

Chapter-by-Chapter Bible Studies

1st Timothy Bible Study **The Best Job in the World**

Bible Studies
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This book has been put together for your use:

- In your personal devotional Bible Study time.
or
- For your Bible Study Discussion Group.

It is divided into several lessons; each lesson typically covers one chapter of the book.

Each lesson has two parts:

1. Questions for you to Answer.
2. My Answers to those same questions.

I suggest answering the questions on your own before you read my comments on the passage. If you are studying as a group and not everyone has their own copy of this Bible Study, I suggest making sure each member of your group has a copy of the next week's questions in advance so that they can prepare if they want to. Preparation for a Bible Study is a great way to establish the habit of getting into the Word every day.

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Chapter-by-Chapter Bible Studies

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Introduction

1st Timothy Bible Study

The Best Job in the World

My husband, Ken, and I are church planters. We started a church in Morris, Illinois, when we were in our 20's. Then one in Tucson, Arizona, in our early 30's. After that we worked very hard on starting a church in Ft. Morgan, Colorado, in our late 30's, and no matter what we did, it failed completely. Our finances and our health were pretty much shot as we limped away from Colorado.

A few years later, after getting back on our feet financially and physically, we started another one in Greenwood, Indiana, in our early 50's. And now, in our “golden years”, we have had the fun of starting another church, also in Greenwood.

Of all the things we have learned through a lifetime of church planting, Ken being a pastor, and me being a pastor's wife, the one that comes first to my mind is the fact that the “hard” parts of pastoring are nothing compared to the joys. We have said often that if we were given the opportunity from the Lord, we would do it all again, in a nano-second!

Even now, after fifty years of marriage and ministry, we are praying that the Lord will give us the energy and the ability to either start another church someday, or ease the way for us to be an encouragement to yet another generation of young pastors and their wives to start their own churches.

1st Timothy is a letter written from one Pastor to another. Paul, the great church-planter of the 1st century, is writing to Timothy, the young man he personally led to Christ, and

then instructed in the growing and nurturing of churches, and left behind to pastor the church in Ephesus.

Paul knows some of the challenges Timothy is going to face as he pastors this Ephesian church, and he is writing to encourage Timothy, but not to feel sorry for him. Timothy has the unparalleled privilege of shepherding a group of believers in Jesus Christ. He’s a Pastor – he has the best job in the world!

But he is probably going to suffer, as Paul himself suffered. In fact, before Paul left Timothy at Ephesus there had been a city-wide riot because Paul was teaching the truth and growing the Ephesian church. (Acts 19:21-41). That is the situation Paul left with Timothy.

As we talk through 1st Timothy together, don’t forget: this is not a letter to shore up someone who is about ready to give up and throw in the towel. Not at all. This is just a little helping hand from an experienced Pastor to one who is beginning.

Memory verse for this study:

“This charge I commit to you, son Timothy, according to the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you may wage the good warfare...” (1st Timothy 1:18)

Lesson 1

Questions for you to Answer

1st Timothy Chapter 1 “Good Doctrine”

Memory verse for this study:

“This charge I commit to you, son Timothy, according to the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you may wage the good warfare...” (1st Timothy 1:18)

:1&2 There is a small phrase in this greeting which is not used in any of Paul’s other greeting verses in any of his other letters. What is it?

Why do you suppose Paul included this phrase as he writes to Timothy?

:3&4 Paul jumps right in, giving Timothy some advice. Where had Paul gone when he left Timothy behind in Ephesus?

What is some of the advice Paul gives in these verses?

What is “doctrine”?

What are some things today that Paul might consider “fables and endless genealogies”?

What is the result of “fables and endless genealogies”?

:5 What is the result of good doctrine?

:6&7 When teachers stray away from good doctrine, what happens? (also look at 1st Timothy 6:3-5)

:8-11 Apparently, there are some teachers in this church who are focusing on the law – but not teaching the total truth. My guess – they are teaching that a person has to keep the law in order to be saved. So Paul makes a very good point here about the law...what is it? (see also in another letter Paul wrote: Galatians 3:10-13)

:12&13 Paul has every right to tell Timothy that these false teachers are, indeed, false – because Paul was entrusted with the truth of the Gospel, and he knows the false teachers are messing with the truth. Why did God put Paul in such an authoritative position?

:14&15 How does Paul look at himself?

:16 What is one of the reasons the LORD showed Paul such mercy?

Do you realize the LORD has also shown you such mercy?
What is the reason He has given you mercy?

:17 This is one of those places in Paul’s letters where he just seems to jump out of his thoughts and explode with praise to his King, Jesus. Why do you think he does that in this particular place?

:18&19 What is Timothy to do once he receives this charge from Paul?

How does Paul feel about Timothy? Do you think he ever worries about him?

:19b&20 Who are two men who have rejected Paul’s leadership? What has Paul done to help bring them back to a place of loving the truth? (1st Corinthians 5:1-5)

Lesson 1

Answers

1st Timothy Chapter 1 “Good Doctrine”

Steve was born in 1968 while Ken was a youth pastor. Chad was born in 1970 after we started a church in Morris, Illinois, and then Andy came along two years later. Of course we had a dog, too. Life was pretty nuts for me.

I asked God to help me read my Bible every day. It seemed no matter what I did, I always ended up the day without having even cracked it open. And by the end of the day I just wanted to sink into my bed, all thoughts of concentrating on something at that point were null and void.

God gave me a plan. I look back now and call it “Three square meals a day”. I decided to read my Bible as often as I ate. So I chose a book of the Bible to read my way through, and started on it in the morning. I would read a few verses, then ask God to please bring those verses to my mind later in the day, then I would reach for the first child who needed to be dressed.

At noontime I would read in either Psalms or Proverbs, again, just a few verses a day.

And sometime in the late afternoon or evening, for quite a few years that meant I did this while feeding a baby, I would pick up my Bible again and take off where I left off in the morning. The next morning I would again take off where I left off the night before. Just a few minutes. Just a few verses.

There were plenty of days when I would lock myself in the bathroom, and for a few minutes shut out the sounds of kids standing just outside the bathroom door, and a dog sniffing and whining for attention...just to grab my few minutes of time in the Word.

The Lord took those wonderful years of three-times-a-day, a few verses at a time, and slowly began to change me. He taught me truths, convinced me of sin I needed to let go of, made me more loving and kind, and I can honestly tell you, as I look back, that's where I learned "good doctrine."

:1&2 There is a small phrase in this greeting which is not used in any of Paul's other greetings in any of his other letters. What is it?

It's the phrase "our hope". Paul is using it to describe Jesus Christ. Why do you suppose Paul included this phrase as he writes to Timothy, but didn't include it in any of his other letters?

I think it's because Paul had been in Timothy's shoes often enough to realize that Timothy would come up against, as a Pastor, times when the hope of seeing Jesus someday would be all that would get him through. The hatred Timothy would face, or the difficulty of living life in a community hostile to the Gospel, or the friends who would desert him, or the haze of bad teachers and bad teaching Timothy would have to sort through.... these things would often bring Timothy to the end of himself.

Paul knew the hope of eternity with Jesus would bring sweet relief to this young Pastor – just as it always had for Paul. In John 14:1-6 Jesus promised He would someday return. And then all the way through the book of Revelation, beginning in chapter 5, when Jesus takes the scroll from the hand of the

Father, through chapter 19, when Jesus returns to earth on His white horse, the promise is spelled out. We will see

Jesus again! No matter how hard things get here in this life, we have hope – we will see Jesus again! Look at Revelation 21:1-4 and bask in the wonder that someday Jesus – God Himself – will live with us forever. Ahhhh...our hope.

:3&4 Now Paul jumps right in, giving Timothy some advice. Where had Paul gone when he left Timothy behind in Ephesus?

Paul had gone on to Macedonia when he left Timothy behind in Ephesus. He left him behind specifically to make sure that no one began to teach wrong doctrine in that very important church. Ephesus was a center of Gospel outreach, and what went out from Ephesus could very possibly affect the message of the Gospel to thousands of people.

Paul tells Timothy to not even give attention to fables and endless genealogies - things which simply detracted from the Gospel message. Paul knew that Timothy had a right understanding of doctrine, or, truth, so he knew he would be able to discern what was wrong or hurtful.

