

1 Timothy

REVIVE THE CHURCH

MEN'S STUDIES



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Introduction by Dr. Rodney Navey

Revive the Church: A Study at LBC on 1 Timothy

A church can know how to function and minister in the year 2021. God gave us the instructions. For 20 weeks, Lawndale is going to dig into a letter known as 1 Timothy. Sunday morning sermons will be verse by verse exposition and instruction. On Sunday afternoons, we will gather by gender to discuss how the book addresses men and women specifically.

To prepare, read the devotional guide and the questions. You will be ready for the sermon in the AM and the discussion in the PM.

Is 1 Timothy inspired by God? Yes! God led Paul to write down the words each generation would need to function as followers of Christ in the church (1 Tim 3:14-15). Since God's Word is living and active, it speaks to each person in every culture and to each church in each generation. It's a worthy document to be studied because it is from God.

Each of the books of the New Testament has Apostolic authority. The Apostles were a group of men called by God and used by God to form the foundation of the church (2 Cor. 12:12; Eph. 2:20; 3:5). Although Paul was not in the original group, he was known as the Apostle who was "untimely born" or called a little later than the others (1 Cor. 15:8). Peter recognized Paul's Apostleship and call from God to write for God (2 Peter 3:15-16).

Paul wrote to a young man named Timothy. Timothy was a Pastor in the church at Ephesus. The letters of 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, and

Titus form what has been called the Pastoral Letters. Paul was led by God to write these letters to encourage the churches and the Pastors who led them.

As the church at Lawndale begins the study of 1 Timothy, consider carefully how the church is commanded to function. You will see some of the same pressure points from the world we face as a church in Greensboro, NC. Our goal is to please God and be the church He designed for us to be. To do so, we must fully surrender to Him no matter the cost or the popular ideas of the day. Humanity's ideas are constantly changing; God's Word is eternal.

Pray for God to revive us. Ask for soft, teachable, moldable hearts. When you see areas we are falling short, ask for a spirit of humility and repentance. When you see areas we are doing well, ask for a spirit of humility and gratitude.

“Father, Lawndale is Your church, purchased with the precious blood of Your Son. Give us the courage to fully surrender all to You. Show us Your truth, and lead us to follow You and Your Word. You have given us Your Word, and Your Word is truth. Sanctify us by Your Word; unite us around Your Word. And change us to be more like Your Son and a worthy bride for Your Son upon His return. In Jesus' name, amen.”

Keep praying. Enjoy the background article and the devotionals. And gather with the family on Sunday mornings and evenings to worship and fellowship.

General Background of Ephesus and Paul's Ministry There

The city of Ephesus was the fourth largest city in the Roman world during Paul and Timothy's era. Being at the convergence of three major trade routes, Ephesus was a prosperous, metropolitan city with marketplaces, gymnasiums, public baths, a theater, and a library. The city was also considered to be the principle financial center of Asia during that time period.

Ephesus too was a place of pagan worship and widespread immoral behavior. Wicked practices like sorcery and magic were performed to the patron deity, whose name was Artemis. Artemis was considered by the pagans in Ephesus as the goddess of the moon, nature, wild animals, and fertility; thus, she was believed to be the deity that brought the blessings of bountiful harvests and productivity to the region. The people of Ephesus crafted an ornate temple to Artemis (called the Artemision). They believed Artemis descended from the celestial world to inhabit their temple once it was completed. (Note: the temple is considered one of the Seven Ancient Wonders of the World). Each year in April, pilgrims would travel vast distances to honor Artemis in a week-long celebration in Ephesus. Their hope in paying tribute was that Artemis would provide the blessing of harvests and fertility, thus bringing prosperity to those who honored her.

The Apostle Paul visited Ephesus at the end of his second missionary journey (ca. AD 49-52). Paul surveyed the spiritual needs in the city and left his Jewish traveling companions, Aquila and Priscilla, in Ephesus while he traveled on to Caesarea/Palestine.

