

# A Study on 1 Timothy

## Week 1 | Introduction

**Overview** | “The gospel leads to practical, visible change in the lives of those who believe it” – ESV Study Bible, Introduction to 1 Timothy, p. 2322

Two main themes are recurrent throughout 1 Timothy:

- Godliness: a call to holy living in the household of God
- Truth: the battle against false teaching within the church

Question: What are some ways that studying this letter can be helpful to us today?

**Paul and Timothy** | A ministry partnership and trusted friendship

The Apostle Paul was the author of this letter. It is thought to have been written between his two Roman imprisonments – somewhere in the mid 60's AD (on a fourth missionary journey).

Timothy was a trusted friend of Paul. He calls him a “true son in the faith” (1 Tim. 1:20).

- In Acts 16:1 Paul meets him in Lystra.
- Timothy was the son of a Greek father and a Jewish mother (who was a believer).
- He had a good reputation among the church in Lystra and Iconium.
- Paul took Timothy along with him on his missionary journeys (Acts 16:3; 17:14f; 18:5; 19:22; 20:4).
- Paul would often send Timothy as an envoy to minister to churches that Paul could not go to. Timothy would report back to Paul the state of the church.



- Timothy became such a ministry partner with Paul that several of Paul's letters were sent jointly by him and Timothy (2 Corinthians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, Philemon).

### **The Church at Ephesus |**

The church had been planted by Paul on a previous missionary journey (Acts 19). Paul ended up staying there for close to two years (Acts 19:10) and had developed a strong connection with the church and its leaders (Acts 20:17-35).

In Paul's final meeting with the leaders of the church he warned them about the dangers of false teachers (wolves) who would seek to draw them away from the truth (Acts 20:28-31).

Ephesus was located in what is modern day Turkey and was built along a major trade route. One of the key features of the city was its temple to the goddess Artemis (one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World). The temple worship and pagan practices associated with the temple were major influences on the culture in the city and they posed continual threats to the growth and health of the church.

### **The Presenting Issue(s) |**

The main issue facing the church was false teaching, primarily from within the church.

The letter begins and ends with a charge to guard the true doctrine of the church (1:3; 6:20).

The specific issues of the false doctrine are not altogether clear but we do know some of the aspects of it: lack of knowledge informing their teaching (1:7); moving toward asceticism and creating new laws (4:1-5); a leaning toward greed, contentiousness, and arrogance (6:3-10); and blasphemy (1:18-20).

Paul was concerned that the church demonstrate lives transformed by the gospel of Jesus Christ. Where there is ungodly living there is a misunderstanding and misrepresenting of the gospel (5:5-8).

### **The Structure of the Letter |**

There are a few different opinions as to how the letter is to be structured but they vary in small details. Below is the outline we will be following (taken from *Teaching 1 Timothy* by Angus Macleay).

1. Responding to False Teachings (1:1-20)
  - a. 1:1-7; 6:20-21
  - b. 1:8-20
2. Restoring the Church (2:1-3:13)
  - a. 2:1-7
  - b. 2:8-3:1a
  - c. 3:1-13
3. Reminding Timothy (3:14-4:16)
  - a. 3:14-4:5
  - b. 4:6-16
4. Restoring the Church (5:1-6:2)
  - a. 5:1-16
  - b. 5:17-6:2
5. Responding to False Teaching (6:3-21)
  - a. 6:3-10
  - b. 6:11-21

## **So What? |**

As you hear the context for the letter what stands out to you? What questions do you have?

Why does this matter?

What do you hope to get out of this class?

## **Resource List**

*Teaching 1 Timothy* by Angus Macleay  
*1 Timothy* by Philip Graham Ryken  
*Commentary on 1 Timothy* by John Calvin  
*1-2 Timothy & Titus* by Philip H. Towner  
*Let's Study 1 Timothy* by W. John Cook  
*ESV Study Bible*