

BIBLE CORRESPONDENCE FELLOWSHIP

First Timothy



The books of First & Second Timothy and Titus are unique from the rest of the writings in the New Testament in that they were written to individuals rather than churches. They are commonly known as the “Pastoral Epistles,” meaning they were written to give advice to these men who served as pastors, or overseers of local churches. The letters are important today both to give instruction to modern day Christian leaders but also for the doctrine and teaching about the Christian life that is valuable for all believers. It also helps Christians identify the qualifications and characteristics of church and ministry leaders.

INTRODUCTION

AUTHOR: The apostle Paul

PLACE OF WRITING: First Timothy was probably written from some place in Macedonia (1 Timothy 1:3), although the exact place of writing is not certain.

DATE OF WRITING: The letter was probably written around 65 A.D. after Paul’s imprisonment of Acts 28.

PURPOSE, THEME AND SUBJECT

MATTER OF THE LETTER: The evidence of the Pastoral epistles suggests that Paul was released from prison in Rome after two years and that he traveled to several cities and churches. During that time he left Titus in Crete (Titus 1:5) and Timothy in Ephesus (1 Timothy 1:3) to set things in order and appoint elders. For that reason Paul gives special attention to the qualifications of elders and deacons in the church in this epistle. He also instructs Timothy to pay attention to the sound doctrine that Paul taught him. Paul also gives instructions for Timothy’s personal life and well being.

At the time of the writing of First Timothy the Christian faith was growing and as the churches became more numerous with more members, it became necessary for them to have specific guidelines about the selection of leaders and they needed a more formal form of government. This epistle gives a quite detailed list of requirements and qualifications for the leadership of congregations. Already by this point in the Church’s history people were beginning to deviate from the sound teaching of Paul. There is evidence that believers were forsaking the clear teachings of God’s grace that the Apostle Paul proclaimed and were returning to the legalism of Judaism (1 Timothy 1:3-8). The epistle also deals with how Christians should act toward one another and how they need to care for each other.



CHAPTER ONE

Please read the entire book of 1 Timothy. _____ Check.

Please memorize the following verse and be prepared to write it out at the end of this lesson.

“For [there is] one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.”
(1 Timothy 5:9 – KJV)

Which Bible version are you using to do this lesson? _____

GREETING AND WARNING AGAINST FALSE TEACHERS

Read 1 Timothy Chapter 1 _____ Check

1. (v. 1) Who wrote this letter? _____

2. (v. 1) What does Paul call himself? _____

Who appointed him to that position? _____

3. (v. 2) To whom is this letter addressed? _____

How does Paul describe Timothy? _____

Read Acts 16:1-3.

4. (v. 2) Why would Paul call Timothy his son if he was not? (See 1 Corinthians 4:14-17)

5. (v. 3) Where was Timothy to stay while Paul was in Macedonia? _____

6. (vss. 3-4a) What was Timothy to do there? _____

7. (v. 4) What are some things taught by false teachers and what do those teachings promote? _____

8. (v. 5) What is the goal (end – KJV) of the command in verses 3-4? _____

9. (v. 5) Where does this love (charity – KJV) come from? _____

10. (v. 6) What have those that have forsaken these things turned to? _____

11. (v.7) What did these people want to become and why could they not become that? _____

12 (v. 8) When is the Law good? _____

13. (vss. 9-10) For whom was the Law made? _____

Note: There are other scriptures that speak of the purpose and value of the Law. Paul makes it clear that Law had no power to save a person. All the Law could do was to point to an individual's need for Christ. Paul in other passages says that the Law was powerless to bring eternal life because of the flesh, our inherent sinfulness. He also describes it as a teacher, or schoolmaster, that was given to point us to Christ. The Law can only condemn, it cannot transform. True change can only come through the regeneration of the sinful nature which comes through a relationship with Jesus Christ and the renewing work of the Holy Spirit. (Please read the following verses: Romans 3:19-20; Galatians 3:23-24; Romans 8:3-4, Titus 3:5)

14. (v. 11) To whom was the gospel entrusted (committed - KJV)? _____

GOD'S GRACE TO PAUL

15. (v. 12) For what is Paul thankful to the Lord Jesus Christ? _____

16. (v. 13) How does Paul describe himself before he was converted? _____

17. (v. 13) Why was Paul shown mercy? _____

18. (v. 14) What three things were poured out abundantly to Paul? _____

19. (v. 15) What is the trustworthy (faithful – KJV) saying that deserves full acceptance? _____

20 (v. 15-16) How does Paul describe himself? _____

21. (v. 15) Why do you believe Paul considered himself to be the worst or chief of sinners? _____

22. (v. 16) Why was Paul shown mercy by God? _____

Note: Paul describes himself as a pattern of God's grace to those that come after him. Paul was the first member of the Church, which is the Body of Christ. He was the first to be saved during the present Dispensation of the Grace of God. God saved him apart from the Law and made him a part of a unique and previously unknown program in which God offered salvation entirely by grace through faith. Paul's example of how God can save a wretched sinner, completely by grace, based upon faith in the death of the Lord Jesus Christ, is a pattern for how all of us have been likewise saved and made members of the Body of Christ.