In today's world, here are some of the things Paul might warn us about:

- So-called "Books of the Bible" which were never included in the Bible.
- Special messages or "words" from God, which come from men, but are not found in the Bible, and do not agree with scripture.
- Hidden secrets in the Bible.
- Religious "secrets".
- Hidden codes or special messages from God to be understood only by "special", or "educated" people.

God gave us His Word so we could clearly understand Him. Yes, there are things we will not understand until we get to heaven. God is bigger than any of us mere mortals can put our arms around. But God did not give us the Bible only to have us not be able to understand it. If any spiritual truth is billed as "secret truth", or "something no one has ever understood before", we should be suspicious. Or if we are encouraged to participate in "secret" ceremonies, run fast in the other direction! God's ways are open and genuine and transparent for all. Good doctrine is learned from the Bible, and nowhere else.

What is the result of "fables and endless genealogies"? They cause disputes (because one person may know the "secret" and others not), and they do not grow people in the Lord.

:5 What is the result of good doctrine?

Love. Bad doctrine causes disputes and stunted growth. Good doctrine brings out love in believers, love which is a result of a heart free from guilt, a conscience free from guilt, and a walk of faith with the Lord. With good doctrine people grow in their faith in Jesus. With bad doctrine people stop growing.

:6&7 When teachers stray away from good doctrine, what happens? (also look at 1st Timothy 6:3-5).

The teachers begin to just babble. They don't understand what they are saying, even if they think they do, and tell you they do. They confuse the people who are listening to them. Look at all the horrible descriptions you find in 1st Timothy 6:3-5, descriptions of men and women who promote bad doctrine. They are proud, they know nothing, they are

obsessed with disputes and arguments, and they produce envy, strife, reviling, evil suspicions, useless wrangling. They are people of corrupt minds, they have no truth, and they are just using religion for personal gain.

Wow! We should run, run, run away from bad doctrine!!!!

:8-11 Apparently, there are some teachers in this church who are focusing on the law – but not teaching the total truth. My guess – they are teaching that a person has to keep the law in order to be saved. So Paul makes a very good point here about the law...what is it? (see also in another letter Paul wrote: Galatians 3:10-13)

Either these bad teachers were proclaiming that a person had to keep the law in order to be saved, or, had to do good works in order to earn a better position with God after they were saved. Both of those teachings are false, and both are still around today.

Paul makes the point that the law is made for lawless, ungodly, unholy and profane people. So, Paul is saying, if these teachers are focusing so much on keeping the law in order to please God, then these teachers must be pretty rotten people indeed. ☺ A little tongue-in-cheek humor from Paul.

The ones teaching this bad doctrine were putting themselves forth as especially righteous...but their emphasis on pleasing God by keeping the law was pointing them out as just the opposite of righteous.

:12&13 Paul has every right to tell Timothy these false teachers are, indeed, false – because Paul was entrusted with the truth of the Gospel, and he knows false teachers

mess with the truth. Why did God put Paul in such an authoritative position?

Timothy would have known very well Paul's own history - that he was a persecutor of Christians back in the day. And Timothy would also have had his own sins to remember. I think Paul understands that God has put him in this position of doctrinal authority so that he can constantly be an example to others in ministry that God has decided to use whom He will use not because of anything great in themselves, but because God can use whoever He wants to use.

:14&15 How does Paul look at himself?

Paul realizes what he is. He is a rotten sinner...in fact...the chief of sinners. There is no arguing that point.

:16 What is one of the reasons the Lord showed Paul such mercy?

The LORD showed Paul mercy so that he could use Paul as "Exhibit A", an example of God's grace, not an example of man's righteousness.

:17 This is one of those places in Paul's letters where he just seems to jump out of his thoughts and explode with praise to his King, Jesus. Why do you think he does that in this particular place?

It seems appropriate, somehow, that he does this right here – because there is no person who deserves praise for what God has done. Nobody at all.

:18&19 So, what is Timothy to do once he receives this charge – this letter – from Paul? Do you think Paul ever worries about him?

He is to wage warfare. More about that warfare in the next lesson. Yes, warfare. Pastoring a church is not a walk in the park.

Paul has such obvious love for Timothy. I don't know if Paul "worried" about Timothy (worry is wrong, right?), but I feel in my heart that Paul kept a mental picture of Timothy before his eyes at all times and never was far away from a whispered prayer for him. (2nd Timothy 1:3)

:19b & 20 Who are the two men who have refused Paul's leadership? What has Paul done to help bring them back to a place of loving the truth? (1st Corinthians 5:1-5)

At the last of this chapter, Paul is back to serious. He is naming names. Who are two men who have rejected Paul's leadership? Hymenaeus and Alexander. Note those names. Paul is not being indiscreet by using names here.

We must know who is leading people away from truth and be willing to speak their names out loud in polite company. These men were doing something evil. Paul prays that God would remove His protection from them and let them experience whatever Satan wants to throw at them. Why? Because they have left the truth, fought against the ministry God gave to Paul, and in the process blasphemed God Himself.

My prayer? May God remove His protection from all who are leading people into false doctrine, and all those fighting against good churches, so that false teachers will either learn to bow their knee to God and do things His way, or be

moved to a place where they cannot harm anyone anymore.
(1st Corinthians 5:1-5)

Let's get personal:

1. Are you sure you have "good doctrine"? What makes you so sure?
2. What areas of "good doctrine" could you learn more about?
3. How does a person go about learning "good doctrine"?
4. Are you spending time in the Word every day? Remember, no amount of knowledge alone makes for "good doctrine". Good doctrine is entwined with your every-day walk with Jesus.

Lesson 2

Questions for you to Answer

1st Timothy Chapter 2 – “Warfare”

Memory verse for this study:

“This charge I commit to you, son Timothy, according to the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you may wage the good warfare...” (1st Timothy 1:18)

:1 Why does Paul say “Therefore”...?

:1 What is the first thing Timothy should do as he begins to “wage the good warfare”? What does that tell you about this type of “warfare”?

:1 What kinds of prayer does Timothy need to engage in?
How are these types of prayer different from one another?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

:2-4 When Paul says to pray for kings and people in authority, who is he referring to? Does that mean we should pray for the President of our country, or the President of Russia, or the Extreme Leader of North Korea? Does that mean we assume they are people who are listening to God? Does that mean we should be praying for their salvation?

:2-4 What is the purpose of us praying for people in authority?

:5 How many Gods are there?

:5 How many mediators are there?

:5 Why do we need a “mediator”?

:5&6 Why is it necessary that our “mediator” be a man?

:7 What was Paul appointed by God to do with his life?

:8 What job does God ask men to do?

:8 What does Paul mean when he says: "without wrath and doubting". ?

:8 Why would this phrase be especially applicable to men?

:9-12 What jobs does God ask women to do?

:9-10 _____

:11-12 _____

:13-14 What is the reason God asks this of women?

:15 Put verse 15 into your own words, taking into consideration some other Bible verses which specifically address women:

Titus 2:3-5

I Peter 3:1-6

Isaiah 3:16-26

Ephesians 5:15-33

Lesson 2

Answers

1st Timothy Chapter 2 “Warfare”

After planting two churches, Ken was called to pastor an existing church in Idaho. We did the whole “candidating” thing. Our youngest was six months old. We travelled to Idaho for Ken to preach and for us to get to know the congregation. They had just gone through a nasty church split, and were looking for someone to come alongside and help them do some healing. They called Ken to do the job. We accepted.

We rented a little house and began the job of getting to know the congregation. We invited them over for meals, organized women’s luncheons, went to meetings.

After about two months we figured two things out:

1. This church really did have some healing to do...and
2. We weren’t the ones to help it happen.

They pretty much hated each other and everyone else...and pretty soon that included us. We resigned, hoping they would find someone wiser than us to do the job.

We packed up our five little ones and left, driving to Colorado to temporarily live with friends, who had four children of their own. Our three boys, and their four children shared a huge basement downstairs, and our toddler and baby were upstairs with us in a small bedroom. It was cramped, and it was a little scary.

