

1 Timothy

Authorship: Apostle Paul. “Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the command of God our Savior and of Christ Jesus our hope” (1:1).

Recipient: “To Timothy my true son in the faith: Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord” (1:2). Timothy was a young man who had joined Paul on his second missionary journey when he was in the city of Lystra in Galatia. Timothy’s mother, Eunice, was a Jew and his father a Greek. He accompanied Paul on his third missionary journey and was with Paul as he wrote the Prison Epistles. By and large, Timothy was Paul’s “right hand.” It is very probable that Paul led Timothy to the Lord.

Date: Around AD 63-67

Theme: Christians must watch their lives, deeds and teaching with great care. It is the role of leaders to assure that they are equipped and able. Paul’s first letter to Timothy clearly pivots around the idea of the local church. Paul presents Timothy with instructions regarding “rules” for how a church should function, and “pastoral help” for shepherding God’s people in the midst of a functioning church.

Purpose: Paul wrote this letter to Timothy with three primary goals in mind:

- (1) To encourage Timothy. He was apparently having a somewhat difficult time in his role of training leaders. Paul wants to help him “keep going.”
- (2) To warn Timothy. Paul, the veteran, wants Timothy to be aware of the types of false teachers around and the methods they use. False doctrine was one of Paul’s greatest enemies and he wants to equip Timothy to “fight the good fight” like him.
- (3) To instruct Timothy. Paul gives him very specific instructions on how a church ought to function.

Key Passage: “Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to your care. Turn away from godless chatter and the opposing ideas of what is falsely called knowledge” (6:20).

Outline:

- I. Salutation (1:1-2)
- II. Warning Against False Teachers (1:3-7)
- III. The Proper Use of the Law (1:8-11)
- IV. God’s Grace to Paul (1:12-17)
- V. Paul’s Charge to Timothy (1:18-20)
- VI. Instruction Concerning Prayer (2:1-8)
- VII. Instructions to Women (2:9-15)
 - A. Adornment (2:9-10)
 - B. Teaching and Exercising Authority (2:11-15)
- VIII. Overseers and Deacons (3:1-16)
 - A. Overseers (3:1-7)
 - B. Deacons (3:8-13)
 - C. The Basis for Conduct in God’s Household (3:14-16)
- IX. False Asceticism (4:1-5)
- X. Ministerial Training (4:6-16)
- XI. Christian Duties (5:1-6:2)
 - A. Exhortation (5:1-2)
 - B. Widows (5:3-16)
 - C. Instructions for Elders (5:17-25)
 - D. Instructions for Slaves (6:1-2)
- XII. Final Indictment of False Teachers (6:3-5)
- XIII. The Love of Money (6:6-10)
- XIV. Final Exhortations (6:11-16)
- XV. Instruction for the Rich (6:17-19)
- XVI. Final Admonition (6:20-21)

Source:

Elwell, Walter A. and Robert W. Yarbrough. *Encountering the New Testament: A Historical and Theological Survey*. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 1998).