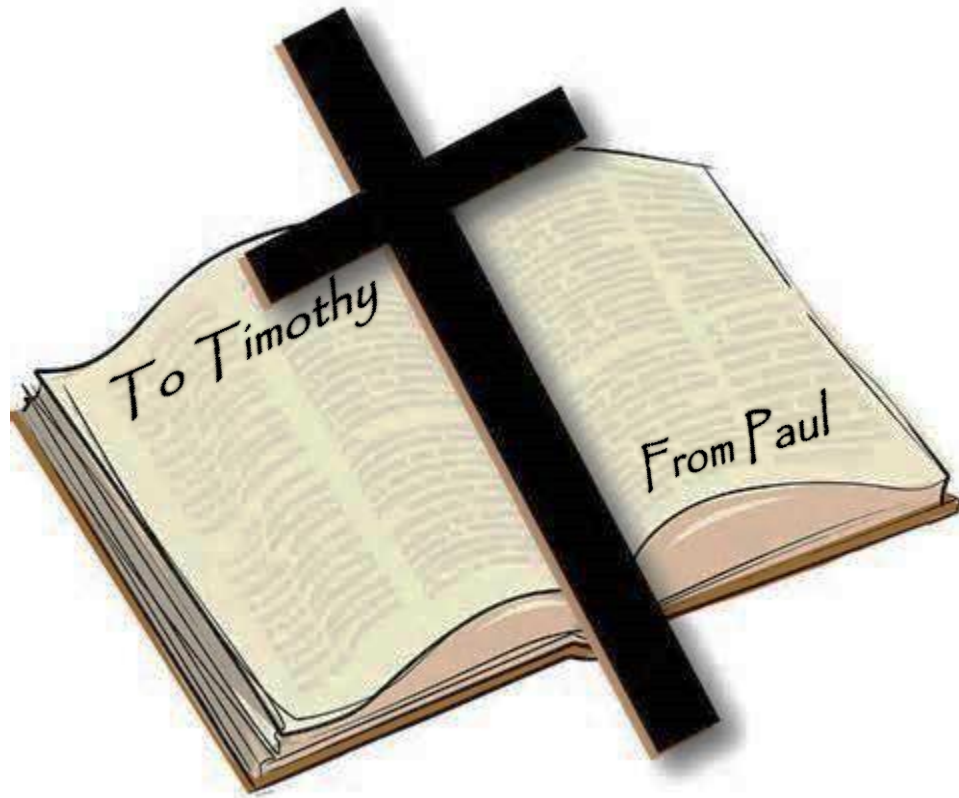


The First Letter to Timothy



GULF SHORES
CHURCH OF CHRIST
GULF SHORES, AL

BIBLE CLASS STUDY GUIDE

Prepared by Ray Reynolds

A Study Guide for the First Letter to Timothy
GULF SHORES CHURCH OF CHRIST (Teacher: Ray Reynolds)
TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

<i>Author of the letter</i>	3
<i>Date of the letter</i>	3
<i>Theme of the letter</i>	3
<i>Audience for the letter</i>	3
<i>Key verses in the letter</i>	4
<i>Outline of the letter</i>	4

BIBLE STUDY OUTLINES

<i>CHAPTER ONE: A Christian Leader Should Be Teaching What Is Right</i>	5
<i>CHAPTER TWO: A Christian Leader Should Be Praying in Faith</i>	7
<i>CHAPTER THREE: A Christian Leader Should Be Serving in the Kingdom</i>	9
<i>CHAPTER FOUR: A Christian Leader Should Be Living With Hope</i>	11
<i>CHAPTER FIVE: A Christian Leader Should Be Working in Love</i>	13
<i>CHAPTER SIX: A Christian Leader Should Be Persevering in the World</i>	15

This study guide was created by Ray Reynolds for the purpose of Sunday morning Bible classes at the Gulf Shores Church of Christ (Gulf Shores, AL). The material presented in this class series will be gleaned from personal notes, the New King James Study Bible, Dr. Coy Roper, Dr. Steven Guy, J.J. Turner, Tom Holland, Robert H. Gundry, B.W. Johnson, and other various sources.