The process of packing up over and over again, feeling homeless, and temporarily living with generous friends who

were just as human as we were...well, let's just say we knew we couldn't do this for long.

We didn't always realize it when we were in the middle of “warfare”. Sometimes we just prayed and held on to the Lord.

:1 Why does Paul say “Therefore” ?

The things which were just said, at the end of Chapter 1, are what prompt Paul to say “therefore”. We could say it like this: “Because of the fact that you are actually in a battle, Timothy, here's what you should do...and remember...

- It's not a battle in the ordinary sense of the word.
- It is not fought with ordinary weapons.
- The enemy does not fight fair. He quite often will masquerade as your closest friend.
- It may seem over sometimes, but it's not. It will only be over when Jesus returns and gives us a new heaven and a new earth. Don't let down your guard.”

:1 What is the first thing Timothy should do as he begins to “wage the good warfare”? What does that tell you about this type of “warfare”?

Therefore, Timothy, pray. Prayer is not hand-to-hand combat. It's harder than that. Prayer is coming to God empty-handed, with no hope of having the strength to do battle, and asking Him to fight for you. Prayer is trusting God to make it happen, not yourself. Prayer is counter-intuitive to the human spirit. It's hard because we just don't want to do it! But “waging the good warfare” can only be done through prayer. Only God can win this battle.

:1 What kinds of prayer does Timothy need to engage in?
How are these types of prayer different from one another?

1. supplications
2. prayers
3. intercessions
4. giving of thanks

I’m not entirely sure I know every nuance of difference here...but I think:

- Supplications are simply requests...things we need – personal needs, I think.
- Prayers are generally any communication with God. Just every day talking.
- Intercessions are specific prayers for other people.
- Giving of thanks is just that – giving of thanks to God.

And note that these different kinds of prayer are to be made for all men, and for Kings and people in authority. In other words, pray for everyone.

:2-4 When Paul says to pray for kings and people in authority, who is he referring to? Does that mean we should pray for the President of our country, or the President of Russia, or the Extreme Leader of North Korea? Does that mean we assume these people are listening to God? Does that mean we should be praying for their salvation?

“Kings and people in authority”...means just what it says. These may not necessarily be the people we want to pray for. These may even be family members. We may even have been mistreated or persecuted by some of these “kings and people in authority”, but our directive is still to pray for them.

For instance: This comes from Voice of the Martyrs’ website for kids: www.kidsofcourage.com

“Delviana is a Christian teenager in Indonesia. One day last year, she was leaving church with her

parents and sister when she stopped to check her cell phone. 'Suddenly I heard an explosion,' said Delviana.

The explosion was a bomb. Delviana's church was one of about 60 churches attacked, burned or vandalized in the past two years by radical Muslims.

Shrapnel (pieces of the bomb) hit Delviana in the forehead. As her father wiped her face with his shirt, Delviana called out to Jesus to help her. 'I felt the Lord Jesus was beside me,' said Delviana. 'I didn't feel any pain. I didn't even cry.'

Delviana's father took her to the hospital where she had surgery to remove the shrapnel. 'I knew the Lord would never leave me alone,' said Delviana. As she was wheeled into surgery, she sang, 'In the name of Jesus there is victory.'

Delviana often had headaches after the surgery, but she returned to church less than two weeks after the bombing. 'Whatever my condition, I don't hate those who harm me,' she said.

None of the church members died in the bombing, but the bomber died. '{I felt} no hatred or revenge in my mind,' said the pastor of the church. 'Only love for this bomber who had chosen the wrong path.'

Ask God to protect Indonesian Christians and heal those who have been hurt. Pray that radical Muslims will open their hearts to Jesus, who never leads anyone down a wrong path."

:2-4 What is the purpose of us praying for people in authority?

God wants all men to be saved. He wants kings and authorities to be saved. He also knows that kings and other authorities most of the time do keep the peace in the land. So, as we pray for those in charge, we pray for their salvation, and that they will keep the peace in our countries, in our cities, in our neighborhoods. When they do, Christians have greater freedom to live the kinds of lives

God wants us to live. Quiet lives. Peaceable lives. Lives simply devoted to God and spreading the Gospel.

When life is in turmoil, sometimes it is impossible to get the Good News out to more than just a few people. But when life is peaceful, the Good News can reach many.

:5-6 How many Gods are there? How many mediators are there? Why do we need a “mediator”? Why is it necessary that our “mediator” be a man?

Paul has just told us to pray for those in authority...so now he says: remember - the One who is really in charge is God. He is the One and only One who is in authority.

Jesus Christ – also God – is not only in authority, not only totally in charge of the world, but also is the One who stands with us before God and pleads our defense. When we sin, He stands between us and the Father and says “that sin doesn’t have to be punished – I took the punishment already on the cross.” He’s our mediator.

We need a mediator because we can’t stand up for ourselves in front of Holy, Perfect God. We would be incinerated as we stood before His presence. But Jesus

shades us – protects us from the wrath of God – protects us from His own wrath – and pleads our case.

Why is it necessary that our “mediator” be a man? Why not an “angel-mediator”? Why not an “animal-mediator”? Why a man? Because only a man can pay the price for the sin of a man. The angels can’t pay the price for our sin. No animal can pay the price for our sin. Only a fellow-man could pay that price. Only a fellow-human-being is qualified to take our punishment in our place.

:7 What was Paul appointed by God to do with his life?

Paul was appointed by God to be a witness of the truth of the Gospel (an apostle), and to preach the truth of the Gospel (a preacher) – primarily to the Gentiles. Paul finishes this chapter by going back to prayer:

:8 What job does God ask “men” to do? By “men”, does Paul mean mankind, or, specifically male persons? What does Paul mean when he says: “without wrath and doubting”? Why would this phrase be especially applicable to men?

Because of the context of this verse – because of the verses which follow, which specifically point out some things women need to do – I think verse 8 is also being specific. Verse 8 is saying that “men” (not just “mankind”, but specifically, the male persons in the church) should pray everywhere. God asks men to pray. Now, we know from other verses throughout the Bible that God also asks women to pray, but in this passage, God is specifically asking men to shoulder this responsibility of prayer.

And here’s how they should pray: “Lifting up holy hands”, which is, I think, a reference to Moses when he protected the

people of Israel as they battled, holding up his hands in prayer. When his hands were up in the air, and he was pleading with God for victory, the people in the valley below were victorious. But when his hands fell to his sides in exhaustion, the people in the valley below were run over by their enemies. Exodus 17:8-13

God asks men, specifically, to pray. Men are endowed by God with an inborn desire to protect, to fight for their loved ones. In the church, men do that by praying. And this praying – this protecting – is different from what comes naturally to a man. It is not in anger. It is not in violence. It is not in fighting, or yelling, or fear. This prayer of protection is in simple faith – without wrath and doubting. Just pray. Just ask God to work. Just keep asking.

It would take faith for a man to act in this way – because his natural reaction is just the opposite. It would be a miracle for this to be the habit of a man's life.

:9-12 Paul has specifically asked men to do something...what specific jobs does God give women?

:9-10 Adorn themselves with good works, not the usual adornments of women.

:11-12 Have an attitude of learning – of listening – rather than one of being listened to.

It would take faith for a woman to act in this way – because her natural reaction is just the opposite. It would be a miracle for these to be the habits of a woman's life.

:13-14 What is the reason God asks this of women?

Eve, so many years ago, passed on to all of us women the natural desire to rule our own lives, to tell everyone else what to do, and to be in charge. But that natural desire earned Eve the award for the biggest mistake of womanhood. God doesn't want the same for us.

:15 Put verse 15 into your own words, taking into consideration some other Bible verses which specifically address women:

So God asks of women the impossible. Learn. Listen. Have an attitude of submission. It can only be done by faith. We, as women, will only be able to effectively bear children, raise them, or do whatever else God has planned for us, if we walk by faith, learning, listening, submitting.

Yikes! Very little else the Bible says raises people's hackles more than this! But if the Bible is God's words, and this passage is saying what it seems to be saying, then it pays to seriously consider this. I'm convinced this culture-shocker is as true for today as it was when it was spoken by Paul to Timothy two thousand years ago.

But I'm not interested in cramming this thought down anyone's throat. In order to understand verse 15 a little better, why don't you just look at some other Bible verses which specifically address women, and come to your own conclusions?

