

**A LOOK AT THE BOOK  
1 TIMOTHY  
“GUARD WHAT HAS BEEN ENTRUSTED TO YOU”**

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**AUTHOR AND DATE**

For stylistic and historical reasons, many debate the Pauline authorship of the book.

However, tradition attests that Paul wrote the letter.

Supported by internal claims

The issue of style can be explained since the book was written to an individual rather than a church and the subjects treated are distinct.

The historical problems suggested by some are easily explained if Paul was released from the Roman prison following the close of Acts.

There is no reason the pastoral epistles could not have been written afterwards.

The date would be about A.D. 63

**BACKGROUND**

Acts implies that Paul was released at the end of two years in Rome because his accusers never arrived.

Therefore it is likely that Paul was released and returned to ministry.

Paul left Timothy in Ephesus while he went on to Macedonia.

Paul had chosen Timothy to accompany him at the beginning of the second missionary journey.

By the time of this letter he has become a respected leader, often left in difficult situations to represent Paul.

He had been left in Ephesus to help the church.

This letter was motivated by the presence of false teachers who denied the resurrection.

Due to his youth, and perhaps illness, Timothy was hesitant to face the responsibilities of ministry.

## **PURPOSE AND THEME**

Paul wrote as a guide for Timothy's ministry at Ephesus.

It contains personal instruction for Timothy concerning the exercise of his ministry.

He wanted to encourage him to use the authority which had been given to him to fulfill his ministry.

The book contains specific directions concerning various areas of church life which Timothy was to teach in the church.

However, it's not intended to be a manual for church government.

## **ORGANIZATION**

The book is divided into three sections:

Paul reminds Timothy of the commission he was given to correct those teaching false doctrines (1).

Next he gives instructions concerning the proper conduct of the church (2-3:13).

Finally he gives instructions concerning Timothy's own life and ministry (3:14-6:21).

## **ARGUMENT**

### **GREETING 1:1-2**

Paul claims Timothy as a son.

### **COMMISSION GIVEN TO TIMOTHY 1:3-20**

A reminder of the reason Paul left Timothy in Ephesus.

He was commissioned to correct those who were teaching false doctrine.

### **OCCASION FOR THE COMMISSION 1:3-17**

#### **Teaching of false doctrine 1:3-4**

They were not to teach their doctrine in the church, nor to continue devoting themselves to myths, genealogies and controversies.

### **Goal of sound doctrine 1:5**

The goal of the teaching was not to be domination nor superiority.

The goal of the correction is love and faith.

### **Misinformed teachers of the law 1:6-11**

Their ignorance concerning the law 1:6-7

Those who have been teaching the false doctrine are ignorant.

They think they have been teaching the law.

They don't realize that they have not understood the law.

The proper use of the law 1:8-11

The law is good when it is used for the right purpose.

However, the purpose of the law is not to justify good men, but to condemn the bad.

### **Example of their ignorance 1:12-17**

Paul's former ignorance concerning the law 1:12-13

Paul understands the view of the false teachers because he has been there himself.

Thinking he was serving the law, Paul had persecuted the church and denied Jesus.

In reality, he was ignorant of the law and unbelieving.

God's grace revealed in him 1:14-17

In spite of his opposition, God corrected him and made him into an example of what His grace can do.

## **PURPOSE OF THE COMMISSION 1:18-20**

### **That he might fight well 1:18-19a**

Because of the change brought about by God's correction in his life, Paul instructs Timothy to fight well to convince the false teachers in Ephesus concerning the truth, while clinging to his own faith and good conscience.

### **That he might avoid shipwreck 1:19b-20**

Whoever rejects these is in danger of shipwreck and will suffer the consequences.

## **INSTRUCTION FOR THE CHURCH 2:1-3:13**

Paul gives Timothy instructions concerning the church which need to be emphasized in his teaching in Ephesus.

### **CONCERNING WORSHIP 2:1-15**

The first instructions deal with their worship.

