

Wednesday Night BIBLE STUDY

Wednesday October 5, 2022 – First Baptist Church Buda
Midweek Prayer Meeting & Bible Study



HONORING GOD Introduction to 1 Timothy *1 Timothy 1:1-7*

“¹Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the commandment of God our Savior and the Lord Jesus Christ, our hope, ²To Timothy, a true son in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord. ³As I urged you when I went into Macedonia—remain in Ephesus that you may charge some that they teach no other doctrine, ⁴nor give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which cause disputes rather than godly edification which is in faith. ⁵Now the purpose of the commandment is love from a pure heart, from a good conscience, and from sincere faith, ⁶from which some, having strayed, have turned aside to idle talk, ⁷desiring to be teachers of the law, understanding neither what they say nor the things which they affirm.” -1 Timothy 1:1-7 (NKJV)

We are beginning a new study this evening through the book of 1 Timothy, a New Testament book that is actually a letter and a different type of letter. It's a personal letter, not written to a particular church or group of people like most of the New Testament letters, but to an individual, and it has a personal word and truth for us as well... for our lives. Sometimes when a book of the Bible is titled with a personal name it indicates that the book is written by that person. For example in the Old Testament we have the book of Jeremiah written by the Prophet Jeremiah, or Isaiah written by Isaiah, or Daniel written by Daniel. In the New Testament we have the book of Matthew, written by Jesus' disciple Matthew, or John written by the beloved disciple John. But the book of Timothy is different. Timothy didn't write the book of Timothy. Rather the book is written to him, for him, and it's personal... for a reason. Here is a simple truth that we need to get our heads around even as we begin this study. God's inspired Word is personal and sometimes the word is personally directed to us. God inspired the writer of Timothy to write a personal letter to Timothy (2 of them to be exact), and it included in the canon of Holy Scripture, and Timothy is one of the only

individuals (Titus the other), to get a book of Bible written personally to Him. That is an incredible thought, and an important thought. It reminds us of how personal God desires to be in our lives, in directing our lives, in speaking into our lives, in helping us with our troubles and struggles, how much He cares what we are facing. If he cared enough about Timothy to, under inspiration of the Holy Spirit, have one of His men write a personal letter to him, He (God) surely cares for us in the same way. And it says we need to study this great personal book and grab hold of the truths it has for us.

What are some of the characteristic of the kind of person God’s uses? Explain...

1. <i>i.e. humble</i>	6.
2.	7.
3.	8.
4.	9.
5.	10.

What are some of the characteristics of a life that truly honors God?

1. <i>i.e. fully surrendered</i>	6.
2.	7.
3.	8.
4.	9.
5.	10.

Now, often we have a tendency to come to Scripture with rose-colored lenses, viewing the people God used significantly as if they were these amazing, gifted, remarkable, holy, extraordinary people and in doing so, we forget that they had to live the spiritual life just as I do. The people God uses in the Bible are flawed. All of them are flawed. The Bible lets us see it. They come from sorted backgrounds and many exhibit major limitations. They are often frail in their faith, at least initially, and weak in many necessary skill sets.

Despite all of this, God uses them mightily. This point seems significant to me, because it seems that we often think that God can’t use us the same way that he has used many of these people we read about in Scripture, and that simply isn’t true. We compare ourselves to a false standard by not looking at these people for who they really were.

This point comes home more clearly when we do a deep dive into the study of our Biblical heroes. Timothy is a good example. After all, he was the one Paul left behind to implement all of these instructions we read about in the book we are going to be studying that bears his name. I was amazed at what I discovered and wanted to share 8 observations with you.

8 Observations About Timothy to Remember: (*especially as we study this book*)

(1) Timothy didn’t come from the right background - He was biracial. He was neither fully Jew, nor fully Greek. Acts 16:1 tell sus, "*Paul came also to Derbe and to Lystra. A*

disciple was there, named Timothy, the son of a Jewish woman who was a believer, but his father was a Greek." Your heritage... your race... the color of your skin isn't a factor for God. He can use you despite the advantages or disadvantages your ethnicity and other background factors bring.

