

# THE FIRST EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY

---

## THE LOCAL CHURCH AND ITS MINISTER

### Introduction:

First Timothy is the first of the Pastoral Epistles. Paul wrote two letters to Timothy and one letter to Titus. Both men were Paul's converts who became pastors of local churches and Paul gave instructions to them about the organization and structure of the local church.

Paul wrote these letters near the end of his life and ministry. Paul addressed both of these men as soldiers in God's army. Timothy was led to Christ by Paul while in Lystra (Acts 14:6; 16:1-3; 1 Timothy 1:2). Timothy had been circumcised for the sake of testimony because his mother was a Jewess, but his father was a Greek. Paul gave Timothy twelve general orders as a soldier in this letter. His main order was to attain sound doctrine (1 Timothy 1:10; 2 Timothy 4:3; Titus 2:1).

The Twelve orders were as follows:

1. Maintain sound doctrine for the purpose of the law and purity of the gospel (1:3-20).
2. Continue in prayer and study of the word (2:1-8).
3. Teach the role of women in the church and home (2:9-15).
4. Establish the ideal qualifications for the pastor (3:1-7).
5. Establish the ideal qualification for deacons (3:8-13).
6. Guard the mysteries and truth of the deity of Christ (3:14-16).
7. Beware of the infiltration of false doctrine (4:1-11).
8. Maintain personal discipline and holiness (4:12-16).
9. Behave properly toward elderly (5:1-16).
10. Honor those who labor in the word, doctrine, and personal health habits (5:17-25).
11. Teach of the relationship between master and servant (6:1-5).
12. Be content as a soldier of Christ by resisting the temptations of worldly wisdom and wealth (6:6-21).

# THE FIRST EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY

---

**Statistics:** 6 Chapters, 113 verses, and 2,269 words

## **Author:**

Pauline authorship has not been questioned until the early 19th century when liberals attacked the Pastoral Epistles (1 and 2 Timothy, Titus) on every front: historical, stylistic, ecclesiastical and theological. But all evidence for the pastorals as a group supports Paul as the author.

The testimony of the church fathers is consistent. Also, in each, the author identifies himself as Paul (1:1; 2 Timothy 1:1; Titus 1:1). Many other doctrinal and autobiographical details fit Paul's theology and life (1:12-17; 2:7; 2 Timothy 1:11).

Furthermore, pseudonymous (writing or written under a false name) documents were unacceptable to the early church because of their deceptive nature. Had these Pastoral Epistles been written in the second century, it is hard to see what purpose they served considering their content.

## **The Date and Place**

The letter was evidently written after Paul's release from his first Roman imprisonment about A.D. 62. Since he was imprisoned again in Rome about A.D. 67, the letter was written in the five year interval. Evidence points to the earlier part of the five year period.

After his release, Paul sent Timothy to Philippi to report the news as planned (Philippians 2:19-23). He then went on to visit Ephesus and other churches, such as Colossae (Colossians 4:7-9; Philemon 22). At some point, Timothy joined Paul in Ephesus where Paul tells him to remain as he travels on to Macedonia (1:3).

When he saw that he might be delayed in returning to Ephesus, Paul wrote to Timothy (3:14-15). Thus Paul wrote from Macedonia, perhaps Philippi, around A.D. 62.

## **The Destination**

The letter is addressed to Timothy (1:2) who remained in Ephesus (1:3) as Paul continued his travels. The city of Ephesus was a base for Paul's missionary activity during his three year stay there (Acts 20:31) and had become well established and organized with elders (20:17).

Paul probably met Timothy, a resident of Lystra, when he visited that city on his way through the Roman province of Galatia on his first missionary journey (Acts 14:6). Timothy was a convert of Paul's (1:2; 1 Cor. 4:17; 2 Tim. 1:2) who became so well spoken of by the Christians in Lystra and Iconium that Paul took him along on his second missionary journey (Acts 16:1-3). He appears in the biblical record as a close associate throughout Paul's ministry.

**Key Words:** Teach, serve, charge

**Key Verse:** 1 Timothy 6:20

## **The Occasion**

The occasion of the letter unfolds in the letter itself. As Paul departed for Macedonia, he left Timothy behind in Ephesus to supervise the church (1:3). The false teaching Paul had

# THE FIRST EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY

---

predicted years before (Acts 20:29-30) was threatening the church. Paul had already dealt with at least two false teachers (1:19-20) but anticipated further trouble (6:3-5).