A Study Guide for the First Letter to Timothy

GULF SHORES CHURCH OF CHRIST (Teacher: Ray Reynolds)

INTRODUCTION

Author:

Paul, the apostle (**I Timothy 1:1**), formerly Saul of Tarsus (**Acts 8-9**) identifies himself as the author of this letter. The early church accepted it as from Paul, but recent scholars will try to debate this fact. There is strong internal and external evidence that it was written by him. He is credited for writing 13 of the 27 books in our New Testament.

Date:

It is generally accepted that Paul wrote it around 62-65 AD from Macedonia. As the book of Acts concludes it is evident that Paul is headed for prison (62 AD?). The first letter to Timothy would have been written soon after those events. In fact, churches were planted all over Macedonia after the second missionary journey and in Ephesus on the third journey. Paul had apparently left Timothy in this region to serve the congregations (**I Timothy 1:3**), possibly in fear that he would not return from a Roman imprisonment (**Acts 26-28**). After his release, probably in the spring of 63 AD, Paul went east (**Romans 15:22**) and also planned to visit Timothy and Titus (**I Timothy 3:14, 4:13, Titus 3:12**). Since very little of this book deals with a heavy persecution upon the church, I Timothy and Titus were evidently written before Nero blamed the burning of Rome on the Christians (July, 64 AD).

Theme:

This letter is lumped with the “Pastoral Epistles” because of the content and nature of it. It was clearly meant for the preacher, not the congregation. However, there is nothing wrong with the entire congregation learning of its contents (see Philemon). Timothy was a younger colleague, but Paul gives the minister authority to appoint elders, rebuke the false teachers, and nurture the flock. He gives guidance and direction for the spiritual life of a church leader.

Audience:

The letter is personally addressed to young Timothy (**I Timothy 4:12**), whom he regarded as his “true son in the faith” (**I Timothy 1:2**), the minister of the congregation in Ephesus (**I Timothy 1:3**). It should be noted that Paul met Timothy in Lystra. Timothy’s parents were in a mixed marriage. His father was Greek and his mother, Eunice (**Acts 16:1, II Timothy 1:5**) was a Jew. His grandmother Lois was also a very influential person in Timothy’s life (**II Timothy 1:5**).

Paul had a strong influence on this young man and was able to persuade him to do many amazing things. Since racial descent was determined by the mother in this culture, and because it was feared by the churches that his ministry might prove difficult, Paul had Timothy circumcised not long after his conversion and after some serious debate (**Acts 16:3**). It should also be noted that none of Paul’s companions are mentioned as often as Timothy.

Key Verses:

I Timothy 1:5-7, 1:17, 2:1-7, 3:1-13, 3:16, 4:1-5, 4:12, 5:3-16, 5:19-20, 6:6, 6:12, 6:17-19

Outline:

- I. ***A Christian Leader Should Be Teaching What Is Right (1:1-20)***
 - A. Christian leaders must confront false doctrine (vs.1-11).
 - B. Christian leaders must confront personal sin (vs.12-17).
 - C. Christian leaders must confront unruly people (vs.18-20).

- II. ***A Christian Leader Should Be Praying in Faith (2:1-15)***
 - A. Christian leaders must encourage prayer as a priority (vs.1-7).
 - B. Christian leaders must encourage men in the church (v.8).
 - C. Christian leaders must encourage women in the church (vs.9-15).

- III. ***A Christian Leader Should Be Serving in the Kingdom (3:1-16)***
 - A. Christian leaders must recognize an elder (vs.1-7).
 - B. Christian leaders must recognize a deacon (vs.8-10, 12-13).
 - C. Christian leaders must have godly wives (v.11).
 - D. Christian leaders must know how to conduct themselves (vs.14-16).

- IV. ***A Christian Leader Should Be Living With Hope (4:1-16)***
 - A. Christian leaders must know the truth (vs.1-5).
 - B. Christian leaders must teach the truth (vs.6-11).
 - C. Christian leaders must exemplify the truth (vs.12-16).

- V. ***A Christian Leader Should Be Working in Love (5:1-25)***
 - A. Christian leaders must exhort the elderly (vs.1-2).
 - B. Christian leaders must encourage the widows (vs.3-16).
 - C. Christian leaders must exalt other church leaders (vs.17-25).

- VI. ***A Christian Leader Should Be Persevering in the World (6:1-21)***
 - A. Christian leaders must pursue faithfulness (vs.1-5).
 - B. Christian leaders must pursue godliness (vs.6-10).
 - C. Christian leaders must pursue righteousness (vs.11-16).
 - D. Christian leaders must pursue steadfastness (vs.17-21).

A Study Guide for the First Letter to Timothy

GULF SHORES CHURCH OF CHRIST (Teacher: Ray Reynolds)

CHAPTER ONE: A Christian Leader Should Be Teaching What Is Right

Introduction: Paul begins his letter to Timothy with a standard opening for Greek letters. They usually identify the sender, name the person or group to which the letter was intended, followed by a brief greeting. After the formal introduction Paul gets to the heart of the matter. He intends this letter to be an encouragement to the young preacher who was struggling at Ephesus after Paul left him. In this chapter Paul will encourage him to teach what is right. Let's study together...

Discussion:

I. CHRISTIAN LEADERS MUST CONFRONT FALSE DOCTRINE (vs.1-11)

¹Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the commandment of God our Savior and the Lord Jesus Christ, our hope, ²To Timothy, a true son in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord. ³As I urged you when I went into Macedonia—remain in Ephesus that you may charge some that they teach no other doctrine, ⁴nor give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which cause disputes rather than godly edification which is in faith. ⁵Now the purpose of the commandment is love from a pure heart, from a good conscience, and from sincere faith, ⁶from which some, having strayed, have turned aside to idle talk, ⁷desiring to be teachers of the law, understanding neither what they say nor the things which they affirm. ⁸But we know that the law is good if one uses it lawfully, ⁹knowing this: that the law is not made for a righteous person, but for the lawless and insubordinate, for the ungodly and for sinners, for the unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, ¹⁰for fornicators, for sodomites, for kidnappers, for liars, for perjurers, and if there is any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine, ¹¹according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God which was committed to my trust.

What are the standard openings for ancient Greek letters? Why does Paul use them?

How is Paul qualified to be an apostle of Jesus Christ? What are the qualifications?

What does Paul tell Timothy to avoid? Why?

What was the purpose of the law? Who needs it? Why?

Why do you think Paul regarded the preaching of the gospel as a personal trust?

What would happen if everyone felt the same way about the glorious gospel of the blessed God?

II. CHRISTIAN LEADERS MUST CONFRONT PERSONAL SIN (vs.12-17)

¹²And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry, ¹³although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. ¹⁴And the grace of our Lord was exceedingly abundant, with faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. ¹⁵This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. ¹⁶However, for this reason I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show all longsuffering, as a pattern to those who are going to believe on Him for everlasting life. ¹⁷Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

What can we learn from Paul's testimony to the grace of God?

What does the phrase "faithful saying" mean (I Timothy 1:15, 3:1, 4:9, II Timothy 2:11, Titus 3:8)?

What is the meaning of the faithful saying in this passage?

Why did Jesus extend mercy to Paul?

Why do you think Paul uses a description of praise followed by a doxology?

What terms are ascribed to the King?

III. CHRISTIAN LEADERS MUST CONFRONT UNRULY PEOPLE (vs.18-20)

¹⁸This charge I commit to you, son Timothy, according to the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you may wage the good warfare, ¹⁹having faith and a good conscience, which some having rejected, concerning the faith have suffered shipwreck, ²⁰of whom are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I delivered to Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme.