- (2) **Timothy's father wasn't his spiritual leader** - It seems Timothy's father was an unbelieving gentile, leaving his mother and grandmother the responsibility of raising Timothy in the ways of God. **2 Timothy 1:5** says, *"I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you as well."* Few wounds seem to leave larger scars than those made by an inept or absentee father. Timothy didn't have a great male spiritual leader in his home. He didn't have an earthly father to grease all the right connections. Timothy had some responsibility for his spiritual life and was responsible to acknowledge the spiritual influences God did place in his life. In the same way, you and I cannot let our parents determine the level of our surrender. We are responsible for our spiritual lives, and we should have more confidence in the equipping of God than in a spiritually anemic parent.
- (3) **Timothy wasn't Paul** - Timothy was second-string. He was Paul's representative. Paul makes this point abundantly clear in **1 Corinthians 4:16-17**, *"I urge you, then, be imitators of me. That is why I sent you Timothy, my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, to remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach them everywhere in every church."* 'Hey, Corinth, I'm sending Timothy to you so that he will remind you of how I live. Just let him point you to me so that I can point you to Christ.' Really? Yes, really. That was Timothy's role. God did not appoint Timothy to be the role model, but the one pointing to the role model. So it may be with you. You might not be first-string, but you have a role. Are you open to God using you in the role He has in mind?
- (4) **Timothy needed to avoid temptation** - Timothy could be tempted; he was not fail-proof. Paul warns Timothy to be careful in this regard at the close of his first letter to Timothy. **1 Timothy 6:20-21** says, *"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."* Timothy had to be instructed to avoid certain conversations and controversies so that he would not be tempted to buy into false knowledge and swerve from the faith. Early in the second letter, Timothy had to be reminded not to be ashamed of the testimony of Jesus nor of Paul (2 Timothy 1:8).
- Sometimes, we feel spiritually inferior because we struggle and stumble.
 - Sometimes, we think that if we were really godly, we wouldn't have some of the desires we do.
 - That's not the Bible talking, that's pride.
 - According to the Bible, the mark of a godly person is not someone who isn't tempted, but someone who chooses to obey God instead of giving into their desires (Galatians 5:16).

Despite your inner desire for the things of this world, God will use you! Resist those desires and trust in him.

- (5) **Timothy had health issues** – In **1 Timothy 5:23** we read Paul’s advice to Timothy (which indicated some health issues)... Paul said, *"No longer drink only water, but use a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments."* Regardless of your physical condition, God can use you for his glory. Are you willing? So long as you have breath in your lungs, God’s not done with you.
- (6) **Timothy was young for his role** - Timothy’s exact age isn’t given (possible 15 to 20 years), but we know that Paul had to encourage him not to allow others to look down upon him as he brought reform to the church in Ephesus. Paul writes in **1 Timothy 4:12**, *"Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity."* Regardless of your age, God can use you.
- (7) **Timothy hadn’t figured it all out** - Timothy still needed instruction even well into his ministry. This point is evident in the mere fact that Paul had to send him the letter of 1st Timothy. **1 Timothy 3:14–15** Paul wrote to him, *"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."* You don’t have to have all the answers. Sometimes God calls you to a ministry where you will not have the pre-established knowledge on how to do that which God has called you to. I think this makes us more dependent on Him and less dependent on man’s wisdom or our own. This point isn’t an excuse not to pursue formal education, but also serves as a reminder that no matter where you are in your ministry, feelings of inadequacy are no excuse to keep you from fulfilling God’s call.
- (8) **Timothy had a heart for God** – Look at how Paul describes him to the church in Philippi in **Philippians 2:19-22a**, *"I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon.... For I have no one like him, who will be genuinely concerned for your welfare. For they all seek their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ. But you know Timothy’s proven worth..."* The reality was that Timothy had been touched by grace. Timothy knew he wasn’t special, but that his Savior was. Timothy knew that his sins, as small as we might have thought them to be, deserved eternal hell, punishment, and separation from God, yet God being rich in mercy provided a way for redemption through Jesus. And, not only did God provide a way for salvation, but now, as a follower of Jesus Christ, Timothy, the foolish, bi-racial, sickly-stomached youth could be used to shape a church for the glory of God!

God uses the weak things of the world so that through us, his surpassing grace, glory, and strength may be shown. Do you feel you aren’t useful? Do you need a reminder of God’s methodology?

- **God uses the willing**
- **God uses the available**
- **God uses the weak**

He uses us. He uses us not because he needs us, but because he wants us to experience the glory of service, submission, and spirit-infused living. God wants us to be the vessel through whom he works. What’s needed is a surrendered heart that puts Jesus first.