Since Paul expected to be detained (3:14-15) he was delegating to Timothy the authority to deal with false teaching and establish proper conduct for the church. Timothy would also need encouragement in his role of representing the apostle. Paul writes this personal letter to Timothy to meet these needs.

The exact nature of the false teaching is not clear. It appears to have a remote kinship with later Gnosticism. The warnings against asceticism (4:1-3) and the fact that Hymenaeus taught against a literal future resurrection (1:20; 2 Tim. 2:17-18) reflect the gnostic tendency to consider matter as evil. Yet there was also a Judaistic element, because these teachers used the law (1:7).

## **Purpose:**

Paul has a negative and positive purpose for writing. Negatively, Paul writes to give Timothy authority and instruction in refuting false teaching (1:3-7; 6:3-5).

Positively, Paul writes to encourage Timothy to instruct the church in godly conduct and order (2:1-12; 3:1-15; 5:1-6:2). The latter is the explicit statement of Paul in 3:15. In all this, Paul instructs Timothy to teach sound doctrine (4:11,13,16; 6:2).

A personal purpose is seen in Paul's encouragement to Timothy to fight a good fight, be an example and use his gifts (1:18; 4:12-16; 6:12, 20). The letter thus was written as a manual for Paul's representative. It gives Timothy the authority, documentation and instructions to conduct church business and to guard true doctrine from error in Paul's absence. Paul also writes to encourage young Timothy in performing these duties.

## **Argument:**

Paul begins the letter with a strong declaration of his apostolic authority (1:1) which lays the authoritative basis for the responsibilities delegated to Timothy. The argument then develops in three main sections.

First is Paul's charge to Timothy concerning sound doctrine (1:3-20). Timothy must guard sound doctrine against the false teaching threatening the church (1:3-11). This teaching was causing dissension (1:3-5) due to the ignorance of the false teachers in their treatment of the law (1:6-7). Paul explains the legitimate use of the law which restrains evil (1:8-11).

The importance of the effects of sound doctrine is illustrated by Paul's own example as he gives thanks for his relationship to the gospel (1:12-17). Paul's ministry is a product of the grace of God revealed in the true gospel of salvation through Christ (1:12-15). He is an example of this grace (1:16). This personal digression reaffirms Paul's authority and implies that the false teachers offer nothing of the power to save as Christ does.

Paul commits the charge to guard sound doctrine to Timothy in 1:18-20. Timothy must stand for the truth and fight for it with faith and a good conscience (1:18-19a). The rejection of these two essentials and the subsequent effect of false doctrine is spiritual shipwreck (1:19b-20). Paul again asserts his authority and transfers it to Timothy in his struggle against false teaching at Ephesus.

## THE FIRST EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY

---

The “Therefore” (2:1) which begins Paul’s instructions to Timothy concerning church order (2:1-3:16) shows that proper church order will help guard the truth and refute the disorder of the false teachers. Paul begins his directives with instructions about public worship (2:1-15).

He addresses the conduct of prayer in public worship (2:1-8) by urging its practice and noting its importance and approval before God (2:1-4). The basis for prayer is the mediatorial work of Christ (2:5-7). While men are to pray (2:8), women must present themselves in modesty (2:9-10) and show submission to male leadership in learning, teaching, and exercising authority (2:11-15).

Another important area to guard in the church is its leadership. Therefore, Paul explains the qualifications of church officers (3:1-13).

First, he lists the qualifications for overseers (3:1-7) or elders (Acts 20:17), then the qualifications for deacons (3:8-13). Paul seems to be addressing qualifications which would combat the temptations which corrupted the false teachers: sex, money and pride.

It is also important to hold the doctrines of the faith with a pure conscience (3:9), which is the area where the false teachers so quickly erred (1:19; 4:2). Even the women involved in church service must be carefully qualified (3:11). The high standards in church leaders will defend the faith by an adherence to sound doctrine and godly conduct.

Paul expresses his purpose for writing and the reasons behind his instructions in 3:14-16. In his absence, he wants Timothy to know how to conduct himself in the church.

Paul then highlights the true function and importance of the church in order to provide a theological basis for his instructions about refuting false doctrine and establishing proper conduct in the church. The purpose statement also provides a bridge to more personal advice about Timothy’s conduct.