What prophecies concerning Timothy do you think Paul is referring to in this passage?

Why would Paul encourage Timothy to remember these prophecies?

What does it mean to wage the good warfare?

Who were Hymenaeus and Alexander? What can we learn about them?

How can blasphemy harm the work of God?

Why is blasphemy such a terrible sin?

Conclusion: It is often difficult to confront false teaching, personal sin, and unruly people. However, Paul knew Timothy was up to the challenge. We need strong Christian leaders in the church today. It would serve us well to study and apply the things written in this letter. Will you be a leader? Will you teach what is right?

A Study Guide for the First Letter to Timothy

GULF SHORES CHURCH OF CHRIST (Teacher: Ray Reynolds)
CHAPTER TWO: A Christian Leader Should Be Praying in Faith

Introduction: After inspiring Timothy to teach what is right, and to oppose what is wrong, Paul now turns to issues of spirituality and worship. Paul knew about the importance of prayer (just consider his own prayer life). He wanted to instruct the young preacher on how to properly commune and worship God. In this chapter Paul will encourage him to pray in faith. Let's study together...

Discussion:

I. CHRISTIAN LEADERS MUST ENCOURAGE PRAYER AS A PRIORITY (vs.1-7)

¹Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, ²for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. ³For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, ⁴who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. ⁵For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, ⁶who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time, ⁷for which I was appointed a preacher and an apostle—I am speaking the truth in Christ and not lying—a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

What is supplication? How can we pray with supplication?

What is intercession? How can we pray with intercession?

What does it mean to give thanks? Why should all men do it?

Why should we pray for kings and all who are in authority?

Why are these things good and acceptable in the sight of God?

What does Paul tell us about God's plan in this passage?

Who is our Mediator? What does that mean?

How can reading the book of Hebrews help us with this concept?

II. CHRISTIAN LEADERS MUST ENCOURAGE MEN IN THE CHURCH (v.8)

⁸I desire therefore that the men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.

Why is posture important in prayer?

What does it mean to approach God with holy hands?

How can we pray without wrath?

How can we pray in faith without doubting?

Do you think Paul is specifically addressing the men in the congregation in this context? Or is he referring to mankind in general? Explain.

III. CHRISTIAN LEADERS MUST ENCOURAGE WOMEN IN THE CHURCH (vs.9-15)

⁹In like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing, ¹⁰but, which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works. ¹¹Let a woman learn in silence with all submission. ¹²And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence. ¹³For Adam was formed first, then Eve. ¹⁴And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression. ¹⁵Nevertheless she will be saved in childbearing if they continue in faith, love, and holiness, with self-control.

What is the purpose of these restrictions and commandments from Paul?

Why does he single out the women (I Corinthians 11, 14)?

What can we learn from other things Paul taught concerning women leading in public worship?

If Paul intended for the women to pray “lifting up holy hands,” why would he also say they were to be silent in submission?

The Greek word for “silence” actually means “in quietness.” Therefore, the women were not to become mute upon entering the assembly. If that were the case, how could they sing?

Did Paul object to women learning in the assembly? Explain.

Did Paul object to women having a role of authority in the assembly? Explain.

Why does Paul take his arguments back to the Genesis account (Genesis 2:7, 21-22, 3:6)?

Do you think Paul was chauvinistic in making these comments? Explain.

What is the purpose of mentioning Genesis 3:16 in reference to women in the assembly?

Is it possible that Paul is simply referring to the greatest role of a Christian woman as the leader of her family and manager of her home (I Timothy 5, Titus 2)?

Notice the change from singular to plural pronouns in the last verse. What does it mean that “she” shall be saved... if “they” continue in faith, love, and holiness, with self-control?

Why should both men and women observe their biblical roles in the home and in the church?