23. How does your personal testimony serve as an example for others? _____

24. (v. 17) How is God described in this verse? _____

25. (vss. 18-19) Why did Paul give Timothy these instructions? _____

26. (v. 19) What happened to those who rejected (put away – KJV) this instruction? _____

27. (v. 20) What happened to Hymenaeus and Alexander because they rejected the sound teaching of Paul and why? (also read 1 Corinthians 5:1-5) _____

CHAPTER TWO

Read 1 Timothy 2:1-15 _____ Check

1. (v. 1) What should we do for everyone? _____

2. (v. 2) Who is specifically listed that we should pray for? _____

3. (v. 2) How are we to live? _____

4. (v. 3) How does God respond to this? _____

5. (v. 4) What does God want for everyone? (Read 2 Peter 3:9) _____

6. (v. 5) Who is the only mediator between God and man? _____

7. (v. 6) What did Jesus do for everyone? _____

8. (v. 7) To what was Paul appointed (KJV – ordained)? _____

9. (v. 7) What and to whom did Paul teach? _____

10. (v. 8) What should men everywhere do and how should they do it? _____

11. (v. 9) Describe the appropriate way a Christian woman should dress?

Note: Paul is not necessarily forbidding women from wearing any jewelry but rather he is telling them that their dress should be modest and appropriate. The excessive use of such things in Paul's time was considered inappropriate for a respectable woman.

12. (vss. 9-10) These verses are addressed to women. Can you think of ways in which they could apply to men as well? _____

13. (v. 11) How should a woman learn? _____

14. (vss. 12-14) Is the woman permitted to teach or have authority over a man? Why? _____

Note: These verses clearly state that women are not to have authority over men within the realm of the local church. The Bible does not place restrictions on women in society in general, but within the family and the church there are many verses that teach that primary authority rests with men. The language of verse 12 in the original Greek suggests that Paul is talking about women that are trying to dominate men, not merely have some say or influence in decisions. The Greek word translated “have authority over,” *authentain*, is very strong and is used to imply complete, domineering, autocratic, absolute rule. Likewise the command to be silent implies one that is appropriately quiet in proper circumstances. It does not imply that a woman is forbidden from saying any words whatsoever.

Note: Verse 15 is one for which no firm interpretation can be made. There are other verses like this in the Bible, such as 1 Corinthians 15:29, which speaks of baptism for the dead. In both that case and this one, these kind of statements are isolated with no other verses anywhere in the scriptures to give us better understanding of the meaning of the passage. Therefore, in such cases it is best to not try to give a clear interpretation and accept the fact that we will never know what God meant in this case. It is safe to assume that whatever the meaning of the passage is, knowing cannot be that important or the Holy Spirit would have given us more material to help us understand it.

CHAPTER THREE

Read 1 Timothy 3:1-13 _____ Check also read Titus 1:5-9

Note: In this section of 1 Timothy as well as the parallel passages in Titus, Paul describes the characteristics of two offices in the local church, elders or overseers (these titles refer to the same office) and deacons. Elders refer to men in the church that serve as spiritual leaders. These people had special authority and leadership responsibilities and thus God established some very high moral and ethical standards for them. The office of deacon had less to do with leadership and more with service. The Greek word translated deacon is *diakonos* and is used several times in the New Testament to refer to ministers. Paul uses it of himself. There is a sense in which all believers are to be ministers, those that serve and help others for the glory of God. However, it appears there are those within local churches that are given a special designation of deacon. It seems that the role of the deacon was to care for the more physical concerns of the church and the well being of its members so as to free the elders for spiritual leadership (Acts 6:1-6)

1. (v. 1) How does Paul describe the work of an overseer or bishop? _____

2. (vss. 2-3) There are eleven requirements, or character traits of an elder listed in these two verses. By looking at those requirements write your own description of what type of person a church leader should be.