Timothy’s personal and official conduct is crucial to a defense of sound doctrine and an influential ministry in the church. Thus in the third section of the letter, Paul addresses this conduct (4:1-6:21a).

In view of the coming apostasy, Paul first instructs him about his personal conduct (4:1-16). He warns about false teachers (4:1-3), refutes their doctrine (4:4-5) and gives instructions for the true teacher (4:6-16).

The emphasis of Timothy’s ministry should be sound doctrine (4:6,11,13,16) and godly conduct (4:7-8,12) which will serve as an example to all (4:15). These things will be a defense against false doctrine if they are manifested in both the ministry (4:6-11) and the personal conduct of Timothy (4:12-16).

Paul next instructs Timothy in his official conduct toward various groups in the church (5:1-6:2). A general exhortation urges a proper attitude toward all ages (5:1-2). Then come instructions concerning widows (5:3-16), including their support (5:3-8) and their enrollment as widows (5:9-16). By overseeing their needs and their moral conduct, Timothy will propagate godliness (5:4,7,10) and an atmosphere conducive to sound doctrine (5:8,12,14-15).

A similar purpose lies behind the instructions concerning elders (5:17-25). If they are properly honored, disciplined and ordained, Timothy will insure godliness and defend against false teaching taking root in the church leaders. The last group Paul gives instructions for are servants (6:1-2). They must honor their masters so sound doctrine will not be blasphemed. Once more, it is seen how godly conduct in the church guards it from error.

## THE FIRST EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY

---

The final instructions for Timothy concern his conduct towards riches and those who are rich (6:3-19). Paul explains how the desire for riches is behind the ungodliness of the false teachers (6:3-10).

Along with their pride, the greed for financial gain is the chief motivation of the false teachers (6:5,9-10). Paul is contrasting ministerial motives, for godliness can be content with a minimum of material goods (6:6-8). Thus Timothy is exhorted to have pure motives in the “fight of faith” (6:11-16).

His motivation should be the Lord’s coming (6:14-16). Further, Timothy must command the rich to trust in God alone and do good works (6:17-19).

Paul’s reiteration of the charge to Timothy aptly concludes Paul’s purpose in writing (6:20-21). Timothy is to guard what was committed to him in the Christian message. As Paul has shown, this is done by refuting false doctrine and establishing proper conduct in the church and in Timothy’s own life.

# THE FIRST EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY

---

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Fill in the missing words to the following

- a. Maintain \_\_\_\_\_ for the purpose of the law and purity of the gospel (1:3-20).
- b. Continue in \_\_\_\_\_ and study of the word (2:1-8).
- c. Teach the role of women in the \_\_\_\_\_ and home (2:9-15).
- d. Establish the ideal \_\_\_\_\_ for the pastor (3:1-7).
- e. Establish the ideal qualification for deacons (3:8-13).
- f. Guard the mysteries and truth of the \_\_\_\_\_ of Christ (3:14-16).
- g. Beware of the infiltration of false \_\_\_\_\_ (4:1-11).
- h. Maintain personal discipline and holiness (4:12-16).
- i. Behave properly toward elderly (5:1-16).
- j. \_\_\_\_\_ those who labor in the word, doctrine, and personal health habits (5:17-25).
- k. Teach of the relationship between master and \_\_\_\_\_ (6:1-5).
- l. Be content as a \_\_\_\_\_ of Christ by resisting the temptations of worldly wisdom and wealth (6:6-21).

2. For there is \_\_\_\_\_ God, and one \_\_\_\_\_ between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a \_\_\_\_\_ for all, to be testified in due time.

3. And without controversy great is the \_\_\_\_\_ of godliness: God was \_\_\_\_\_ in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto \_\_\_\_\_, believed on in the world, received up into \_\_\_\_\_.

4. What are the key three words in First Timothy? \_\_\_\_\_

## THE SECOND EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY

---

### **Introduction:**

Second Timothy is Paul's last will and testament to his dear son in the faith. Timothy was a young pastor and Paul wrote his final advice, encouragement, exhortation, and warning to him. The last words of Paul instructed Timothy as a soldier in the spiritual battle for the faith (2 Corinthians 10:3-6; Ephesians 6:10-20). A faithful soldier seeks to master his spiritual weapon in the sword of God (2:15; 3:16-17).