Paul later returned during his third missionary journey, which led to a three-year ministry there (AD 54-57). He began teaching in

the Jewish synagogue in Ephesus to reason boldly with the Jews about Jesus Christ and the Kingdom of God. But after many of the Jews obstinately maligned the “Way” (i.e. salvation through Jesus Christ), Paul moved his ministry to the lecture hall of Tyrannus for his final two years so that both Jews and Gentiles might hear the Word of God. God did extraordinary miracles during that time. Handkerchiefs and aprons that touched Paul were taken to the sick, and they were cured of illnesses and freed from demonic oppression. The ministry of Paul proved to be a success in that people came to Christ, pagan scrolls used in tribute to Artemis were voluntarily burned, and “the Word of the Lord spread widely and grew in power” (Acts 19:20).

But Ephesus too was known as a place where craftsmen practiced their trades, and many were employed in the design of articles for worshipping Artemis. One silversmith by the name of Demetrius, (who made silver shrines to Artemis) was angered at his loss of revenue, since Paul was proclaiming that man-made gods were not gods at all. Demetrius called other craftsmen together and incited a riot. For two hours, these men started crying “Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!” since they prided themselves in their city being the guardian of the great temple, and these tradesmen wanted the city to continue to embrace its loyalty to its patron goddess. During the riotous commotion, two of Paul’s traveling companions, Gaius and Aristarchus, were seized. The mob ran together into the amphitheater, shouting all kinds of things; ironically, many of the people who were a part of the riot did not even know why they were there.

Fearing that the Roman authorities would move in to control the mob, a city clerk convinced the mob to stop their riotous behavior and pursue their grievances in the courts. Paul wanted to speak to the people who had assembled in the theater; however, certain

officials as well as some of Paul's fellow companions cautioned against it. When the uproar had ended, Paul called together the other believers to encourage them and share his goodbyes.

Paul continued to travel around the region, sharing the gospel. Then, as he began his trip back to Jerusalem to celebrate Pentecost, he stopped about 30 miles from Ephesus in a port city called Miletus, and he sent word for the elders of Ephesus to join him there. When they arrived, Paul talked about the difficulties of ministry (referring to his "tears" [Acts 20:19]) and the severe testing by Jewish plots against him. Though Paul knew from the Holy Spirit that prison and hardships awaited him and that his friends from Ephesus would never see him again, he encouraged them to keep watch and be shepherds over themselves and the flock to which the Holy Spirit had made them overseers. He warned them that "savage wolves" would infiltrate the flock, distort the truth, and lead disciples away. Paul called them to work hard and minister to the weak, then he knelt down and prayed with them. The Ephesian elders wept, embraced, and then they followed Paul to his departing ship (Acts 20:13-38).

Paul traveled to Jerusalem, where he would be arrested by the Jews and be turned over to the Romans. He was imprisoned in Caesarea for two years under the rule of the Roman leaders, Felix and Festus. Paul then was sent to Rome (ca. AD 61-62), where he would write the pastoral letters to the churches and individuals with whom he had had contact. Some of the letters Paul wrote while in prison in Rome included Philipians, Colossians, Ephesians, and Philemon.

Who Was Timothy?

Timothy's name means "honoring God." Despite being a young man who struggled with "frequent illnesses" (I Tim. 5:23), Timothy was a man known through the region of Lystra and Iconium as a man of whom the people of that area "spoke well" (Acts 16:2). He would become a man who would in Paul's words in Philippians 2:22 "prove himself." Paul too would reference Timothy as a man who faithfully "carried on the work of the Lord" (I Cor. 16:10). Paul loved his companion in sharing the gospel, adding that Timothy was like a "son whom I love, who is faithful in the LORD" (I Cor. 4:17).