3. (v. 4) How must an overseer manage his home? _____

4. (v. 5) Why is it important that an overseer be able to manage his family well? _____

5. (v. 6) Why should a leader not be a recent convert? _____

6. (v. 7) What must an overseer's reputation be and why? _____

7. (v. 8) What are the qualities that a deacon should have? _____

8. (v. 9) What should deacons hold on to? _____

9. (v. 10) What must happen before someone can serve as a deacon? _____

10. (v. 11) How should a deacon's wife be? _____

11. (v. 12) How should a deacon manage his household? _____

12. (v. 13) What has one that has served well as a deacon earned? _____

Read 1 Timothy 3:14-16 _____ Check

13. (v. 14) What about this verse implies that Paul was no longer in prison, as in Acts chapter 28? _____

14. (v. 15) Why did Paul leave these instruction? _____

15. (v. 15) How does Paul describe the household (house – KJV) of God? _____

16. Verse 16 is believed to be a poem or song, perhaps it was the words to a hymn which was sung by early Christians. It is generally agreed the subject of the lyrics is the Lord Jesus Christ. Look at the individual lines in the verse and try to find the places in the gospel records or the book of Acts that are being referred to. (Do as many of these as you can, don't get bogged down if you can't find verses for all of them)

a. Manifest in the flesh (KJV). Appeared in a body (NIV) _____

b. Justified in (vindicated by - NIV) the Spirit. _____

c. Seen by angels. _____

d. Preached among the Gentiles (nations – NIV). _____

e. Believed on in the world. _____

f. Received (taken – NIV) up in glory. _____

CHAPTER FOUR

Read 1 Timothy 4:1-16 _____ Check

1. (v. 1) What does the Spirit say will happen in the latter times? _____

Note: The Greek words that are translated as “latter times” are different than those normally used to identify the final days before the coming of Christ. Rather it carries the general idea of the current times in contrast to earlier times. Therefore, the time period discussed here most likely refers to all times since Paul wrote the words up to and including the present. He is describing the nature of the world *without* Christ and the transforming power of the gospel.

2. (v. 2) How are the consciences of those who speak hypocritical lies described? _____

3. (v. 3) What are some of the things taught by these false teachers? _____

4. (vss. 3-4) What do you believe these verses teach about previous food prohibitions that we find in the scriptures? _____

5. (vss. 3-5) Since everything God created is good and not to be refused, how should we receive everything?

Note: These verses clearly demonstrate that God’s commands have changed throughout the various dispensations. The restrictions that God placed on what people could eat went from eating only plants in the Garden of Eden up to the time of the flood. After the flood man could eat any meat until the Law was given to Moses. During the time of the Law the Jew’s diet was restricted to only certain types of animals. Here we see the final command that God has given for us, the members of the Body of Christ. We are no longer bound by the dietary restrictions of the Mosaic Law because we are not under law but under grace.

6. (v. 6) What does Paul instruct Timothy to do with these truths? _____

7. (v. 6) How does Paul describe Timothy if he follows the instructions of the verse? _____

8. (v. 7) What should we avoid and what should we do instead? _____

9. (v. 8) What value does physical training (bodily exercise – KJV) have? _____

10. (v. 8) This verse says that godliness holds a promise for this life and the life to come. Explain what you think that means _____

11. (vss. 9-10) What is the trustworthy (faithful – KJV) saying? _____

Note: This (“savior of all men”) does not mean that God saves every person from eternal punishment, for such universalism would contradict the clear testimony of Scripture. God is, however, the Savior of all in that he offers salvation to all and saves all who come to him. (NIV Study Bible, Grand Rapids, Zondervan © 1995, p. 1840).

12. (v. 12) What should Timothy not allow anyone to do? _____

13. (v. 12) How should Timothy be an example for others? _____

14. (v. 13) What was Timothy to do while he was waiting for Paul? _____

15. (v. 14) What was Timothy not to do with the gift that had been given to him? _____

16. (v. 14) How did Timothy receive this gift? _____

17. (v. 14) What do you think this gift was? _____

Note: We are told that every believer receives a spiritual gift (Romans 12:6; 1 Corinthians 12:7). Such gifts are enablements from the Holy Spirit that allow us to serve the Lord more effectively. According to this passage it is possible to ignore these gifts and based on other passages, we can abuse them. At the time Paul wrote his letter God was giving supernatural sign gifts, such as healing and speaking in tongues. It seems that near the end of Paul's ministry those gifts had been removed (1 Corinthians 13:8) as even Paul was not able to heal his companion Trophimus (2 Timothy 4:20). However, there is a list of gifts for ministry and the building up of the Body of Christ that are still being distributed by the Holy Spirit (Romans 12:6-8). God wants us to discover that gift and not neglect it, just as Paul instructed Timothy.