Paul gave four additional charges to the twelve mentioned in First Timothy:

1. Timothy was first ordered to continue in the godly heritage of his mother and grandmother.
2. Timothy was ordered to be faithful, pure, strong, and a tough soldier of Jesus Christ who continually studied the sword of the Spirit (Ephesians 6:17; Hebrews 4:12).
3. Timothy was warned of perilous times and evil men.
4. Timothy's final charge and order was to follow the commands of the Captain of his salvation and finish the fight until death or the Rapture (Joshua 5:13-15; Hebrews 2:10).

This letter was the final inspired letter of Paul before his execution by beheading. He was a prisoner in Rome under the administration of Nero (1:8; 16-17). Roman dictators imprisoned, persecuted, and martyred Christians. Nero secretly began the burning of Rome and blamed it on the Christians. Evil tyrants secretly cause social turmoil and blame it upon their scapegoat to incite the people in the wrong cause (1 Kings 21:1-14; Luke 23:1-5; Acts 21:27-40).

The alert soldier and student of the word discerns the doctrinal truths that were prophesied of the last days (3:1-7; 4:3-4). World tyrants under Rome's influence will secretly cause a social turmoil and they will blame nonconformists (John 19:11-15).

## THE SECOND EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY

---

Apostasy of the pastor breeds apathy in the people and anarchy in the nation. Faithful soldiers fight apostasy, apathy, and anarchy with an authoritative sword of God until the end.

**Statistics:** 4 Chapters, 83 verses, and 1,666 words

### **The Author:**

The author's claim (1:1) and the circumstances inferred by the letter lead only to the conclusion that Paul wrote this epistle. No objection has stood against the external and internal evidence for Pauline authorship for this or the other pastoral epistles.

### **The Date and Place:**

Paul is in a Roman prison as he writes (1:8,16-17; 2:9). This is obviously not his earlier imprisonment recorded in Acts 28, because there he lived in a rented dwelling with many companions, but now appears alone and in seclusion (1:16-17; 4:11). Neither does he expect a quick release as before (Phil. 1:25-26; 2:24), but expects death (4:6-8).

This second imprisonment came under the persecution initiated by Nero in A.D. 64 to divert suspicion about the burning of Rome from himself to the Christians. When Paul returned to Asia from Spain about A.D. 66 he was a prime target for accusations by his enemies.

The letter appears to have been written shortly before his death in A.D. 68. Therefore, Paul wrote from Rome most likely in A.D. 67.

### **The Destination:**

The destination of the letter is not so clear as it is in the other pastorals, but there is good reason to think it was sent to Timothy (1:2) in Ephesus, just as 1 Timothy. Some reasons for this conclusion include the reference to Onesiphorus (4:19) who evidently resided in Ephesus (1:16-18), the reference to Hymenaeus (2:17) who was mentioned in connection to the false teaching in Ephesus (1 Tim. 1:19-20), and Paul's assumption that Timothy would pass through Troas on his way to Rome (4:13). Troas lay on the Egnatian Way directly enroute from Ephesus to Rome.

### **The Occasion:**

As Paul faced the end of his life and ministry in a Roman prison cell, he desired to communicate to his close associate, Timothy, some final words of encouragement and instruction.



## THE SECOND EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY

---

The occasion for the writing of this letter thus grew out of Paul's circumstances and his fatherly concern for Timothy. Timothy was alone in a dangerous time for the church. Paul was also alone and desired Timothy's company in Rome. The letter encourages Timothy in the ministry and summons him to Rome to be with Paul.

### **The Purpose:**

The first purpose of the letter is to encourage Timothy in his ministry. Paul encourages him to endure hardship (1:8; 2:3; 4:5) and to be bold in his gospel witness (1:8-12; 4:1-5) as he faithfully discharges his ministerial duties in increasingly evil times.

A second purpose born of his desire to see Timothy (1:4), is to summon the associate to his side (4:9,21). At the same time, Paul wants Timothy to bring Mark also (4:11), as well as some personal items (4:13).

### **Argument:**

Paul's introduction (1:1-5) expresses his genuine gratitude and affection for Timothy. He makes it clear from the beginning that he wants to see him again (1:4). The rest of the letter is composed largely of exhortations related to Timothy's ministry and some final personal remarks.