Timothy was the son of a Jewish mother and a Gentile father. He was taught the Scriptures from his mother Eunice and his grandmother Lois (2 Tim. 1:5; 3:15). Some believe he may have been introduced to Paul while Paul was on his first missionary journey through the region, since Timothy was from Lystra, and Paul traveled through the city during that time (Acts 14:8-20).

When Paul returned during his second missionary journey, we find that Timothy already was a disciple living in Lystra (Acts 16:1). Paul, in order that he might be "all things to all people so as to win some for Christ" (I Cor. 9:19-23), took Timothy and had him circumcised because of the Jews who lived in the area (the Jews knew that Timothy's father was a Greek and Timothy needed to be circumcised to follow faithfully the Mosaic law [Acts 16:3]).

Timothy would become one of Paul's trusted traveling companions in ministry, and he was routinely sent to differing places to minister: to Corinth to represent Paul and his teachings (1 Cor. 4:17) and to Philippi because Timothy had a genuine interest in their welfare (Phil. 2:19-20). At the end of life (and imprisoned in Rome), Paul sent for Timothy to come and be with

him (2 Tim. 4:9). Timothy himself at some time was imprisoned, but later would be released (Heb. 13:23).

Overview of the Book of 1 Timothy

The book of *1 Timothy* was written in the early AD 60s (likely 62-63) following Paul's first imprisonment in Rome. Some believe that Paul was released from prison briefly and traveled eastward toward Macedonia, writing his letter to Timothy while on his travels. Others believe Paul wrote his letter to Timothy while he remained in Rome under continued "arrest" but with more leniency and flexibility to move about the city during his awaited appeal to Caesar.

1 Timothy was a word of encouragement for Timothy who had been sent to Ephesus in order that he might refute those who propagated false doctrines and that he would continue the organizational development and ministries of the early church there. Timothy may very well have been previously with Paul during his three-year ministry in Ephesus, since it was from Ephesus that Paul sent Timothy and Erastus to Macedonia (Acts 19:22).

1 Timothy is a letter of practical advice for a young pastor, and it gives instruction concerning doctrine, order, and ministry in the church. The themes included in the letter to Timothy are as follows:

- 1:3-11: Warning against false teachers. Importance of sound doctrine
- 1:12-20: Emphasis upon the grace of God through Christ
- 2:1-15: Instruction on public worship. Importance of prayer as a priority. The importance of Jesus Christ as the mediator between God and man

- 3:1-16: Qualifications of deacons and overseers
- 4:1-5: Warning against false teachers. Issue deals with false teachers claiming that marriage and certain foods were wrong
- 4:6-16: Discussion of sound doctrine and discipline. Encouragement to Timothy to be a “good minister of Christ Jesus” and “to set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith, and in purity” (4:6, 12)
- 5:1-16: Discussion of treatment of older men and women. Also addressed is the ministry to widows in the church. Practical instructions concerning the ministry of the church to various groups that comprise its membership
- 5:17-20: Discussion of Elders
- 6:1-2: Discussion of those who serve (slaves)
- 6:3-5: Warning against false teachers, who were motivated by “financial gain” (6:5)
- 6:6-10: Warning about the love of money, as “a root of all kinds of evil” (6:10)
- 6:11-21: Encouragement to Timothy to flee evil and pursue righteousness. Final expressions of praise to God and concluding thoughts to Timothy

1—Guardian of the Truth

This week's sermon addressed the importance of Paul's directive to Timothy to be the "guardian of the truth." While imprisoned in Rome, Paul sent Timothy to the large, industrious town of Ephesus (a place Paul had previously served for three years) so that he could deal with false doctrines that had crept into the church there. Effective leadership always begins with guarding the truth as is revealed in God's Word.