Titus 2:3-5

1st Peter 3:1-6

Isaiah 3:16-26

Ephesians 5:15-33

As we conclude Chapter 2, think about this: as you read all of these verses for both Christian men and Christian women,

and also the verses about prayer, you see over and over one major theme coming through: Trust God, not yourself.

These, then, are the weapons of our warfare, whether we are men or women:

- Pray.
- Do what God has asked you to do.
- Trust God, not yourself.

Let's get personal.

1. Paul was appointed to preach and teach the Gospel to the gentiles. Have you been appointed to do anything specific?
2. How is your prayer life?
3. How are you doing on the specific jobs God has asked men or women to do?

Lesson 3

Questions for you to Answer

1st Timothy Chapter 3 – “Leadership”

Memory verse for this study:

“This charge I commit to you, son Timothy, according to the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you may wage the good warfare...” (1st Timothy 1:18)

:1 What is a bishop? What other words seem to be interchangeable with the term “bishop”? Look at the following verses, and make note of what you learn:

1. 1st Timothy 3:1
2. Titus 1:5-9
3. 1st Peter 2:25
4. 1st Peter 5:1-4
5. James 5:14
6. 1st Timothy 5:17,19
7. Acts 14:23
8. Acts 20:17-31
9. 1st Timothy 4:14
10. Ephesians 4:11

In your own words, what is a good definition of “bishop”?
What would be in his job description?

:2-7 From the following verses, make a list of the qualifications for someone who is a bishop. What would be the reason each of these is necessary?

:2
:2
:2
:2
:2
:2
:2
:2
:3
:3
:3
:3
:4&5
:6
:7

:8 What is a “deacon”? Look at the following verses:

1. Acts 6:1-6
2. Philippians 1:1
3. I Timothy 3:8-12
4. The word “deacon” is also translated “servant”, or “minister” in other Bible passages. (as in Mark 10:43)

In your own words, what is a good definition of “deacon”?
What would be in his job description? Is there such a thing
as a “deaconess”? (see Romans 16:1)

From the following verses, make a list of the qualifications
for someone who is a deacon. What would be the reason
each of these is necessary?

:8

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:13 How significant is the position of “deacon” in the church,
and in the community?

:14 How soon does Paul expect to come and see Timothy?

:15 What is the purpose of this letter Paul is writing to
Timothy? Go back to chapter 1, verse 3. What position do
you think Timothy holds at the church in Ephesus?

:16 What is the work of the church? Why are bishops and deacons necessary to get this work done?

:16 What are the different parts of the “mystery of godliness”?

APPLICATION QUESTION:

What should you do about what you have learned in this chapter?

Lesson 3

Answers

1st Timothy Chapter 3 “Leadership”

Church leadership, technically known as “elders” and “deacons”, may not be what you think. It’s not a meeting around a big table with comfortable chairs where men chosen by God make decisions and tell others to carry them out.

It is hard-working men and women who take care of others, most of the time with no one saying thank-you, and often with no one even realizing they are doing it.

When Southside Bible Church started, in Greenwood, we asked one of our guys to run the sound board. He had little to no experience doing that type of thing, but I’ll never forget his fantastic attitude when he said: “Ok. I’ll be the sound guy until the sound guy shows up.”

At every church, men and women take on a multitude of leadership roles – teaching, staffing nurseries, cleaning bathrooms, organizing meals, cooking, greeting, landscaping, making coffee, running sound boards – leadership jobs which require a servants’ heart.

In Morris, at our first church plant, John and Gayle got saved, then fell in love, and then Ken had the privilege of marrying them at that church. They went off to Bible College to prepare for ministry, John became a pastor, and they are still serving in ministry today.

A group of college guys travelled to Grace Baptist from Maranatha College in Wisconsin every weekend. They helped out with whatever needed to be done at church, and spent the night in the new church building. They slept in sleeping bags in the sanctuary, and, we hear, took baths in the baptistry. 😊

Dennis was one of those young men from Maranatha. He met Mavis at Grace – she had been saved just the year before. They married and eventually joined us when we left Grace to start a church in Arizona.

Leadership is not what you think. It's simply serving, whenever and wherever the Lord points. And, equally important, it's being willing to move on to God's next job for us...to “be the sound guy until the sound guy shows up.”

:1 What is a bishop? What other words seem to be interchangeable with the term “bishop”? Look at the following verses:

1. 1st Timothy 3:1 In the notes of my NKJV study Bible, it says that “bishop” literally means “overseer.”
2. Titus 1:5-9 The word “bishop” seems to be interchangeable with the word “elder”.
3. 1st Peter 2:25 Jesus is described as a “Shepherd” and “Overseer”.
4. 1st Peter 5:1-4 Peter is writing to the “elders”, and considers himself also an “elder. Elders are told to “shepherd” and “oversee” their people, just as Jesus does, who is the Chief Shepherd and Overseer.
5. James 5:14 James refers to the “elders” of the church – the leaders.

6. 1st Timothy 5:17,19 Paul refers to “elders” of the church – the leaders.
7. Acts 14:23 “Elders” were appointed in every church Paul started.
8. Acts 20:17-31 Paul addresses the “elders” of the church, also calling them “shepherds”, and “overseers.”
9. 1st Timothy 4:14 The “elders” were the ones who laid hands on Timothy, verifying Timothy’s gift for being an “elder” himself.
10. Ephesians 4:11 Paul lists “pastors and teachers” as one of the many spiritual gifts for equipping the church.

Now....in your own words, what is a good definition of “bishop”? The word “bishop” in the Greek language can literally be translated “overseer”, which would of course indicate leadership and care. It is used interchangeably with the terms “elder”, “shepherd”, & “pastor” in the passages above.

So, here’s my definition of a “Bishop”: “A man who is the kind and loving and sacrificial leader of a church, sometimes called Bishop, Pastor, Elder, Shepherd, or Overseer.”

In churches in America today, the Bishop – or Pastor – of a church can have many varying bullet points on his job description: preacher, teacher, counselor, organizer, manager, trouble-shooter, building maintenance, vision-caster, teacher, music leader, comforter, the one who knows what the needs are in the church, wedding-officiant, funeral-officiant, grief counselor, marriage counselor....etc.

Sometimes there are others in the church who fill some of those roles, but always it is the leader...the Pastor...the Bishop...the Elder...the Shepherd...who puts his arms around all the different parts of the church and cares deeply for it all.

:2-7 From the following verses, make a list of the qualifications for someone who is a bishop. What would be the reason each of these is necessary?

Each of these qualifications is necessary in the man who leads the most important gathering of people in the world. Every Sunday morning thousands of churches gather to worship Jesus Christ and take care of each other. Each church needs a Bishop...a Pastor. He must be:

:2 blameless...meaning that he has a good reputation. This can't possibly mean that he is perfect...for then we would have no Pastors for our churches. Even a good man does things wrong, but I think the blameless man makes the wrong things right as soon as he possibly can after he does them, so that his blame is washed away, and his reputation is that of an imperfect man who knows how to say “I’m sorry”, and who is not too proud to do whatever it takes to make recompense for his wrong.

A leader is a very easy man to blame for anything which goes wrong, so there will be many times when he gets blame for things of which he is innocent. This word “blameless” does not mean he never gets blamed for anything. I think it just means when he is truly in the wrong, he admits it and takes care of it.

:2 husband of one wife. On the surface this seems pretty self-explanatory. This is a “one-woman” man. He is married to one woman. But there are shades of questions here: 1. Does this mean this man has never been married before? What about a widower? 2. What about a divorced man? 3. And does this mean that if a man is not married at all he is not qualified to be a bishop?

I'm just going to give you my opinions here – please take it as worth only that. There are better theologians than me...and their take on these questions is varied.

1. I think this is not referring to a man who is a widower. If a man's wife has died, he is not considered as being married to two women when he marries again.
2. I think it also does not refer to a divorced man who has married again. In the eyes of the law, he is only married to one woman if the divorce was legal. There may be other reasons why a divorced man would not qualify for the position of bishop (for instance, if he was unfaithful to his first wife he then does not have a “good testimony” with those who are outside the church), but I don't think it's because he is married to more than one woman.
3. And if Paul had wanted to say that a man had to be married in order to be a bishop he would have said that. The very fact that Paul stresses the “one wife” seems to indicate that the emphasis of this qualification is on the fact that there is not more than one wife.
4. So what does this mean? Very simply, I think it means that this man is not a bigamist. He is not married to more than one woman at the same time.

:2 temperate. Meaning – he is not unpredictable with his lifestyle and his emotions. He is stable...healthy.

:2 sober-minded. This man looks at things realistically, and understands how to make hard decisions. He's not flighty.

:2 of good behavior: He doesn't engage in what would typically be considered bad behavior in his community and his culture.

:2 hospitable: He is willing to sit at the dinner table with people and enjoy their company. He is willing to share his home.

:2 able to teach: He knows the Word of God, and is capable of teaching it to others.

:3 not given to wine: He does not get drunk.

:3 not violent: He does not commit violent acts anywhere in his life: at home, in the community, in church. He doesn't hit people. He doesn't shoot people. He doesn't fly off the handle.

:3 not greedy for money: His motivation for what he does is not money.

:3 gentle: The bishop handles situations with gentleness, not roughness.

:3 not quarrelsome: He doesn't want to start fights all the time. He doesn't want to argue. He is peaceable. He is a peace-maker.

:3 not covetous: He is not overcome with jealousy for anyone or anything.

:4&5 rules his own house well: He is in charge at home. His children know how to obey him. They may not be perfect, but they do not show the signs of growing up in a house with a father who never wanted to say “no” to them.

:6 not a novice: Not a new believer. He has had time to grow and learn and walk with Jesus awhile before he takes on the responsibility of leadership in the church.

:7 a good testimony among those who are outside: The community may not like him if he preaches the truth, but they cannot point at him and say that he lives immorally or illegally, or legitimately say that he is an unloving or disagreeable person.

Can you join me in looking at that list and saying: “Whoa! Who would ever want this job?” But I can tell you from my own experience as a Pastor’s wife that the man who is called of God to shepherd a church has a burning desire to be the man just described above, and wild horses can’t pull him away from it. He may not always feel like it, but he knows in his heart that he has the best job in the world, doing the most important thing in the world, and he wants to be up to the task.

:8-12 What is a “deacon”? Look at the following:

1. Acts 6:1-6 This appears to be the first time we see “deacons” appointed in a church. The word “deacon” is not used here, but the job description is the same as we see elsewhere. They were specifically commissioned to take care of the normal, practical problems which arise in church. Like making sure the poor are taken care of, or the widows are fed, etc.

The Apostles were covered over with the job of “Pastoring”...teaching the Word, and ministering to the spiritual needs of the people. They needed help with some of the physical needs which came up...like taking care of the widows. So they appointed Godly men to fulfill that need. They were deacons. They were considered an essential part of the work of the church in the world.

2. Philippians 1:1 Deacons are considered part of the leadership of the church, as they are addressed here in the opening salutation. In the churches which sprung up as Paul and the rest of the Apostles spread the Good News, deacons were also appointed, to come alongside and minister next to the men who took on the responsibilities of Pastoring. They saw that the physical needs of the people were met. And they also were evangelists and teachers in their own right. They were strong and powerful men of God in every way
3. 1st Timothy 3:8-12 Both deacons and elders had high standards to meet, along with their wives and children. In fact, as far as qualifications go, deacons seem to differ from elders only in the fact that deacons are not required to be teachers.

The word “deacon” is also translated “servant”, or “minister” in other Bible passages. (as in Mark 10:43)

In my own words, I would say that a deacon is a Godly man who has gifts which allow him to minister to the physical needs of the people in the church. He serves alongside the Pastor(s) of the church, supporting them in their work of ministering to the spiritual needs of people.

Just a note here – there may be some indication that there was such a thing as “deaconesses” – or women deacons.

See Romans 16:1. They also ministered alongside the Pastor(s) – as Godly support.

Here’s the list of the qualifications for someone who would be a deacon:

:8 reverent. Having a right relationship with God, and holding Him high in their talk.

:8 not double-tongued. Tells the truth. Honest.

:8 not given to much wine. Not a drunkard.

:8 not greedy for money: Not motivated by money to do the job they do.

:9 holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience: Honoring the Gospel with their lives and with their tongues. Genuine believers in Jesus.

:10 tested. Having lived in the community of believers long enough that everyone knows the life they lead, and that they, although not perfect, make every attempt to keep things right with people and God.

:11 qualified wives. His wife also is part of the qualification requirements. She also must be reverent, not a person who wants to slander others, temperate, and faithful. If a Godly man is married to a woman who professes to be a believer, but does not act like it, he should not be considered as a deacon. Not fair? Fair isn’t the question here.

:12 husbands of one wife, and rule their children and houses well. Same as an elder/pastor/bishop.

:13 How significant is the position of “deacon” in the church, and in the community?

There is great honor in serving in the church of Jesus Christ. And one tremendous blessing of such an honor is that great boldness comes with it. Boldness which may allow a deacon to preach the Gospel message to the governing authorities and die a martyr’s death. (Acts 7)

:14&15 How soon does Paul expect to come and see Timothy? What is the purpose of this letter Paul is writing to Timothy?

Paul fully expects that he will see Timothy soon. But he knows, from years of ministry, that what he expects may not happen exactly as he hopes it will, so he explains to Timothy that this letter from him has a purpose. He wants Timothy to know how to be a Pastor of a church of the living God.

What is the work of the church? Why are pastors and deacons necessary to get this work done? The church has the overwhelming responsibility to get the Gospel message out to the whole world. The individual people in the church are the ones who will get the job done. Pastors and deacons are there to help, to encourage, and to bolster them up, spur them on.

:16 What is the work of the church? Why are bishops and deacons necessary to get this work done?

Have you ever held a newborn baby in your arms? I have. One of the feelings which grip you at that moment is fear. Fear that you will drop or somehow damage this precious, valuable package of life.

That’s the same feeling we should get when we hold the “Mystery of Godliness” : the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It is of such value that we cannot describe it. It is a message every person needs. It will determine the eternity of each soul.

Hold it carefully. Use it boldly. Be overwhelmed with its power and its worth.

Honor and protect the group who are commissioned to bring it to the world: the church.

And carefully take good care of the ones who take care of the church: the leaders: pastors and deacons, (and countless unnamed other servants) who have the greatest job in the world.

:16 What are the different parts of the “mystery of Godliness”?

*“And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness:
God was manifested in the flesh,
Justified in the Spirit,
Seen by angels,
Preached among the Gentiles,
Believed on in the world,
Received up in glory.”*

1. Jesus was born as a baby.
2. He lived a sinless life, died, and then was raised from the dead by the Spirit.
3. Angels saw Him rise.
4. Gentiles heard His story.
5. People throughout the world believed in Him.
6. His followers saw Him go back up to Heaven.

Lesson 4

Questions for you to Answer

1st Timothy Chapter 4 “Latter Times”

Memory verse for this study:

“This charge I commit to you, son Timothy, according to the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you may wage the good warfare...” (1st Timothy 1:18)

:1 What are the “latter times”?

- Have the “latter times” already happened?
- Are we living in the “latter times” right now?
- Could the “latter times” start any time soon?
- Should we be looking for the “latter times”?
- Is the “latter times” the same as “end of the age”?
- Is the “latter times” the same as the “day of the Lord”, or the “day of Christ”?
- Is the “latter times” the same as “the last days”?

:1-5 What is going to happen in the latter times?

:1

:1

:2

:2

:3

:3

:1 Who has told us that these things will happen?

:6 What is Timothy supposed to do with this knowledge about the latter times?

:6-9 What should Timothy be nourished with, and what should his exercise be?

:10 To what end is Paul working so hard? What is his goal?
To what end should Timothy be working?

:12 How old was Timothy?

:12 How did Timothy dare presume to teach those older and more experienced than he?

:13-16 What are some more of the things Paul is urging Timothy to do on a consistent, habitual basis?

:13

:13

:13

:14

:15

:15

:16

APPLICATION QUESTION:

How much of this advice to Timothy is relevant to you?