#### **The role of prayer 2:1-8**

Dedication to prayer should be given top priority.

Its purpose 2:1-4

We are to pray for everyone, especially their rulers, so that we will be free to live as God wants us to live and that others will hear the truth and be saved.

Its mediator 2:5-7

We are to pray because there is a mediator in God's presence who paid for our redemption.

We can be assured of results from our prayer to be able to witness to others because it is in agreement with God's desire, and Christ, the mediator, died so that all men could be redeemed.

Its prerequisites 2:8

When we pray we should come with holy lives and with our conflicts with others resolved.

#### **The role of women 2:9-15**

Paul also deals with the role of women in the corporate life of the church.

Her dress 2:9-10

They are to be careful how they dress so that they not attract attention to themselves by their clothing.

Attention should be earned by appropriate conduct, instead of by their clothes.

Proper dress 2:9a

Improper dress 2:9b

Appropriate adornments 2:10

Her activity 2:11-15

Description of her activity 2:11-12

The activity of women is to learn in silence and submission.

They are not to teach nor to have authority over men.

To learn in quiet and submission 2:11

Not to lead men 2:12

Reason for her activity 2:13-15

The reason for this position is that men received priority in the creation and because woman was deceived and thereby became a sinner.

However, women are not lost forever. [You might have mistakenly assumed that, based on what Eve did]

After the physical judgment of this life, which involves pain in childbirth, they will be saved if they evidence true faith in the Lord.

Priority in creation 2:13

Deception in sinning 2:14-15

## **CONCERNING LEADERSHIP 3:1-13**

Paul also gives instructions concerning the leadership of the church.

### **Concerning overseers 3:1-7**

He recognizes the privileged position of the overseers who are responsible for caring for God's people and outlines the qualifications required.

In brief, they are to maintain a spotless testimony before family, church and friends.

Their privilege 3:1

Their qualifications 3:2-7

### **Concerning deacons 3:8-13**

Deacons also are to have a solid testimony in every area of their lives.

Those who serve well earn an excellent standing and assurance.

Their qualifications 3:8-12

Their reward 3:13

## **REASON FOR THE INSTRUCTIONS 3:14-16**

The reason for Paul's instructions for the church is that he has not been able to come to them.

In case he is further delayed, he wants them to understand their responsibilities, both for proper conduct and to uphold the truth.

**His absence 3:14**

**Their responsibility for conduct 3:15a**

**Their responsibility for upholding truth 3:15b-16**

## **INSTRUCTIONS FOR TIMOTHY 4:1-6:21**

Paul finally addresses himself directly to Timothy with personal instructions as to how he should fulfill his ministry.

## **CONCERNING THE PRESERVATION OF SOUND DOCTRINE 4:1-5**

He first informs Timothy of the false doctrine which he will have to face.

**Source of the false doctrine 4:1-2**

This doctrine is demonic and those who preach it are hypocritical liars whose consciences are seared.

[They talk religious, but live in sin!]

**Content of the false doctrine 4:3**

The content of the false doctrine is legalistic prohibitions of things which God has made and declared to be good (cp. Acts 10).

[but which they themselves don't keep, except in public!]

**Response to the false doctrine 4:4-5**

The answer to their legalism is that all things are good if God made them.

They are to be enjoyed with thanksgiving, as long as we submit our use of them to the teaching of God's word and to His will.

## **CONCERNING THE RESPONSIBILITY OF A GOOD MINISTER 4:6-16**

Paul instructs Timothy concerning the personal characteristics which he ought to practice in his life to be a good minister.

### **To teach sound doctrine 4:6**

He should teach sound doctrine in response to the false teachers.

### **To reject myths 4:7a**

He should not waste his time with their myths and wives' tales.

### **To train ourselves to be godly 4:7b-11**

Instead, he should concentrate his efforts on training himself to be a godly person.

### **To set an example 4:12**

Timothy does not need to be ashamed of his young age.

We should concentrate on living an exemplary life.

Then others will want to follow our lead.

### **To use our gift(s) in ministry 4:13-15**

Paul urges us to get to work in public ministry and to use the gifts which God gave us.

This is probably a remedy for depression.

If we use the gifts which God has given us, we will see God work through us and be encouraged.

### **To watch our life and doctrine 4:16**

Paul warns us to examine carefully our life and doctrine.

We should be careful to apply the things we have learned.

When we do that, we will be an encouragement to ourselves as well as to our listeners.

## **CONCERNING OUR DUTY TOWARD OTHERS 5:1-6:2**

### **Proper respect for others in general 5:1-2**

Following a general principle urging respect for others and fraternal relationships with others, Paul counsels Timothy concerning the way we should deal with various specific groups in the church.

### **Toward widows 5:3-16**

Widows who are really in need should be helped with basic necessities.

Families should care for their own first, when they are available.

Widows under sixty should remarry.

But those who have lived godly lives and now have nowhere else to turn should be supported by the church.

Mature widows 5:3-10

Younger widows 5:11-16

### **Toward elders 5:17-25**

Elders are to be treated with respect.

Payment of elders 5:17-18

Those who direct the affairs of the church, and especially those who teach, should be paid.

Accusations against elders 5:19-21

Accusations should not even be heard, unless there are two or three witnesses.

They are to be men of respect to qualify.

Therefore that position should not be damaged by rumors.

When sin is discovered, there should be severe disciplinary action as a warning to others.

Ordination of elders 5:22-25

Because of the high standards demanded of elders, they should not be chosen quickly.

Novices should not be admitted.

Sometimes sin can be hidden for a long time.

They should be pure, but healthy.

While drunkenness is not to be a characteristic, this should not be evaluated legalistically.

### **Toward slaves 6:1-2**

Timothy is also to counsel the slaves.

Respect for masters 6:1

We are to maintain a good testimony by our respect for our masters.

Respect due to Christian masters 6:2

If that is true concerning an unbelieving master, it ought to be even more so with the believing master.

We ought to respect them more and serve them better because they are brothers in Christ

## **CONCERNING GODLINESS AND MATERIALISM 6:3-19**

Paul addresses the issue of godliness versus materialism.

### **Danger of the profit motive 6:3-5**

The false teachers have used their religion to make a financial profit.

They have sold themselves to false teaching.

### **Advantage of godliness with contentment 6:6-10**

The true perspective recognizes that godliness combined with contentment is great gain.

The desire for more wealth causes all kinds of evil, even the preaching of false doctrine.

Value of contentment 6:6-8

Danger of greed 6:9-10

### **Charge to pursue godliness 6:11-16**

Rather than pursue wealth, the man of God ought to pursue a godly walk.

### **Warning against materialism 6:17-19**

The wealthy run the risk of trusting their wealth, rather than the God who gave it to us.

We should recognize where it came from and use it to do works that will glorify Him.

By doing so we will lay up permanent treasure in heaven where it really matters.

Proper attitude concerning wealth 6:17

Proper investment of wealth 6:18

Proper purpose for wealth 6:19

## **CONCLUDING EXHORTATION 6:20-21a**

### **Priority of his ministry 6:20a**

Paul directs a final warning to Timothy that he recognize the priority of the ministry he has been given and to be sure he fulfills it.

### **Danger of false doctrine 6:20b-21a**

We should beware of the danger posed by false religious ideas circulating around us.

Others have followed them and been led astray.

## **CONCLUDING GREETING 6:21B**

The letter closes with a final greeting.

## **What lessons does this book teach us for daily living in the 21st century?**

*What are the implications of this letter for dealing with those who teach false doctrine?*

*What are the implications of this letter for worship in the local church?*

*What are the implications of this letter for leadership?*

*What are the implications of this letter for depression?*

*What are the implications of this letter for dealing with materialism?*

*Any other implications that you observe?*