Read 1 Timothy 1:1-11, then answer the following questions:

1. Why is "guarding" the truth so important for the Church? For families?
2. What inevitably happens when a church or a family chooses not to guard the truth?
3. Paul shared that the goal of confronting those that did not teach the truth was *love*. Why do you believe he emphasized this?
4. Paul discussed the error of those in the church becoming devoted to "myths and endless genealogies" which promote "controversies." What are some things that can creep into the church and cause controversy? How should the church deal with such issues?
5. Paul mentioned that there were those in the church that confidently wanted to be teachers, but they lacked "pure hearts, good consciences, and a sincere faith." Instead, they engaged in "meaningless talk." Why is it important for the church to be discerning of anyone desiring to teach?

2—The Church Serves the Head of the Church

The theme of this week's sermon is "The Church Serves the Head of the Church." In today's world, we find more and more that those who attend church seem to believe that they are to be served rather than serve. In other words, some do not see that their central purpose is to serve Jesus Christ as its Head and bring Him glory; instead, many churches have become consumer-driven settings where attendees look for what others might do for them.

Read 1 Timothy 1:12-20, then answer the following questions:

1. For what was Paul thankful in verse 12? How do you believe his response motivated him to fulfill his purpose to serve?
2. Re-read verses 13-16. What things did Paul remember about himself before Christ? What did he receive from the Lord Jesus Christ? How did this affect his passion for service to the Lord?
3. What are the praise items about God in verse 17 that Paul incorporated into His letter to Timothy? What does this verse suggest about Paul's focus as He served Jesus Christ?
4. In verse 18, Paul mentions to Timothy that the instruction Timothy was receiving would help him "fight the good fight." What do you believe this means?
5. In verses 19-20, Paul identifies two individuals that did not hold on to "faith and a good conscience," and as a result, had shipwrecked their faith. How might believers today "shipwreck their faith?" How might the mindset of *privileged service to the Lord* avoid such outcomes?

3—The Church and Politics

This week's sermon discussed the importance of praying for all people, especially for those who are in authority. In fact, verse 3 says this is "good and pleases God our Savior who desires that everyone be saved and to understand the truth." In today's Scripture, Paul writes how important it is to share the Gospel message that Jesus is the only one who can reconcile us and purchase freedom for everyone.

Read 1 Timothy 2:1-7, then answer the following questions:

1. Paul's first words to Timothy in verse 1 are to "Pray for all People." We know that Paul was imprisoned in Rome around 62-63 AD during the reign of Nero. Both Paul and Peter were martyred during his reign. Why do you think Paul wanted Timothy to pray for all people, especially for an emperor like Nero?
2. Why do you think Paul "urges" us to offer prayers of intercession and thanksgivings for all people?
3. In verse 2 we are asked to pray for people in "high" positions. Is this a difficult task to do in today's culture?
4. Paul says that there is only one God and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus. Explore the significance of the word *Mediator*. What did Christ accomplish?
5. In verse 7 Paul tells his readers that he is a preacher and an apostle; and, Paul shares that he is a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth. Why do you think he is emphasizing this to Timothy? Why is Paul's ministry to the Gentiles so important?

4—The Church and Gender

Today's sermon tackled a tough issue about how women should dress. Specifically, this passage states that women are not to draw attention to themselves by wearing expensive jewelry, gold, pearls or even expensive clothes . . . they were called to dress modestly. The passage too states that women who are godly are to have self-control, and they should learn in quietness and submission.

Read 1 Timothy 2:8-15, then answer the following questions:

1. Paul's first admonishment in verse 8 is that in every place of worship, men should pray with "holy hands" lifted up to God, free from anger and controversy. Why did Paul want men to pray this way? When we worship why do we need to be free from anger, controversy, or other things on our mind?
2. Do you find that when you pray you struggle with distractions?
3. 1 Timothy 2:8–15 is not just for women. Paul wrote the instructions in 1 Timothy 2 to his envoy (Timothy), who was commissioned to order the church to follow the truths of the gospel. What is Paul addressing in this passage when it comes to women's attire? Since Paul is speaking to men and women, what role do men play in the church?
4. Discuss in your group what "modest dress" should look like. Why is fashion not a part of worship? What good works should be on display in worship?
5. Why should women protect the eyes of their spiritual brothers? Why should women care about their looks?