Lesson 4

Answers

1st Timothy Chapter 4 “Latter Times”

Pastors are totally indispensable in the latter times.

The funds we were promised from a seminary never came through when we tried to start a church in northern California. We had little in the way of worldly things, and we were totally depending on that financial support to survive. So, it didn't take long before Ken had to get a job. Church planting would have to wait just a little while.

In fact, we were desperate for a job. We lived in this beautiful, awesome area of the country, but we had to feed five kids, and there were no church planting funds to be seen, so Ken went job hunting.

They were looking for salespeople at the Porsche-Audi store in Santa Rosa. Ken applied and was interviewed. He had sold real estate in Tucson, but had never sold cars before. I'm sure they thought he would never make it in the car business, so they sent him on his way.

As he drove away, he thought: “They are making a big mistake! I could be an awesome car salesman!” He turned around and went back – walked back into the manager's office and told him what an incredible mistake he was making, that he would be able to sell the pants off of anyone else on the lot...and he got the job.

We didn't even know how to pronounce the word “Porsche” (Pour-sha). There was much to learn. Eventually Ken was, indeed, the top salesman at Santa Rosa Porsche-Audi. But

he had to work on Sundays. No church planting was going to happen yet.

For a short while, before the money started coming in from car sales, we were dirt poor, and frantic to feed our kids. Many people...some of them strangers...stepped in to help us in the most unexpected ways. A neighbor heard we were having trouble making ends meet, so they divided up all the food in their pantry and gave us half of everything they had. Someone gave us a whole basket of pigeon eggs. I had no idea what to do with pigeon eggs, but they looked like tiny little chicken eggs, so I cracked them, dumped them in a bowl, whisked them, added milk & salt, and made scrambled eggs. Didn't really taste a bit different than regular scrambled eggs...it just took four dozen to feed us! ☺

And then there was Andy. He entered Kindergarten that fall, and I didn't have a car, so there was no choice but to have him ride the bus to school. It wasn't the best of neighborhoods, and we were nervous about it. One day, while waiting for the bus with some older kids, Andy was talked into joining the older kids into ditching the bus, and going to a store to buy (or maybe steal, not sure we heard the whole story) candy. I honestly can't remember how we found out about it, or even how we let Andy know that wasn't ever going to happen again...but I do remember we about went crazy with the question of why God had brought us here only to work on Sunday and watch our 5-year-old become a juvenile delinquent.

While we were trying to figure out our next step, we found a really great Christian & Missionary Alliance Church in the area, with a kind and wonderful Pastor, who ministered to us and encouraged us to not give up. I can't remember his name. We only knew him for a few weeks. It doesn't matter. He was just what we needed to keep going through the "latter times".

:1 What are the "latter times"?

The first 4 verses of this chapter talk about the "latter times". What are the "latter times"? Here are some questions we could ask about the latter times:

- Has the "latter times" already happened?
- Are we living in the "latter times" right now?
- Could the "latter times" start any time soon?
- Should we be looking for the "latter times"?
- Is the "latter times" the same as "end of the age"?
- Is the "latter times" the same as the "Day of the Lord", or the "Day of Christ"?
- Is the "latter times" the same as "the last days"?

Here are two different things to remember as you answer the above questions:

- 1) The "End of the Age", "Day of the Lord", "Last Seven Years", the "Coming of the Lord", and the "Day of Christ" all refer to the last seven years of life as we know it on this earth, also called the "Tribulation".

Matthew 24:1-35

Revelation 6-19

2nd Thessalonians 2:1-12

1st Thessalonians 5:2-10

James 5:7&8

- 2) There also is a long period of time referred to in scripture, which precedes the last seven years, and is described as the "Last Days",

"Latter Days", the "Last Hour", and the time right before the "End of all Things".

1st Timothy 4:1-3

2nd Timothy 3:1-7

1st Peter 4:7-11

1st John 2:18&19

We have been in #2) the "latter times" since the church began. We have been waiting, since then, for the #1) the "End of the Age", or, the "Last Seven Years" to begin.

:1 What is going to happen in the latter times? Who has told us that these things will happen?

The Spirit of God is the One Who has told us what things will be happening in those "latter times".

:1-5 **Depart from the faith:** Many people who look like they are believers in Jesus will actually turn away from Him. They will be people who used talk like Christians, look like Christians, go to church like Christians, but suddenly they stop acting like Christians, stop living by the Bible's words, and stop being kind or gentle or loving.

:1 These same people will actually be lured away from what is true by what is a pack of lies. They **give heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons.** They could get interested in cults or false religions, or worse. They might get involved in the world's worship of money and sex and power. They believe the lies these cults and false religions and evil powers teach because they never actually were committed to Jesus in the first place. They never really loved Truth. So they easily believe the lies.

:2 Men and women will freely and creatively **tell lies** without even feeling a bit guilty about it. Lying will be a way of life for many.

:2 **Consciences will be seared.** No feeling at all. People will feel less and less guilt about all the evil things they do. They will lie, cheat, commit adultery, divorce, hate, hurt others, seek addictions....and all with less and less a feeling of horror at what they are doing.

:3 **Marriage the way God designed it will be looked down on.** Marriage between two believers will be made fun of, or even forbidden. Homosexuality will flourish. Perverted marriage definitions will be accepted. Pre-marital sex will flourish. Pornography will flourish.

:3-5 While many of God's standards will be scorned, also many other standards, or rules, will be added to life – designed to **strangle people with rules they can never keep.** Legalism will abound. People will worship themselves...and will work hard to keep all the rules...so that they do not have to bow the knee to Jesus.

All these things are happening now. They are all clear indications to us that we are living in the latter times.

:6-9 What is Timothy supposed to do with this knowledge about the latter times?

Teach his flock, his church, to expect these things, to learn to recognize these things, to not be surprised that these things will happen.

He can encourage his people to not give up. They can learn how to live by the words they read in the Bible. They can trust Jesus when the world seems to get worse and worse. They can reject false teachings because they are familiar with the truth. They can exercise Godliness. In other words, they can “work out” their lifestyles by acting like Jesus. It’s hard work, and they will need His help to do it. It will leave them panting and sweating...but it will be far more profitable than going to the gym, lifting weights, and running on the treadmill.

Being nourished with the Word, and exercising Godliness brings results which last into eternity. That is what Paul wants for Timothy himself, and what he knows Timothy must also teach his people.

:10&11 To what end is Paul working so hard? What is his goal? To what end should Timothy be working?

Answer: The life which is to come.

:12 How old was Timothy? How did Timothy dare presume to teach those older and more experienced than he?

We don’t know how old Timothy was, but we do know he was young. Maybe a man in his 20’s? Maybe the age the twelve apostles were when they followed Jesus and learned from Him while He was on earth?

Timothy didn’t have to apologize for his youth...but it was going to be a good idea for him to be very aware of the fact that his life was an open book. He needed to live for Jesus 24-7.

How did Timothy dare presume to teach those older and more experienced than he? He had orders from Paul, and

he just kept serving Christ where he had been placed, no matter what anyone else might say.

:13-16 What are some more of the things Paul is urging Timothy to do on a consistent, habitual basis?

As we close this chapter, Paul is urging Timothy to:

:13 Read.

:13 Exhort.

:13 Know good doctrine.

:14 Don't neglect your spiritual gift. It won't exercise itself. You have to use it.

:15 Think hard about all I have told you.

:15 Give yourself completely to all I have told you, so that you will be making progress, and everyone will see it.

:16 Continue.

Let's get personal:

After reading all this sobering advice written to a young pastor two thousand years ago, ask yourself: how much of this advice to Timothy is relevant to you?

Lesson 5

Questions for you to Answer

1st Timothy Chapter 5 “Who to Honor?”

Memory verse for this study:

“This charge I commit to you, son Timothy, according to the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you may wage the good warfare...” (1st Timothy 1:18)

:1&2 When the time comes for Timothy, as a Pastor, to approach an older man in his church with a problem that must be addressed, how is Timothy to approach this job?

- How about a younger man?
- And older woman?
- A younger woman?

Why do you think Paul is advising these differing approaches?

:3-8 What do you think Paul means by “really” widows? Does he think some widows might be pretending to be widows?

:3 What does Paul mean by “honor”? Does this mean people should treat widows with respect? Or does it mean more?

:9&10 Why such stringent requirements for “taking them into the number”? What is this talking about?

:11-15 If a widow is completely taken care of by her church, is that always a good thing?

:16 Who is the first responsible party for a widow or someone in need?

:17-19 What advice does Paul give Timothy about the treatment of elders in a church?

a.

b.

:20 Do you think verse 20 refers to elders who are sinning, or to anyone who is sinning?

:21-25 What are the few closing pieces of advice in this chapter?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

Lesson 5

Answers

1st Timothy Chapter 5 “Who to Honor?”

Honor: To hold in high respect. (Dictionary.com)

I think Chapter 5 is teaching that there are some people you honor in life and in the church. You just owe it to them. Here are two of my favorites:

Walter, had Parkinson’s disease, and for quite a few months hadn’t been able to sit comfortably in church. In his last couple of weeks, his body had just been shutting down on him. His stomach had stopped working, and it became obvious that he wasn’t ever going to be able to eat again. The medical suggestion was that he would have a feeding tube inserted, which hopefully could deliver nutrients to his body, and bypass his stomach.

He decided, after much thought and prayer, that this was not what he wanted. He was ready to die, and his body was ready to die, so he declined the feeding tube. He wanted to be allowed to go home to be with the Lord. With family and friends by his side 24/7, he waited for a few days for the Lord to come and take him home.

Another man, Maury, in his 60’s, was a public school educator, and also loved preaching, teaching, and singing on praise teams in his volunteer work in the family of God. He began to show symptoms of Alzheimer’s disease, and for ten years watched himself deteriorate, finishing his life on this earth in an Alzheimer’s unit of a nursing home, no longer able to take care of himself. Near the end of his life,

when he could still carry on a decent conversation, he loved to talk about the Lord, loved to talk about the Word of God, and loved to sing. In fact, in the nursing home, he sang to his fellow patients.

These two men of God knew each other, and were able to get together once, close to the end of Walter’s life.

What followed was a picture of the kingdom of heaven. Maury, who had lost his sense of space, and could not get himself in or out of a room, was guided to the bedside of his friend, Walter, who was too weak to rise. Maury sang to Walter. He sang loud and clear of the awesomeness of Jesus, and with tears running down both faces, two men nearing the end of their lives on earth still had the joy of the living in the kingdom which had only just begun for them both.

Maury and Walter were not sad as they worshipped God together in that nursing home. They were full of joy. I can’t honor them enough.

:1&2 When the time comes for Timothy, as a Pastor, to approach an older man in his church with a problem that must be addressed, how is Timothy to approach this job? How about a younger man? An older woman? A younger woman?

An older man should be exhorted (confronted) as a father. How would you confront your father? Not with disrespect, that’s for sure. A father is someone who has made great and painful sacrifices for you – someone who possibly has given up his own dreams at some time in his life, so that you can have yours. He’s a person who has been forced to grow and stretch and often agonize inside as he tries to be the

person you need him to be. That man, then, is someone you deeply respect. You may not agree with everything he does, or everything he thinks, but you would be well-advised to never cross the line into purposely hurting or disrespecting him.

So, Timothy....think of your father when you approach any older man in your congregation with words of exhortation or rebuke.

How about a younger man? - these men treat like brothers. Not as strangers whom you will never see again, but as brothers who share your life until you die.

And older women? Treat them as you would your mother. Be tender. Be protective. Shield them from hurt. Help them through life when they need it....give them space when they don't.

Younger women? - As if they were your sisters. Guard them. Don't let them be hurt. Keep an eye out for predators and chase them away from her. And above all – don't be a predator yourself.

Why do you think Paul is advising these differing approaches?

Timothy will be best able pastor his church if he treats each person with respect...in a way they will understand. These people who believe in Jesus are working side-by-side with Timothy in this amazing assignment, and as workers in God's church, they should be treated as honored and respected creations of God.

:3-8 What do you think Paul means by "really" widows? Does he think some widows might be pretending to be widows?

When he uses the word widows, Paul is not just referring to those women whose husbands have died. It appears Paul is giving guidelines for a special group of widows – those who must be cared for by the church because they are beyond being able to care for themselves.

He is singling out two groups of widows in verses 3-8:

- 1- Widows who still have family who can care for them should not be included in this group the church cares for. They are not “really widows”. They’ve done nothing wrong – that’s not the point. They simply don’t need the church to support them financially because they still have family who should and will take on the responsibility.
- 2- Widows who say they are believers in Jesus, but don’t live like it. They are taking advantage of the “social security” system of the church – getting financial support from the church – but not walking with Jesus and not living like Christians. These widows can’t be included in this group, either. They are just using the church.

What does Paul mean by “honor”? Does this mean people should treat widows with respect? Or does it mean something more? The word “honor” here does not just mean “respect” – as we can see from the rest of the context of these verses. It also means “financially and otherwise taking care of them”.

:9&10 Why such stringent requirements for “taking them into the number”? What is this talking about?

Again, I think “taking them into the number” refers to making them a part of the ministry of the church, financially and otherwise. The stringent requirements? This financial care of widows is for those who will be not only taken care of, but

also will be ministering to others with the time they now have on their hands.

They need to be qualified to do this. In fact, the guidelines almost seem to mirror the exacting qualifications given earlier, in chapter 3, for Pastors and Deacons. What does that tell us? It tells us that ministering for Jesus Christ is not something to be taken lightly. It is a privilege and responsibility. These widows were not put into this group because everyone felt sorry for them. They were financially supported because they had a need and because they had a job to do still!

:11-15 If a widow is completely taken care of by her church, is that always a good thing?

No, not necessarily. A younger widow should be encouraged to marry, to take care of her children, to work hard. She should not be supported and taken care to the extent that she has idle time on her hands. And, again, widows with extended family should be helped out by that extended family.

What is this saying about our current culture? Very simply, I think we can take some very good advice away from this: Help those who need help – so that they can get to the place where they are again helping themselves. When helping is enabling, then it is no longer helping.

:16 Who is the first responsible party for a widow or someone in need?

Family is responsible first, before anyone else. This applies across the board to all who are in need. If my mother or sister or cousin is in need, I shouldn't take them to the community Food Bank – I should take them to the grocery

store and buy what they need myself. It's my responsibility.

:17-19 What advice does Paul give Timothy about the treatment of elders (Pastors) in a church?

- a. Pay them well. Double honor.
- b. Don't listen to accusations unless they are confirmed by two or three others.

This is not just treating elders with respect. It is guarding them and caring for them and looking out for their needs.

:20 Do you think verse 20 refers to elders (Pastors) who are sinning, or to anyone who is sinning?

I'm not totally sure on this one. The context before the verse would indicate it is talking about elders who are sinning. But the context after the verse might make us think Paul is including this advice with the scattered pieces of advice in verses 21-25.

So here's my best guess: I think Paul is saying that if it is found that an elder (Pastor) is damaging lives with his sin, and is “caught in the act”, then that man must be rebuked publicly. Why? Why not cover it over and keep things peaceful? Because his sin has undoubtedly affected many people, and the best way to heal the wounds for everyone is to get it out in the open. Speak the truth – not in anger or in meanness – but in love.

:21-25 What are the few closing pieces of advice in this chapter?

- Follow my advice, Timothy, without being partial to one person or one group of persons. Treat everyone the same.
- Don't be hasty in your confrontations.

- Don't be so aware of other people's sins, and spend so much time thinking about their sins, that you become a partaker of those sins yourself.
(Unfortunately, it's true for everyone, even leaders in a church – the thing you spend the most time thinking about is the thing which begins to control your life.)
- Keep yourself sexually pure. Put a guard on your thoughts and what you say and do.
- Drink a little wine because of the stomach problems you have been having.
- Use caution when you trust people. Some people hide their true selves very well.
- Those who do good things are easy to spot. Those who do evil things will someday come to light...just keep your eyes open.

Let's Get Personal:

1. When someone becomes a widow today, what is the church's responsibility to her?
2. If an elder is counted worthy of double honor, what does that mean a church should do about paying their Pastor?
3. If Paul advised Timothy to drink wine, then does that mean it is OK to drink wine?