The first part of the letter exhorts Timothy to remain steadfast in the ministry (1:6-13). This section begins with the qualities of a steadfast minister (1:6-18). Paul tells Timothy to make the most of his spiritual gift (1:6-7) and to have the same courage in the face of adversity that Paul has demonstrated in himself (1:8-12).

In contrast to those who deserted the apostle, except for Onesiphorus, Timothy must remain faithful to the truth entrusted to him (1:13-18). Timothy is also exhorted to remain steadfast in his duties as a gospel minister (2:13). He must be strong (2:1) and continue to teach others the truth he learned from Paul (2:2).

He must also be prepared to endure suffering (2:3-13) after the example of endurance seen in the soldier, the athlete, and the farmer (2:4-7). The motivation for faithful enduring is the assurance from Christ's resurrection, the example of Paul's suffering, and the certainty of a future reward (2:8-13).

Paul not only encourages Timothy to remain faithful in ministry, he further exhorts him to be faithful to sound doctrine (2:14-4:8). This second part of the letter begins with the proper reactions a minister of the gospel should have toward doctrinal error (2:14-26).

## THE SECOND EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY

---

When confronted with error, Timothy should shun it while being diligent in his personal handling of God's Word (2:14-16). The false teaching Timothy encountered was cancerous in its spread and damaging in its denial of the future resurrection (2:17-18).

As a servant of God, Timothy must also be diligent in personal purity (2:20-22). When he must confront false teaching, Paul exhorts Timothy not to be quarrelsome, but to be humble in correcting its adherents (2:23-26).

Paul also wants to prepare Timothy for ministry in the dark times of increasing apostasy, so he exhorts him concerning his conduct in the midst of this coming situation (3:14:8). Paul warns him about the coming apostasy and describes the apostates (3:1-9).

But Timothy is also apprised of his advantages in such a time (3:10-17). He has Paul's example of suffering for the gospel and subsequent deliverance (3:10-13), and his own personal experience with the Scriptures which will equip him for every good work (3:14-17).

Paul's summary charge to Timothy is to faithfully and diligently perform his gospel ministry (4:1-8). This involves preaching the Word and doing the work of an evangelist in the face of growing apostasy (4:1-5). Finally, Paul explains the basis for his urgent charge; he expects to die soon and his ministry is finished (4:6-8).

The personal remarks of Paul form a third part of the letter (4:9-18). He indicates his need for assistance and asks for Timothy to come to him promptly (4:9-13). His need is compounded by the companions who have deserted him (4:10-11). He also desires to see Mark and to have his cloak and books (4:11-13).

Paul includes a warning to Timothy about the dangerous Alexander (4:14-15) and a brief account of his first trial (4:16-18). It appears that Paul was able to capably defend himself after all had forsook him. However, the deliverance he expects is not release from prison, but a vindication of his ministry.

Paul concludes the letter with final greetings, information about some brothers, and a final appeal for Timothy to come before the winter freeze prohibits travel (4:19-21). He closes with his final benediction (4:22).

Paul's last letter is an expression of love and concern for his friend, Timothy. His affection brings encouragement to Timothy to continue faithfully in the gospel ministry and brings a personal summons to join him a last time in Rome.

## THE SECOND EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY

---

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Fill in the Blanks of the following:

- a. Timothy was first ordered to continue in the godly \_\_\_\_\_ of his mother and grandmother.
- b. Timothy was ordered to be \_\_\_\_\_, pure, strong, and a tough soldier of Jesus Christ who continually studied the sword of the Spirit (Ephesians 6:17; Hebrews 4:12).
- c. Timothy was warned of \_\_\_\_\_ times and evil men.
- d. Timothy's final charge and order was to follow the commands of the Captain of his salvation and \_\_\_\_\_ the fight until death or the Rapture (Joshua 5:13-15; Hebrews 2:10).

2. \_\_\_\_\_ to show thyself approved unto God, a  
\_\_\_\_\_ that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly  
\_\_\_\_\_ the word of truth.

3. All \_\_\_\_\_ is given by \_\_\_\_\_ of God, and is profitable for \_\_\_\_\_, for \_\_\_\_\_, for correction, for instruction in \_\_\_\_\_.

4. I have fought a good fight, I have \_\_\_\_\_ my course, I have kept the faith: