

# JesusOnline Equip

Ministry Resources Hub

## 1 Timothy

---

**A free resource from JesusOnline Ministries.**

Read or share online: [app.jesonline.com/post/93661-5-1-timothy](https://app.jesonline.com/post/93661-5-1-timothy)

---

**JesusOnline Equip** · Ministry Resources Hub · [equip.jesonline.com](https://equip.jesonline.com)

Free media and discipleship resources for pastors, leaders, and growing disciples.

# 1 Timothy

---

## A. Overview and Summary.

1. This epistle from Paul is one of two he wrote to Timothy, whom he considered his beloved son in the faith. This is one of three so-called “pastoral letters,” including 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy and Titus. “Pastoral”, as both Timothy and Titus functioned as pastors, or shepherds in local churches. Timothy, whose name means “one who honors God”, received it from his mother Eunice and his grandmother Lois who were devote Jews and in whom dwelt genuine faith (2 Timothy 1:5). They taught Timothy the Old Testament Scriptures from his childhood (2 Timothy 3:15). His father was Greek, which explains why Timothy was not circumcised until Paul circumcised him because of the Jews and because he wanted Timothy to go with him Acts 16:3).
2. Timothy was from Lystra, a city in the Roman province of Galatia, part of modern Turkey. Paul met him while on his first missionary journey. Paul may have led him to Christ as he calls Timothy “his beloved son” in several places in his epistles. Paul does acknowledge Timothy’s faith and the influence of his mother and grandmother, but also makes mention of stirring up the gift of God that Timothy received from Paul by the laying on of his hands (2 Timothy 1:6).
3. Paul often sent Timothy to churches as his representative. This epistle is addressed to Timothy while he was serving as a pastor in Ephesus (1:3) from Paul while he was in Macedonia (1:3). As Timothy had been thoroughly immersed in theology from Paul, this letter contains practical pastoral instruction from Paul. The epistle does address important theological truths including the proper function of the law (1:5-11); salvation (1:14-16; 2:4-6); attributes of God (1:17); the fall of man (2:13-14); the person and nature of Christ (3:16; 6:15,16); election (6:12) and the second coming of Christ (6:14-15). Timothy was also to deal with false doctrine that had crept into the church (1:3-7; 4:1-7; 6:3-5), address disorder in worship (2:1-15), establish qualifications for church leaders (3:1-14), and confront materialism (6:6-19).

## B. Chapter One.

1. After his opening greeting, Paul admonishes Timothy to address false doctrine: “As I urged you when I went to Macedonia, remain in Ephesus so that you may instruct certain people not to teach different doctrine or to pay attention to myths

and endless genealogies. These promote empty speculations rather than God's plan, which operates by faith. Now the goal of our instruction is love that comes from a pure heart, a good conscience, and a sincere faith. Some have deviated from these and turned aside to fruitless discussion" (1:3-6).

2. These "certain people" were Judaizers who were teaching the law without proper understanding. Paul says the "law is good, provided one uses it legitimately" (1:8). He then tells Timothy the law is for the "unrighteous, the ungodly, the rebellious for the unholy and irreverent, for those who kill their fathers and mothers, for murderers, for the sexually immoral and homosexuals, for kidnappers, liars, perjurers, and for whatever else is contrary to the sound teaching based on the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was entrusted to me" (1:9-11). We can use the Law today legitimately to convict someone of their sin before a righteous God.
3. Paul continues with his testimony noting he was "one who was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an arrogant man. But I received mercy because I acted out of ignorance in unbelief" (1:13). He gives praise to God: "Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen (1:17).
4. He closes this chapter with a charge to Timothy to "strongly engage in battle according to prophecies previously made about him" (1:18). He mentions two individuals who have made their faith shipwreck: "Some have rejected these and have suffered the shipwreck of their faith. Hymenaeus and Alexander are among them, and I have delivered them to Satan, so that they may be taught not to blaspheme" (1:19-20). This can be a difficult passage to understand. Paul, using his apostolic authority, apparently put these men out of the church to remove their negative influence. In doing so, they were removed from the protection and insulation of God's people. They were no longer in the environment of God's blessing to the church, but vulnerable to Satan's control and influence. Church discipline, if administered properly, will accomplish the same. The goal of disfellowship is repentance and restitution not destruction of the individual(s). Nothing else is mentioned in Scripture about these two men, but the hope is that they learned not to blaspheme.

## C. Chapter Two.

1. Paul begins this chapter with instruction on prayer: "First of all, then, I urge that petitions, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for everyone, for

kings and all those who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity. This is good, and it pleases God our Savior, who wants everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth” (2:1-4). This passage has raised a common question, if God wants “everyone to be saved” why doesn’t He? In Ephesians 1:4, Paul tells us that in eternity past, God “chose us before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him in love”. This is called predestination, or election (Romans 8:29-30). This was before we were born, before we sinned. That is not the issue. What is the issue is why or how did He chose some and not others. God obviously did not choose everyone, or else everyone would come to a saving knowledge of Christ. Some, He left to their own desires to continue in rebellion and reject Christ. If He did not choose us, we all would be in such a condition.

2. There are at least two common theories to God’s choosing. One view which is called the prescient, or foreknowledge view, says that God in His omniscience, knows who in time will by their own free will, chose to put their faith in the saving grace of Jesus Christ. He therefore choses them in eternity past based upon this. The second theory is called the Augustinian view, named after Augustine, the Bishop of Hippo (396-430) who said about predestination “He did this according to the good pleasure of His will, so that nobody might glory concerning his own will, but about God’s will towards himself”. In other words, God for His own purposes and for his glory, not for ours, chooses some to bestow grace upon them so that by faith, they would come to a saving knowledge of Christ. Theologians have disagreed about predestination for centuries without resolution.
3. Some argue that this means many will suffer in Hell for eternity because they were not chosen. God is just, and there will be no one in Hell who does not deserve to be there. Our free will allows us to make decisions throughout our lives as to whether to sin, rebel, or glorify God. Mankind will be judged according to their works (Revelation 20:13; Psalm 62:12; Proverbs 24:12; Jeremiah 17:10; 32:19; Matthew 16:27; Romans 2:6). No one will be able to say that God is not fair according to our thinking. Regardless, we do not know this side of eternity, who is chosen and who is not. Therefore, it does not change our responsibility to share the gospel with all that we possibly can.
4. The passage in 1 Timothy 2:8-14, which addresses the role of women in the church, has often been a subject of debate. It is essential to understand that Paul’s instructions must be read in their cultural and historical context. While

Paul addresses leadership and authority within the church, his teaching is not a blanket prohibition on the spiritual gifts and ministries that women can exercise in the body of Christ. Armenian evangelical theology values the full equality of men and women in Christ (Galatians 3:28), and it is crucial to affirm that women have an essential role in ministry. While Paul highlights a specific order in church leadership, this should not be interpreted as a restriction on women's ability to serve in significant roles within the church, such as teaching, evangelism, discipleship, and leadership. Women, like men, are called and equipped by God to serve His kingdom in powerful ways. It is essential to acknowledge that cultural norms and historical context influenced Paul's directives; therefore, these teachings should not be applied in a legalistic manner in modern contexts where cultural and social conditions differ. The full participation of women in ministry is not only consistent with Scripture, but it also reflects the abundant gifts that the Holy Spirit has given to all believers, regardless of gender. God calls both men and women to serve and lead in His church in accordance with their gifts and calling. While the question of church leadership positions may still vary by denomination or tradition, we are encouraged to uphold the biblical principle that all believers are equally valued and equally empowered to serve God in His Kingdom. Women's spiritual gifts should not be disregarded or undervalued, and their role in ministry should be celebrated and supported.

5. Paul again writes a controversial passage: "But she will be saved through childbearing, if she continues in faith, love, and holiness, with good judgment" To be saved in child bearing would refer to the natural role that women have in giving birth and rearing godly children and not to eternal salvation which is in Christ alone. In context with the preceding verses, this would mean that instead of demanding authority roles, women will find fulfillment in raising children to love and honor God and to manage the household wisely (5:14).

#### D. Chapter Three.

1. This chapter contains the qualifications of elders (overseers) and deacons. For an elder: "If anyone aspires to be an overseer, he desires a noble work. An overseer, therefore, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, self-controlled, sensible, respectable, hospitable, an able teacher, not addicted to wine, not a bully but gentle, not quarrelsome, not greedy—one who manages his own household competently, having his children under control with all dignity. (If anyone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care

of God's church?) He must not be a new convert, or he might become conceited and fall into the condemnation of the Devil. Furthermore, he must have a good reputation among outsiders, so that he does not fall into disgrace and the Devil's trap" (3:1-7). Above reproach means that he must have a godly reputation not clouded by past indiscretions or sins. This does not mean perfection, but he must be recognized as one who has an excellent reputation. Husband of one wife could mean that he is not a polygamist, but the Greek carries with it the connotation that he is a one-woman man, not someone who is chasing other women either openly or covertly. The one attribute that differs from the attributes of a deacon is that he must have the ability to teach the Word. The other attributes are self-explanatory.

2. For a deacon, the attributes are similar except for teaching, as previously mentioned. Both must be able to manage their own households, as this is an indication of how well they can manage the affairs of the church. If tested faithfully, a deacon may eventually become an elder.
3. Paul closes with: "I have written so that you will know how people ought to act in God's household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth. And most certainly, the mystery of godliness is great: He was manifested in the flesh, vindicated in the Spirit, seen by angels, preached among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory" (3:15-16).

#### E. Chapter Four.

1. Paul discusses things that will creep in at the end times: "Now the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will depart from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and the teachings of demons, through the hypocrisy of liars whose consciences are seared. They forbid marriage and demand abstinence from foods that God created to be received with gratitude by those who believe and know the truth: (4:1-3). Many have pointed out that the practices of the Roman Catholic denomination regarding the celibacy of priests and nuns seem to match this prophecy. This requirement has caused much sin among those individuals as not all have the gift of celibacy. They also forbid meat on certain days. But the focus of this passage is on the influence of demons. We are surrounded by demons, and we must be diligent not to be deceived by them. This is accomplished by prayer and by setting boundaries in our lives to keep us from sinning.

2. Paul gives Timothy instruction in godliness: “If you point these things out to the brothers, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, nourished by the words of the faith and the good teaching that you have followed. But have nothing to do with irreverent and silly myths. Rather, train yourself in godliness, for the training of the body has a limited benefit, but godliness is beneficial in every way, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come” (4:6-8). Bodily exercise does have benefits. Regular exercise can result in years of healthy living for ministry. But Paul’s point is that his focus should be on godliness training.
3. Paul gives Timothy instructions for his ministry: “Command and teach these things. Let no one despise your youth; instead, you should be an example to the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. Until I come, give your attention to public reading, exhortation, and teaching. Do not neglect the gift that is in you; it was given to you through prophecy, with the laying on of hands by the council of elders. Practice these things; be committed to them, so your progress may be evident to all. Pay close attention to your life and your teaching; persevere in these things, for by doing this you will save both yourself and your hearers” (4:11-16). These are good words for anyone in ministry. The gift that was in Timothy is the Holy Spirit, which all genuine believers possess. However, we can neglect it by not focusing on prayer and the study of the Word.

#### F. Chapter Five.

1. Paul gives instructions regarding the rebuke of older men and the treatment of younger men and women. He also gives lengthy advice on widows, with the concern that younger women would become idle. He specifically says that the church should support no widow unless they are 60 years old and is well known for good works (5:9-10).
2. He mentions support for elders involved in full-time ministry: “The elders who are good leaders should be considered worthy of an ample honorarium, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says: Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain, and the worker is worthy of his wages” (5:17-18).
3. He addresses how to deal with accusations against elders: “Don’t accept an accusation against an elder unless it is supported by two or three witnesses. Publicly rebuke those who sin, so that the rest will also be afraid. I solemnly charge you before God and Christ Jesus and the elect angels to observe these

things without prejudice, doing nothing out of favoritism. Don't be too quick to appoint anyone as an elder, and don't share in the sins of others. Keep yourself pure. Don't continue drinking only water, but use a little wine because of your stomach and your frequent illnesses" (5:19-23). Those in leadership positions will receive criticism. Some will be correct, but some not. The test for true accusations is that the offense is confirmed by two to three witnesses. Timothy apparently had frequent stomach illness. Water was often impure. Common practice was to add wine containing alcohol to the water to purify it.

4. Paul ends the chapter with an interesting comment: "Some people's sins are obvious, going before them to judgment, but the sins of others surface later. Likewise, good works are obvious, and those that are not obvious cannot remain hidden" (5:24-25). In the United States, we have seen this with former prominent preachers. One world-famous theologian and apologist passed away, and his grievous sins came to light only afterwards and destroyed what would have been his legacy. Others, still living, are facing their previously hidden sins, which are now coming to light and destroying their ministry.

#### G. Chapter Six.

1. Paul gives an opening word about slaves and the need for respect for their masters (6:1-2). He continues with a strong word about those who bring in false doctrine and says: "he is conceited, understanding nothing, but has a sick interest in disputes and arguments over words. From these come envy, quarreling, slander, evil suspicions, and constant disagreement among people whose minds are depraved and deprived of the truth, who imagine that godliness is a way to material gain" (6:4-5).
2. He brings a word about material things: "For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with these" (6:7-8). He cautions about the temptation of desiring riches and warns: "For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, and by craving it, some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pains" (6:10). Note he says the love of money is the root of all evil and not money itself. The ministry requires money, and we need to manage it correctly for the sake of God's Kingdom.
3. He tells Timothy: "But you, man of God, run from these things, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, and gentleness. Fight the good

fight for the faith; take hold of eternal life that you were called to and have made a good confession about in the presence of many witnesses” (6:11-12).

4. He admonishes Timothy: “I charge you to keep the command without fault or failure until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. God will bring this about in His own time. He is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings, and the Lord of lords, the only One who has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light; no one has seen or can see Him, to Him be honor and eternal might. Amen” (6:14-16).
5. He gives instructions to the rich: “Instruct those who are rich in the present age not to be arrogant or to set their hope on the uncertainty of wealth, but on God, who richly provides us with all things to enjoy. Instruct them to do what is good, to be rich in good works, to be generous, willing to share, storing up for themselves a good reserve for the age to come, so that they may take hold of life that is real” (6:17-19).
6. He closes with a final word to Timothy: “Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you, avoiding irreverent, empty speech and contradictions from the “knowledge” that falsely bears that name. By professing it, some people have deviated from the faith. Grace be with all of you” (6:20-21). Paul’s mention of “knowledge” most likely has a connection to the false knowledge of Gnosticism. That he says “Grace be with all of you” indicates that the epistle was to be read by the church and not just Timothy.

#### H. Discussion Questions, Application and Passing it On.

1. Does your church practice appropriate church discipline? Many churches do not and the leaven of those who sin within the church can impact negatively the entire church body (Galatians 5:9). What is the proper method to confront sin or offense in the church? See Matthew chapter 18 for guidance.
2. Evangelist Ray Comfort references the Ten Commandments frequently in his ministry outreach. He points to 1st Timothy 1:8, saying this is using the Law “legitimately”. Are you able to use the Ten Commandments in this way?
3. What is your understanding or interpretation of God’s election?
4. Does your church select elders and deacons in accordance with the criteria listed in chapter three? Have you seen issues when those attributes are not present in those who have been appointed?
5. Do you exercise yourself for godliness? If not, what are your next steps?

6. What is your attitude towards money? Do you let it rule over you or do you use it not only for your needs, but to further the Kingdom of God?

---

*This New Testament survey was provided by Joshua Nations ([JoshuaNations.org](http://JoshuaNations.org))*