

Handout: 1 Timothy Lesson 1
Summary Outline of St. Paul's First Letter to Timothy

Biblical Period	#12 The Kingdom of the Church			
Covenant	The New Covenant in Christ Jesus			
Focus	Paul's Greeting and Instructions Concerning the Community		Timothy's Pastoral Responsibilities	
Scripture	1:1-----2:1-----5:1-----6:2-----21			
Division	Greeting and instructions on sound teaching	Discipline and qualifications for ministerial service	Duties toward members of the community	False teaching, true wealth, and final exhortations
Topic	Warnings, worship, and wisdom		Rules for widows, presbyters, slaves, and false teachers	
	False doctrine and true teachers		Duties and dealings	
Location	Written somewhere in Macedonia to Timothy in Ephesus			
Time	Sometime after Paul's first Roman imprisonment and before his second Roman arrest and martyrdom, probably between 63-67 AD			

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Paul's letter instructs Timothy on his duties as Christ's representative to the Church at Ephesus:

1. He is to work to restrain false and useless teaching (1 Tim 1:3-11; 4:1-5; 6:3-16).
2. He receives instruction on conduct at liturgical celebrations (1 Tim 2:1-15).
3. He receives a list of the necessary qualification for the offices of bishop and deacon (1 Tim 3:1-13).
4. He receives rules for aiding the community's widows (1 Tim 5:1-8).
5. He receives guidance concerning the selection of candidates for charitable ministrations (1 Tim 5:9-16).
6. He must maintain principles pertaining to his relationship with the presbyters and their work serving the churches (1 Tim 5:17-22).
7. He receives recommendations for guiding the relationship between slaves and their masters (1 Tim 6:1-2).
8. He receives instruction on the obligations of the wealthier members of the community (1 Tim 6:17-19).

Paul's instructions to Timothy reveal the major themes of his letter:

1. Timothy's duty to protect the prophetic character of his office (1 Tim 1:12-20).
2. Timothy's obligation to oversee and maintain the right conduct of the community especially in the Liturgy of worship (2:1-3:13).
3. Timothy's duty to preserve the purity of Church doctrine against false teaching (1 Tim 3:14-16).

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4. Paul's encouragement to Timothy in exercising his authority as Christ's representative and the first Bishop of Ephesus (1 Tim 4:6-16).

Scholars who argue in favor of Paul as the author of the three Pastoral Letters of 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus point out that the differences of vocabulary, style, and concepts concerning church organization from his other letters are to be expected:

1. Paul was writing to individuals concerning their pastoral ministry and not to faith communities.
2. In writing to individuals who are ordained shepherds of the Church, it makes sense that the topics and concerns in the letters would be different.

Today, the majority of Biblical scholars support the arguments in favor of Pauline authorship of the Pastoral Epistles.

Timothy's Greek name, Timotheus, means "honoring the god." According to Scripture, we know that Timothy was:

1. The son of a Jewish woman and Greek father, Timothy and his mother converted to Christianity at Lystra in Asia Minor.
2. He was a trusted companion of St. Paul, and his Greek background was an aid in preaching to Greek culture Gentiles.
3. Since he had a Jewish mother, at Paul's suggestion Timothy submitted to circumcision to have more credibility with prospective Jewish converts.
4. He was a member of Paul's second missionary journey who helped found Christian communities in Macedonia and Greece.
5. He was also a companion on Paul's third missionary team.
6. He was the co-sender for seven of Paul's letters, including letters to the Christian communities at Thessalonica (2 letters), Corinth (2 letters), Philippi, Colossae, and the personal letter to Philemon.
7. Paul sent him on special missions, as his representative to deliver letters to communities, to help settle disputes, and to correct doctrinal errors.
8. Paul praised him as a preacher.
9. Paul described him as timid in personality and intensely loyal.
10. Timothy often suffered from poor health.
11. Paul wrote two pastoral letters to Timothy.
12. Paul described Timothy as the chief administrator or bishop of the entire Ephesian church that probably had several faith communities (1 Tim 1:3).

From Church tradition, we know that Timothy was martyred for speaking out against pagan worship. His feast day is January 26, which he shares with St. Titus. He is the patron saint of those who suffer from stomach ailments (see 1 Tim 5:23).

Chapter 2 of Paul's letter concerns prayer in the Liturgy of worship. 2:1-7 concerns intercession with God for civil and ecclesial leaders. Paul asks for four forms of intercession:

1. Supplications: the action of asking for something earnestly and humbly.
2. Prayers: the response to the awareness of God's presence.
3. Petitions: a request for God's intervention in human affairs.
4. Thanksgivings: the act of giving thanks for God's intervention.