4. In this chapter, 2 different types of people are singled out as worthy of honor. Who are they?
 - a.
 - b.
5. If you were to give yourself a grade (F being failing, A being succeeding), for the honor you show to each of these two types of people, what would your grades be?
 - a.
 - b.
6. I think you might notice who Paul does not mention in this "to honor" list. Who might we honor today...but Paul doesn't mention them?

Lesson 6

Questions for you to Answer

1st Timothy Chapter 6 “Contentment”

Memory verse for this study:

“This charge I commit to you, son Timothy, according to the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you may wage the good warfare...” (1st Timothy 1:18)

:1-2 Who else is Timothy’s congregation supposed to honor? What if the “master” is a fellow-believer? Should the “slave” continue to serve as a slave? Shouldn’t he rebel against this position and demand his rights as a human being?

:3 What if someone in the church is teaching something other than what Paul has just said? What if someone is teaching a doctrine that says each man should look out for himself and do whatever it takes, even rebellion, to get himself the status he deserves?

:3 My NKJV says that the right doctrine is the same as Godliness. Fill in the blank: It matters what you_____. So therefore....it isn’t OK to just believe whatever you want to believe, is it?

:4-5 So, this person who might just be teaching bad doctrine in any area of life...what is this person really like? And what does that tell us about how to view this person? Should we even give our listening ear to anything this person has to say?

:6-10 What happens when Godliness isn't enough?

:11-14 The man of God needs to flee what? And tightly hold on to what? And actively do what?

:15&16 Why do you think Paul just seems to burst forth with love and wonder for Jesus right here?

:17-19 What is Paul's advice for rich people?

:20&21 Timothy is told to “guard” that which was committed to his trust. What was committed to his trust? How should he guard it?

Lesson 6

Answers

1st Timothy Chapter 6 “Contentment”

con·tent·ment
[kuhn-**tent**-muhnt]
noun

The state of being contented; satisfaction; ease of mind.
(Dictionary.com)

When we limped into Indianapolis in 1978 we left behind a dream. We had been starting churches, and as we settled in Indianapolis we found that the LORD was taking wonderful care of us by opening up a door for Ken to have a job in the “real world”, but pastoring seemed to be over for us. We didn’t know...would it be over forever, or just for a couple of years? Ken filled pulpits now and again, but we trusted God, and got on with the stuff of life as the door remained closed for another church to pastor. And of course you know that the job of pastor is not ever just for the husband. It’s a job for a couple. We were both out of work – the work we had dedicated ourselves to – the work we loved. We waited. We prayed that the LORD would someday see fit to give us another chance to start a church. And we waited.

Ken was 51 and I was 49 when the door opened wide and free. We’d been married for 30 years. Our kids were grown and gone from our house. We had grandchildren. We had cared for and then said good-bye to Ken’s parents as they went home to be with the Lord, having lived near us for their last few years. We had walked through many of life’s blessings together, and a few of life’s sorrows. We had

started churches together. We had run a business together. We had succeeded and failed together...many times.

We knew we were on the “finishing” side of our life. We didn’t have all the energy we once had....and we didn’t have the blindness of youth. We had no doubt but that we would make mistakes. We had no guarantees that a new church would be a success. But we were absolutely sure of one thing: we wanted to finish strong working at the best job in the world.

Southside Bible Church, Greenwood, Indiana, was born. We jumped at the chance to start just one more church...and our dream was that Ken could pastor a church for the rest of our lives. Ken kept his job so we would have an income.

Every Sunday we would pile my little red truck full of the stuff of church: baby swing, toys for the nursery, bulletins, Bibles. And every Sunday after services were over we would have only one prayer. Just one more Sunday, Lord. After waiting all that time, we could hardly wait for just one more Sunday. We still feel that way today. Contentment.

1st Timothy 6:6 says “*Godliness with contentment is great gain.*” So, to put this in my own words, Paul is telling Timothy (and thus, all other Pastors) that being Godly and also being satisfied with the life we are living, is the key to happiness for the leader of the church.

Yes, of course this applies to all believers in Jesus....but mostly, I think, Paul is calling out those who are specifically called to lead churches.

So let’s start this chapter: Paul starts out Chapter 6 by continuing his theme from Chapter 5 – Who to Honor:

:1&2 Who else is Timothy’s congregation supposed to honor? What if the “master” is a fellow-believer? Should the “slave” continue to serve as a slave? Shouldn’t he bring his case to the “master” who is also a believer, and demand his freedom and rights as a human being?

Paul doesn’t address any “rights” here. He simply says if anyone is living his/her life as a slave, he should be sure to honor the master he is serving. And if that master is a fellow-believer, all the more so. There is no hint here that Paul was advising slaves to rebel against their lot in life...or to raise up support for having human rights. Why not? Because Paul’s is a greater purpose than human rights.

In today’s world it’s practically a sacrilege to say that there would be a greater purpose than human rights. But there is a greater purpose. Taking the Gospel message to the humans in this world, who desperately need the Gospel message much more than they need human rights, is the greater purpose.

Paul is telling all Christian slaves who would hear his letter that it was more important to “walk the talk” as Christians than to demand their rights as humans. He is telling them to love their masters and thus show the world the love of Christ, rather than rebel against their masters and show the world they are no different than the hopeless masses of people without Christ.

I see an unwritten message here – one which was first spoken by Jesus to his disciples just before His crucifixion, and then is repeated over and over again in the New Testament: “By this will all men know you are my disciples, if you have love one for another.” (John 13:35) And, “Greater love has no man than to lay down his life for his friends”. (John 15:13)

It's more important, apparently, in God's way of thinking, to sometimes die to your own needs and wants and rights, than to fight for your own needs and wants and rights. That's what Jesus did. And that's what He asks His followers to do...not only slaves, but also leaders in His church.

But, you might think, not sticking up for my rights, and not looking out for myself...that would be a horrible life! No, it's not. It's Godly, and it's the path to ease of mind...to “contentment”.

:3 What if someone in the church is teaching something other than what Paul has just said? What if someone is teaching a doctrine that says each man should look out for himself and do whatever it takes, even rebellion, to get himself the status he deserves?

If someone is teaching something other than sacrificial love between Christians, then he is wrong, and is going against the teaching of Christ. Period.

My NKJV says that right doctrine is the same as Godliness. It matters what you believe.

And no, it isn't OK to just believe anything. What you believe has to be based on what's true...and there is no better guideline for what's true other than the Bible.

You can't ever say, “I don't know what the Bible says, I just know what I believe.”

Knowing scripture, and letting the Words of God define your belief is Godly, and leads to ease of mind...or “contentment.”

:4&5 So, this person who might just be teaching bad doctrine in any area of life...what is this person really like? And what does that tell us about how to view this person? Should we even give our listening ear to anything this person has to say?

Run away from the person teaching anything contrary to the truth. He/she will cause arguments, will love the envy and strife which bubbles up around him/her, and will be proud and self-serving.

Run away.

:6-10 What happens when Godliness isn't enough?

Greed could take over, and satisfaction is far away. But when Godliness is enough, that leads to ease of mind – to “contentment”.

If you are in a painful or difficult situation, just ask yourself: Am I being Godly? Am I reacting like Jesus did? If the answer is yes, then relax. Godliness is enough.

:11-14 The man of God needs to flee what? And tightly hold on to what? And actively do what?

Flee bad doctrine and self-promotion. Hold on to Godliness. Actively fight to live by faith and speak of faith to all within your hearing.

:15&16 Why do you think Paul just seems to burst forth with love and wonder for Jesus right here?

Because He is the reason we can live in this seemingly insane way in this desperately mean and cruel world.

:17-19 What is Paul’s advice for rich people?

Don’t trust in your riches for anything in life. Give. Share.
Your true riches are in heaven.

:20&21 Timothy is told to “guard” that which was committed to his trust. What was committed to his trust? How should he guard it?

The Gospel was committed to Timothy. The truth of the Word of God was committed to Timothy. How to guard this precious commodity? Avoid non-truth and the people which promote it. Don’t get all tangled up in what is not true.

Keep it simple. Live Godly. Ease your mind and be content.

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