5—The Church’s Leadership Part 1

Church leadership is a noble and respectable position that requires high character. Paul called on everyone to live lives of character as he wrote of the incredible value that God places on the church and its relationship to Christ. The qualities that are timeless and standard for pastors and other leaders, require this blameless character.

Read 1 Timothy 3:1-7, then answer the following questions:

1. What is the office of *overseer*? Based of verse one, how should the church view those who aspire to the office of *overseer*? What other words are used in the New Testament to describe the role of *overseer*?
2. Why do you think Paul sets such high standards for a person to have this role?
3. What do you think it means to be “above reproach”?
4. The characteristics of being sober-minded and self-controlled are often tied together. What is being asked of the *overseer* and why is it so important?
5. Why is observing how a man manages his household important when considering whether or not to make him an *overseer*?

6—The Church’s Leadership Part 2

As we have already discussed, leadership in the church takes on many forms. Today we will talk about the *elder*. Elders should willingly shepherd their flock, not for personal gain but as an example of humility and Christlikeness.

Read 1 Peter 5:1-2, then answer the following questions:

1. What is the job of an *elder*? What are other titles that are given in scripture to people with the same job in the church?
2. In what way was Peter a partaker of the glory that is to be revealed?
3. What is the difference between a willing shepherd and being one under compulsion? How does this play itself out in today’s church?
4. What instructions did Peter give to the elders?
5. In what way is a shepherd a good model for a church leader?

7—The Church’s Leadership Part 3

Paul described the qualities of a *deacon* (i.e., those who serve people in the name of Christ and the church). He did this so the church would know how to select individuals for this office who serve well and please God.

Read 1 Timothy 3:8-13 and answer the following questions:

1. What is a *deacon*?
2. How is the role of an elder and deacon the same? How are they different?
3. Paul speaks of not being “double-tongued.” What does being double-tongued mean? Can you think of any examples today of someone being double-tongued?
4. Paul mentions in both lists for *overseer* and *deacon* in chapter three to “let them be the husband of but one wife.” Take some time to think about what this could mean. Dig deep with this question. Beyond the obvious, what does it mean to “be the husband of but one wife”?
5. What do you notice about the similarities within the two groups (elders and deacons)? Are there any differences in the qualifications between the two groups? If so, what are they and why do you suppose there are differences?

8—The Church’s Manual

Who taught you how to behave? Parents? Grands? Maybe someone outside your household showed you the ropes on how to think, speak and act. After instructing overseers and deacons (vs. 1-13), God through Paul tells Timothy and us *why* the instructions are important and how Christ models and empowers our godliness through the Spirit.

Read 1 Timothy 3:14-16 and answer the following questions:

1. Verse 14: What did Paul hope to do? For what reasons (plural) do you think he wanted to do this? (Hint: Think about what people do when the boss is coming.)
2. Verse 15a: What reason does Paul give for writing “these things”? What imagery is used right after the word *behave*? What does that image conjure up as you think about the church and how we act? For what reasons (plural) does God want people to know these things? (Hint: Think about both “inside” and “outside” the household of faith.)
3. Verse 15b: Why the word *living*? What two images are used in relation to truth and its importance? (Hint: think about the nature of truth in our culture today.)
4. Verse 16: Paul uses *mystery* 21 times in the New Testament, referring to things previously hidden by God, now revealed in Jesus. *Godliness* refers to our proper response of obedience and righteous living, empowered by the Spirit. Now - discuss the phrases about Jesus and their impact on what we believe, proclaim and live out. (Hint: Concentrate on *manifested*, *vindicated*, *seen*, *proclaimed*, *believed on* and *taken up*.
Example: Because Jesus was manifested, we can ...)

