some of the “enemies” that attacked Timothy are attacking you and making you want to give up.

**Self-pity** (4). Timothy was having a hard time in Ephesus and wanted to leave (1 Tim. 1:3). Perhaps that caused his tears. When you start feeling sorry for yourself, remember that others are praying for you and that God still honors your faith.

**Neglect** (6). Timothy had neglected his spiritual life (1 Tim. 4:14), and the flame was low on the altar of his heart. No wonder he needed to exercise himself (1 Tim. 4:7–8)!

**Timidity** (7). *Fear* in this verse means “cowardice” or “timidity.” Timothy was not enthusiastic in his witness or ministry. The Holy Spirit can give us the resources we need to get the job done.

**Shame** (8, 12, 16). Paul was not ashamed of the gospel (Rom. 1:16) or of the Lord. His friend Onesiphorus was not ashamed of being identified with Paul (v. 16). Timothy should not be ashamed of either the Lord or Paul (v. 8).

**Carelessness** (13–14). Paul committed the message to Timothy, and Timothy’s responsibility was to guard it (1 Tim. 6:20) and share it with others (2 Tim. 2:2). Again, the Spirit of God enables us to be faithful.

## **2 TIMOTHY 2**

God’s grace strengthens us and enables us to be faithful teachers (v. 2), soldiers (vv. 3–4), athletes (v. 5), farmers (v. 6), workers (v. 15), vessels (vv. 20–23), and servants (vv. 24–26). The world looks on us as evildoers; but we are God’s elect, willing to live and die for Jesus Christ (vv. 8–13).

God’s grace enables us to overcome our three great enemies: the world (v. 4), the flesh (v. 22), and the devil (v. 26).

God’s grace enables us to endure hardship (vv. 3, 10) as we fight the Lord’s battles, so that we do not deny the Lord (vv. 11–13). It helps us do work of which we are not ashamed (v. 15) and deal with problem people of whom we are not afraid (vv. 23–26).