That is a good place to start to set the stage for this study and the kind of person (like Timothy) that God uses. He uses those who will honor Him with their life. But as we begin our study let's probe a little bit deeper with some background to this wonderful book.

TITLE

The book of Timothy is a letter. This is the first of two inspired letters Paul wrote to his beloved son in the faith. Since the title of the book/letter bears the recipients name it might be good for us to get to know the letter's namesake... Timothy. The following are some facts about Timothy that will be helpful in our study.

Getting to Know Timothy Facts:

- (1) **The name Timothy means “one who honors God”** – Hence the name of our study “Honoring God.” Timothy received his name, which means “one who honors God,” from his mother (Eunice) and grandmother (Lois), devout Jews who became believers in the Lord Jesus Christ (2 Tim. 1:5) and taught Timothy the Old Testament Scriptures from his childhood (2 Tim. 3:15). His father was a Greek (Acts 16:1) who may have died before Timothy met Paul
- (2) **Timothy was from the town of Lystra** - Timothy was from Lystra (Acts 16:1-3), a city in the Roman province of Galatia (part of modern day Turkey).



- (3) **Timothy came to know Jesus through Paul during his first missionary journey** - Paul led Timothy to Christ (1 Timothy 1:2; 1 Corinthians 4:17; 2 Timothy 1:2), undoubtedly during his ministry in Lystra on his first missionary journey (Acts 14:6-23).
- (4) **Paul recruited Timothy to join his ministry team during Paul's second missionary journey** - When Paul revisited Lystra on his second missionary journey, Paul chose Timothy to accompany him (Acts 16:1-3).
- (5) **Timothy was likely a teenager when he first joined Paul's ministry team** - Although Timothy was very young (probably in his late teens or early twenties, since about 15 years later Paul referred to him as a young man, 1 Timothy 4:12), he had a reputation for godliness (Acts 16:2).

- (6) **Timothy was with Paul throughout the rest of Paul's life and ministry** - Timothy was to be Paul's disciple, friend, and co-laborer for the rest of the apostle's life, ministering with him in Berea (Acts 17:14), Athens (Acts 17:15), Corinth (Acts 18:5, 2 Corinthians 1:19), and accompanying him on his trip to Jerusalem (Acts 20:4). He was with Paul in his first Roman imprisonment and went to Philippi (Philippians 2:19-23) after Paul's release. In addition, Paul frequently mentions Timothy in his epistle (Romans 16:21; 2 Corinthians 1:1, Philippians 1:1, Colossians 1:1; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:1; Philemon 1).
- (7) **Timothy became the pastor of the church at Ephesus** - Paul often sent Timothy to churches as his representative (1 Corinthians 4:17; 1 Corinthians 16:10; Philippians 2:19; 1 Thessalonians 3:2), and 1 Timothy finds him on another assignment, serving as pastor of the church at Ephesus (1 Thessalonians 1:3).



- (8) **Timothy was imprisoned for his faith** - According to Hebrews 13:23, Timothy was imprisoned somewhere and released. In Hebrews 13:23 the writer says, *"Know that our brother Timothy has been set free, with whom I shall see you if he comes shortly."* This indicates that Timothy has been imprisoned and released. Interestingly, this statement has also led many to believe Paul the author of Hebrews, because of his close association with Timothy.

Those 8 facts give us a little more information about the one to whom this letter is written. These are just some things we know from Scripture itself, but they do give us something of a picture of the young man we are talking about here.

AUTHOR AND DATE

There are three letters that are known as Pastoral Epistles...

3 Pastoral Epistles: (found in the Bible)

- (1) 1 Timothy
- (2) 2 Timothy
- (3) Titus

**These are personal letters written by the Apostle Paul to individuals (i.e. Timothy & Titus)*

Now there is some controversy surrounding the authorship of these letters. This is only important because of the confusion that it has caused many, and thus their attempts to question the authoritative voice of these letter... especially concerning some the more controversial issues raised in these letter (which we will address later). Up front it should be stated that the is not reason to doubt the author claimed by the letter themselves, though some have.