9—The Church’s Unsaved Members

Satan fights hard against God’s truth - and the closer time draws to the return of Jesus, the worse the fight will be. Yet God, as always, has prevailed. The first part of our passage reveals Satan’s strategy including: whom he will employ, how some will fall and turn traitorous, the seared condition of their minds, and the resulting distortions of God’s good things. The remainder encourages the faithful with a powerful reminder and an invitation to receive what God intended for His own to enjoy.

Read 1 Timothy 4:1-5, then answer the following questions:

1. Read John 16:13 then compare/contrast the work of the Holy Spirit versus the deceitful, demonic spirits of the enemy. Next: think about the damage done by traitors and discuss how this is reflected in the church by false teaching today.
2. John 8:44 says that Satan is the father of *all* lies. How can we combat the lies of false teachers in the church and in daily life? (Hint: Expand your vision of false teachers to include those outside the church: business leaders, media, your friends, etc.). Describe a conscience (mind) that has been “seared” (think of a steak on the grill) and how that affects it.
3. How does a biblical mindset differ from that of control-hungry traitors who forbid us from enjoying God’s good gifts? How does knowing God help us enjoy God? (Hint: If Christ has made you free, you are _____ indeed!)
4. Read Genesis 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25 – What descriptive word was used in each? What happened that changed all that, and how has God made it right again?

10—The Church Must Train Its Men

This week's sermon is a Father's Day challenge specifically directed at the church training its men. In 1 Timothy 4:7, the Holy Spirit inspired Paul to highlight a choice between two paths. The first path is clearly marked with a DO NOT ENTER sign, as he warns, "have nothing to do with irreverent, silly myths." The second path is an invitation, a challenge – to "train yourself for godliness." We cannot prepare ourselves for biblical manhood while wasting time on empty pursuits. There are two very different paths leading in two directions.

Read 1 Timothy 4:7, then answer the following questions:

1. Unlike Paul's original audience, we are not tempted to pay attention to myths about Greek and Roman gods. What are some modern myths of American society that captivate our attention as men?
2. Highlight a man who you see as living in "godliness." Why do you describe him that way?
3. What are some ways to "train yourself for godliness"? Be specific. Which one of these ways could you use to start "training yourself" this week?
4. Share a personal experience or another's that you have observed. Describe a specific instance when spending time on an "irreverent, silly myth" prevented spending time to "train yourself for godliness."
5. Think specifically as a father or grandfather. How would you restate 1 Timothy 4:7 in your own words to explain it to a child or teenager? Limit yourself to 1-2 sentences.

11—The Church’s Training Program

Today’s sermon shared the importance of “the church’s training program.” In our society today we find that people do not want to invest in being trained. They can look for the quick “how-to” video or try to evaluate if the result justifies the effort. Paul tells us that the church must put in the work and train itself for godliness. This is an investment for this life and the life to come.

Read 1 Timothy 4:6-10, then answer the following questions:

1. How does Paul tell his readers to invest their time and resources in verses 6-7? What is the significance of this?
2. Why does Paul compare bodily training and training in godliness in verses 8-9? What value should we put on training in godliness?
3. Re-read verse 10. What encouragement does this give the church as we look to train in godliness?

12—The Church’s Public Perception

Today’s sermon discussed the importance of the “church’s public perception” taken from 1 Timothy 4:11-16. Followers of Christ represent Christ and His church. Paul gives detailed instructions for how the church must conduct itself outside of the walls of the church.

Read 1 Timothy 4:11-16, then answer the following questions:

1. Why is it important for the younger generations of the church to be included in this section?
2. Re-read verse 13. Paul tells Timothy to publicly read Scripture, exhort Scripture and teach Scripture. Why is it important for the church’s public perception to see the church immersed in the Scriptures? What implications does this have for our everyday lives?
3. Re-read verse 16. Why is it important for the Word of God to be faithfully taught? What is at stake if the Word of God is not faithfully taught?