18. (v. 15) Why was Timothy to devote himself wholly to these things? _____

19. (v. 16) What was Timothy to watch? _____

CHAPTER FIVE

INSTRUCTIONS FOR WORKING WITH DIFFERENT PEOPLE

Read 1 Timothy 5:1-24 _____ Check

1. (vss. 1-2) Describe how Paul instructs Timothy to treat each of the following groups of people.

a. Older men _____

b. Older women _____

c. Younger men _____

d. Younger women _____

2. (v. 3) To whom are we to give proper recognition? _____

3. (v. 4) If a widow has a family, what are they to do for her? _____

4. (v. 5) What should the widow who is in true need and left alone (desolate – KJV) do? _____

5. (v. 6) How is the widow that lives for pleasure described? _____

6. (v. 7) Why did Paul give these instructions to the believers? _____

7. (v. 8) How does Paul describe someone that does not provide for his family? _____

8. (v. 9) What are the requirements for a woman to be put on the list of widows (taken into the number – KJV)?

9. (v. 10) What are some examples of the good deeds that widows should be known for? _____

10. (v. 11) Why were younger widows not to be put on the list? _____

11. (v. 12) What do you think it means to break the first pledge (cast off their first faith – KJV)? _____

12. (v. 13) What behavior do the younger widows become involved in? _____

13. (v. 14) What instructions does Paul give to younger widows? _____

14. (v. 14) Why does Paul give these instructions? _____

15. (v. 15) What have some already done? _____

16. (v. 16) How can a woman with a widow in her family help the church to help the widows in true need? _____

17. (v. 17) Who is worthy of double honor? _____

18. (v. 18) What do the Scriptures say about paying those that devote themselves to the ministry? _____

19. (v. 19) How many witnesses are needed before an accusation against an elder should be entertained? _____

20. (v. 20) Why should the sinner be rebuked publicly? _____

21. (v. 21) How were these instructions to be followed? _____

22. (v. 22) What instruction does Paul give about the laying on of hands? _____

Note: Paul is speaking of the ordination of an elder, which should not be performed until the candidate has had time to prove himself. (NIV Study Bible, Grand Rapids, Zondervan © 1995, p. 1842). Laying hands on a man that was entering the ministry served as a formal recognition of an individual's gifts and calling. It was only to be done after the individual had proven himself qualified and competent for the work.

23. (v. 22) What final command does Paul give to Timothy in this verse? _____

24. (v. 23) Why does Paul instruct Timothy to drink a little wine? _____

25 (v. 24) Explain in your own words the meaning of this verse. _____

26 (v. 25) Can good deeds be hidden? _____

CHAPTER SIX

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SLAVES

Read 1 Timothy 6:1-2 _____ Check

1. (v. 1) How should slaves (servants – KJV) treat their masters? Why? _____

2. (v. 2) Why should a slave with a believing master serve even better? _____

LOVE OF MONEY

Read 1 Timothy 6:3-10 _____ Check

3. (vss. 3-4a) How is a person that teaches false doctrine described? _____

4. (vss. 4-5) What results from such men? _____

5. (v. 5) What is the motivation of these men of corrupt minds? _____

6. (v. 6) What is great gain? _____

7. (v. 7) What did we bring into this world and what do we take out of it? _____

8. (v. 8) With what should we be content? _____

9. (v. 9) What happens to those who want to be rich in this world? _____

10. (v. 10) What is the root of all (kinds of) evil? _____

11. (v. 10) What happens to those that are eager (covet – KJV) for money? _____

PAUL GIVES FINAL INSTRUCTIONS TO TIMOTHY

Read 1 Timothy 6:11-21 _____ Check

12 (v. 11) What are we to pursue? _____

13. (v. 12) What are we to fight? _____

14. (v. 12) What are we to take hold of? _____

15. (v. 13) Who gives life to everything (quickeneth – KJV)? _____

16. (vss. 11-14) How long are we to keep the commandments given in these verses? _____

Note: The appearing of the Lord spoken of here is also referred to as the Rapture of the Church. It is that event described in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 in which the Lord will appear in the clouds to call the believers that are dead and alive to be with him in heaven for eternity. This is different than the second coming which is described in the book of Revelation, the Old Testament and the gospel records (cf. Zechariah 14:3-5; Matthew 24:36-51; 25:31-46; Revelation 19:11-21)

17. (v. 15) Who will decide when Christ will appear? _____

18. (vss. 16-17) List some of the ways in which God is described in these verses?

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

d. _____

e. _____

19. (v. 17) What are we not to put trust in? _____

20. (v. 17) Why should we put hope in God? _____

21. (v. 18) In what should we be rich in this world? _____

22. (v. 19) What is the result of good deeds? _____

23. (v. 20) From what must we turn away? _____

24. (v. 21) What has happened to some that have given attention to godless chatter (profane and vain babblings – KJV)? _____

25. (v. 21) How does Paul conclude this letter to Timothy? _____

Use the space below for any questions or comments:

The questions for this lesson were prepared by an inmate in Indiana that completed the entire set of Bible Correspondence lessons and desired to continue his study of God's Word. He sat down one day and prepared this lesson. His example can be an inspiration to all that desire to know more about God and His will as it is revealed in His Holy Word.

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