Many modernist critics delight in attacking the plain statement of Scripture and, for no good reason, deny that Paul wrote the Pastoral Epistles (1 & 2 Timothy, Titus). Ignoring the testimony of the letters themselves (1 Timothy 1:1; 2 Timothy 1:1; Titus 1:1) and that of the early church (which is as strong for the Pastoral Epistles as for any of Paul's epistles, except Romans and 1 Corinthians), these critics maintain that a devout follower of Paul write the Pastoral Epistles in the second century. As proof, they offer 5 lines of supposed evidence.

5 Reasons Some Question Paul's Authorship of 1 Timothy: (and the other Pastoral Epistles)

- (1) The historical references in the Pastoral Epistles cannot be harmonized with the chronology of Paul's life given in Acts**
- (2) The false teaching described in the Pastoral Epistles is the fully-developed Gnosticism of the second century**
- (3) The church organizational structure in the Pastoral Epistle is that of the second century, and is too well developed for Paul's day**
- (4) The Pastoral Epistles do not contain the great themes of Paul's theology**
- (5) The Greek vocabulary of the Pastoral Epistles contains may words not found in Paul's other letters, nor in the rest of the New Testament.**

While it is unnecessary to dignify such unwarranted attacks by unbelievers with an answer, occasionally such an answer does enlighten. Thus, in reply to the critics' arguments, these 5 responses to the critics.

5 Answers to the Critis Objections to Paul's Authorship of 1 Timothy:

- (1) Chronology question - This contention of historical incompatibility is valid only if Paul was never released from his Roman imprisonment mentioned in Acts - But he was released, since Acts does not record Paul's execution, and Paul himself expected to be released (Philippians 1:19, 25, 26; Philippians 2:24; Philemon 22). The historical events in the Pastoral Epistles do not fit the chronology of Acts because they happened after the close of the Acts narrative which ends with Paul's first imprisonment in Rome.**
- (2) Gnosticism question - While there are similarities between the heresy of the Pastoral Epistles and second-century Gnosticism, there are also important differences - Unlike second-century Gnosticism, the false teacher of the Pastoral Epistles were still**

within the church (see 1 Timothy 1:3-7) and their teaching was based on Judaistic legalism (1 Timothy 1:7; Titus 1:10, 14; Titus 3:9).

- (3) **Church structure question - The church organizational structure mentioned in the Pastoral Epistle is, in fact, consistent with that established by Paul -** See Acts 14:23 and Philippians 1:1.
- (4) **Paul's theology question - The Pastoral Epistles do mention the central themes of Paul's theology** – These include the inspiration of Scripture (2 Timothy 3:15-17); election (2 Timothy 1:9; Titus 1:1-2); salvation (Titus 3:5-7); the deity of Christ (Titus 2:13); His mediatorial work (1 Timothy 2:5), and substitutionary atonement (1 Timothy 2:6).
- (5) **Greek vocabulary problem - The different subject matter in the Pastoral Epistles required a different vocabulary from that in Paul's other epistles -** Certainly a pastor today would use different vocabulary in a personal letter to a fellow pastor than he would in a work of systematic theology.

The idea that a “pious forger” wrote the Pastoral Epistle faces several further difficulties

- *The early church did not approve of such practices and surely would have exposed this as a ruse, if there had actually been one (see 2 Thessalonians 2:1-2; 2 Thessalonians 3:17).*
- *Why forge 3 letters that include similar material and no deviant doctrine?*
- *If a counterfeiter, why not invent an itinerary for Paul that would have harmonized with Acts?*
- *Would a later, devoted follower of Paul have put the words of 1 Timothy 1:13 & 15 into his master's mouth?*
- *Why would he include warnings against deceivers (2 Timothy 3:13; Titus 1:10), if he himself were one?*

The evidence seems clear that Paul wrote 1 Timothy and Titus shortly after his release from his first Roman imprisonment (ca. AD 62-64), and 2 Timothy from prison during his second Roman imprisonment (ca. AD 66-67), shortly before his death.

BACKGROUND AND SETTING

There are several points to be made to set the scene for Paul's letter to Timothy known as 1 Timothy.

- After being released from his first Roman imprisonment (see Acts 28:30), Paul revisited several of the cities in which he had ministered, including Ephesus.
- Leaving Timothy behind there to deal with problems that had arisen in the Ephesian church.

These problems in the Ephesian church that Timothy is to deal with are topics that emerge in this first letter to Timothy, and they are relevant topics for us today.

Some of the Problems in the Ephesian Church: (that Timothy was to confront)

- (1) **False teaching/doctrine** (1 Timothy 1:3-7; 1 Timothy 4:1-3; 1 Timothy 6:3-5)
- (2) **Disorder in worship** (1 Timothy 2:1-15)
- (3) **The need for qualified leaders** (1 Timothy 3:1-14)
- (4) **Materialism/greed** (1 Timothy 6:6-19)

Paul went on to Macedonia, from where he wrote Timothy this letter to help him carry out his task in the church (see 1 Timothy 3:14-15).



HISTORICAL AND THEOLOGICAL THEMES

1 Timothy is a practical letter containing pastoral instruction from Paul to Timothy (see 1 Timothy 3:14-15). Since Timothy was well versed in Paul's theology, the apostle had no need to give him extensive doctrinal instruction. This epistle does, however, express many important theological truths...

Some Theological Truths Expressed in 1 Timothy:

- (1) **The proper function of the law** (1 Timothy 1:5-11)
- (2) **The doctrine of salvation** (1 Timothy 1:14-16; 1 Timothy 2:4-6)
- (3) **The attributes of God** (1 Timothy 1:17)
- (4) **The doctrine of the Fall** (1 Timothy 2:13-14)
- (5) **The doctrine of the person of Christ** (1 Timothy 3:16 and 6:15-16)
- (6) **The doctrine of election** (1 Timothy 6:12)
- (7) **The doctrine of the second coming of Christ** (1 Timothy 6:14-15)

INTERPRETIVE CHALLENGES

The book/letter of 1 Timothy has been a source of some contention and disagreement, and the enter of much debate even our church today for various reasons. As we close out this introductory lesson on our study of 1 Timothy it may be helpful to make you aware of some of these interpretive challenges to both prepare us for what is ahead and also to give you an idea of what to look for in the book/letter.

10 Interpretive Challenges in 1 Timothy:

- (1) **Who are the false teachers and their teaching?** - There is disagreement over the identity of the false teachers (1 Timothy 1:3) and the genealogies (1 Timothy 1:4) involved in their teaching.
- (2) **What does it mean to be delivered to Satan and can it happen to me?** - What it means to be “delivered to Satan” (1 Timothy 1:20) has also been a source of debate.
- (3) **How far does atonement extend** - The letter contains key passages in the debate over the extent of atonement (1 Timothy 2:4-6 and 4:10). Paul writes in 1 Timothy 2:3-6, *“³ For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, ⁴ who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. ⁵ For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, ⁶ who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.”*
- (4) **What is the role of woman in the church?** - Paul’s teaching on the role of women (1 Timothy 2:9-15) has generated much discussion, particularly his declaration that they are not to assume leadership roles in the church (1 Timothy 2:11-12).
- (5) **What is meant by women being saved by child-bearing?** - How women can be saved by bearing children (1 Timothy 2:15) has also confused many.
- (6) **Can a divorced or unmarried man be a deacon?** - Whether the fact that an elder must be “the husband of one wife” excludes divorced or unmarried men has been disputed?
- (7) **Is it acceptable for women to serve as deacons?** - Is Paul referring to deacons’ wives or deaconesses (1 Timothy 3:11)?
- (8) **Is it possible to lose your salvation?** - Those who believe Christians can lose their salvation cite (1 Timothy 4:1) as support for their view.
- (9) **Who qualifies for widows ministry?** - There is a question about the identity of widows in 1 Timothy 5:3-16 – are they needy women ministered to by the church, or an order of older women ministering to the church?
- (10) **What does it mean for an elder/preacher to receive “double honor”?** - Does “double honor” accorded to elders who rule well (1 Timothy 5:17-18) refer to respect or money?

These will not be easy issues for us to deal with, but they are all addressed in the book/letter of 1 Timothy, and our desire is to be thoroughly Biblical. Our beliefs and practices must be based on Scripture above all else and consistent with the whole of Scripture, and not based on mere tradition or cultural whims. A final thought on these controversial subjects... we will try our best to deal with these interpretative challenges, but we may not reach a full resolution... as least not one that will be fully satisfying to everyone. Please know that at times we must be content to deal with the best conclusions we can come to, always seasoned with grace and truth. These will be dealt with in their respective notes in the study.