13—The Church is a Family and Partners with Families

This week's sermon explained the importance of the church as a family that partners with families. In today's world, we have lost the Biblical concept of the family and we can become easily focused on ourselves.

Read 1 Timothy 5:1-16, then answer the following questions:

1. Re-read verses 1-2. Here we see how we are to interact with different genders and generations. Why is this so important for us to embrace as the church?
2. Look again at verses 3-8. Paul gives clear instructions for taking care of the family. Why is it important for the members of the church to take care of their own individual families?
3. In verses 9-10, Paul addresses older widows. He then instructs the church to take care of them. Thinking about verses 1-2 in connection with this, why is it important for the church to care for the older widows?
4. In verses 11-14, Paul addresses younger widows. Paul says that since they are younger, they should look to get married again and continue a family of their own. Why does Paul make a distinction between younger widows and older widows? Thinking back to verses 1-2 in connection with this, how should the church treat these younger widows?
5. Think back to last week's sermon and the public perception of the church. What is the impact that the church could have by being a family that partners with others?

14—Church’s Responsibility to Its Leaders

Here, Paul has a wonderful practical admonishment to Timothy who was leading the church at Ephesus. So many young pastors today would love to have a mature, wise Paul to guide them. We have Paul’s inspired word from God which has been protected through centuries. Paul gives some rather stern direction here on how to select and guide elders and deacons for church leadership.

Read 1 Timothy 5:17-25, then answer the following questions.

1. Verses 17 and 18 indicate that some leaders do a better job than others and deserve special recognition. How might the example of those who work hard encourage growth, improvement, and discipleship from those who do not?
2. Verse 19 states a complaint must be backed up by two or three responsible witnesses. Should this still be followed? Paul advises Timothy to be impartial and show no favoritism. Do we today often overlook sins in a popular leader?
3. Our churches today require so many elders, deacons, and leaders, according to verse 22. Should we let a position remain vacant instead of quickly filling it with an immature leader? Was it important for Timothy to keep his own life pure?
4. With limited medicines Paul advised that a little wine was good medicine. Can someone today use Paul’s medical advice to Timothy for excessive use of wine?
5. In verses 24-25 we see examples of obvious, blatant sins that land people right in court. How can hidden sins cause as much damage? How can we bring to light obvious good deeds as well as some hidden deeds that bring glory to God?

15—The Church’s Equality

Thankfully, our nation abolished slavery at a tremendous cost and we continue to uproot the vestiges of such unbiblical and inhumane practices. Now, no person can legally *own* another person, yet power relationships still exist in everyday life. From the ground of harsh first century realities, our passage teaches how Jesus raises the lowly and lowers the raised up, for the sake of His name and our mutual blessing.

Read 1 Timothy 6:1-2, then answer the following questions.

1. Critics accuse the Bible of condoning slavery. Do you agree? Discuss: “The Bible nowhere condones slavery, yet recognizes it as a reality in a fallen world that Christ has overcome.” (Please be aware of the sensitivities of this subject.)
2. Why are Christians to honor those who are in power relationships above them? (Hint: See “so that...”) Why is this important in both the short and long term? (Hints: Think of what is important for every day relationships to work; and consider the eternal perspective of our relationship with God and others).
3. (V. 2a) On what grounds are people with believing “masters” to be respectful to them? Discuss how Christ changed the relationship completely, from being ‘masters’ to *what*?
4. (V. 2b) Discuss why God requires believers to “serve all the more.” (Hint: Review the text after “since...” and also consider how unbelievers would be influenced.)
5. Read John 8:36. Discuss how that truth influences our behavior in power relationships – whether we’re at the top, bottom or in the middle. What is true freedom and what did Jesus do to make it possible?

16—The Church Tests Its Leaders and Teachers

Many desire to be leaders/teachers in the Church; however, not everyone is fitted for leadership due to a lack of Godly character and/or competency. The Church has the responsibility of “testing” those who seek positions of leadership. Men who are fathers and husbands should strive to cultivate (through their disciplined study of God’s Word, prayer, and seeking Godly wisdom) Godly character and the tools needed to be effective leaders in their homes.

Read 1 Timothy 6:3-10, then answer the following questions:

1. 1 Tim. 6:3-5 describes those who teach “false doctrines.” What are some of the negative descriptors mentioned and why are they so destructive to the church and to families?
2. 1 Tim. 6:6, mentions that “godliness with contentment is great gain.” How is this so? What ways can great gain be experienced when a husband/father displays “godliness with contentment”?
3. 1 Tim. 6:7 shares that no one brings anything into the world, and no one will take any possessions with him when he dies. What does this say about how we should prioritize our lives spiritually? How about priorities in our family life?
4. In 1 Tim. 6:8-9, Paul encourages Timothy to be content with “food and clothing.” Why do you believe he said this?
5. 1 Tim. 6:10 states that the “love of money is a root of all kinds of evil.” What kinds of “evil” might be evident when believers pursue earthly riches? What are the consequences of such pursuits? How might these consequences impact a family?

17—The Church Fights For Its King

In this passage of Scripture, Paul urged Timothy to flee the pursuit of money. Paul encouraged Timothy instead to focus and contend for the “souls” of men. In this text there was so much in the church at Ephesus for Timothy to oversee regarding pastoral leadership and the qualifications of church leaders. Paul closed this chapter with a charge for Timothy to nourish his own soul in the words of faith and good doctrine.

Read I Timothy 6:11-16 and answer the following questions:

1. What is Paul asking Timothy to flee and why? Paul lays out 6 pursuits for Timothy to focus on. Which one is the most important? Why?
2. We often think that fighting is a “bad thing.” Why did Paul tell Timothy to fight the good fight of faith?
3. Paul asked Timothy to “Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called.” What do you think he is referencing?
4. Timothy has a great responsibility to “keep the commandment and be free from reproach.” How important is it for us to do the same? As believers what will happen if we don’t keep the commandments? Is your life free from reproach?

18—The Church is Rich in Good Works

Money (its temptations, disappointments, and destructiveness) is one of Paul's major concerns in this chapter. Within every command and instruction, he directs us to recognize God's generosity and the fleeting nature of this world. Paul has talked to the poor, the imposter, and the Christian leader; now he addresses the rich.

Read 1 Timothy 6:17-19 and answer the following questions:

1. How would you define what it means to be wealthy? In what ways would your definition of wealth change if you lived in a different culture/country?
2. How can becoming wealthy impact your faith?
3. Discuss as a group ways you can become rich in good works. What are some practical things that you can do right now to become rich in good works?
4. Talk about storing up treasure for yourself. Of what kind of treasure is Paul referring? How does that help us to build a good foundation for the future?
5. Why might a rich person become haughty? How might his riches change his attitude toward others?

19—The Church Guards the Good Deposit

It is obvious that Paul dearly loved Timothy who was first taught the Gospel by his mother and grandmother. Paul loved the Gospel of Jesus Christ and so wanted the church to flourish.

Read I Timothy 6:19-20, then answer the following questions:

1. Read these two verses from a couple of different Bible translations.
2. One writer refers to what Timothy has been given as “treasure” that is to be guarded with his very life. History records that many followers of Christ, including the eleven disciples, gave their very lives for the Gospel. Do we today consider the teachings from God as Treasure?
3. Paul advises to avoid “talk show” religion as one author wrote. Some frivolous handling of the teachings of scripture cause many to stray from the true Gospel. Do we see many examples of this today?
4. How can we actively pass the heritage of the Christian faith on to the next generation, our children and grandchildren? Give good concrete, specific examples.
5. The final greeting says “grace be with you.” One writer added an emphasis, “Overwhelming grace keep you!” After this wonderful series on I Timothy do you feel Paul speaking directly to you?

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