Conclusion: If Timothy would heed Paul’s teaching it could affect the whole church. This is why Paul addresses both the men and the women in the congregation. When the Christian home is strong the Christian church will be stronger. We need strong Christian leaders in the church today. It would serve us well to study and apply the things written in this letter. Will you be a leader? Will you pray in faith?

A Study Guide for the First Letter to Timothy

GULF SHORES CHURCH OF CHRIST (Teacher: Ray Reynolds)

CHAPTER THREE: A Christian Leader Should Be Serving in the Kingdom

Introduction: In the first two chapters Paul deals with teaching and praying. His concern seems to be that true godly leadership was lacking in the church of Ephesus (and in other congregations). Throughout the next three chapters he will address the roles of elders, deacons, ministers, and even widows in the church. In this chapter Paul will encourage Timothy to recognize godly men who are willing to serve the kingdom of God. Let's study together...

Discussion:

I. CHRISTIAN LEADERS MUST RECOGNIZE AN ELDER (vs.1-7)

¹This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work. ²A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach; ³not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous; ⁴one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence ⁵(for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?); ⁶not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil. ⁷Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

What are the qualifications of elders in relation to God?

An elder is blameless and above reproach (I Timothy 3:2, Titus 1:6)

An elder is able to teach (I Timothy 3:2, I Timothy 5:17, Titus 1:9)

An elder holds firmly to scriptural truths (I Timothy 3:9, Titus 1:9)

An elder is not a new convert or new to the church family (I Timothy 3:6)

What are the qualifications of elders in relation to others?

An elder is respected by others (I Timothy 3:2)

An elder is hospitable towards others (I Timothy 3:2, Titus 1:8)

An elder is not violent, but gentle towards others (I Timothy 3:3, Titus 1:7)

An elder is patient with others (I Timothy 3:3, Titus 1:7)

An elder is not quarrelsome towards others (I Timothy 3:3)

An elder has a good reputation with outsiders (I Timothy 3:7)

What are the qualifications of elders in relation to themselves?

An elder desires the shepherding work (I Timothy 3:1, I Peter 5:2)

An elder is a temperate person (I Timothy 3:2, Titus 1:7)

An elder is a self-controlled person (I Timothy 3:2, Titus 1:8)

An elder is not quick tempered or a brawler (I Timothy 3:3, Titus 1:7)

An elder is not given to drunkenness (I Timothy 3:3, Titus 1:7)

An elder is not a covetous person (I Timothy 3:3)

An elder is not a lover of money (I Timothy 3:3)

What are the qualifications of elders in relation to their family?

An elder has only one wife (I Timothy 3:2, Titus 1:6)

An elder manages his family well (I Timothy 3:4, Titus 1:6)

An elder has obedient children (I Timothy 3:4-5, Titus 1:6)

II. CHRISTIAN LEADERS MUST RECOGNIZE A DEACON (vs.8-10, 12-13)

⁸Likewise deacons must be reverent, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy for money, ⁹holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience. ¹⁰But let these also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons, being found blameless....¹²Let deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. ¹³For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a good standing and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

What are the qualifications of a deacon?

A deacon should be reverent (I Timothy 3:8)

A deacon should not be double tongued (I Timothy 3:8)

A deacon should not be given to much wine (I Timothy 3:8)

A deacon should not be greedy for money (I Timothy 3:8)

A deacon should be tested (I Timothy 3:9)

A deacon should be blameless (I Timothy 3:9)

A deacon should be the husband of one wife (I Timothy 3:12)

A deacon should have obedient children and rule their house well (I Timothy 3:12).

Why is the list for elders longer than the list of deacons? Why is it different?

How do the roles of elders and deacons differ? Could that be why their lists differ?

III. CHRISTIAN LEADERS MUST HAVE GODLY WIVES (v.11)

¹¹Likewise their wives must be reverent, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things.

What are the qualifications of the wives of elders and deacons?

They should be supportive of his desire to serve (I Timothy 3:1, I Peter 5:2)

They should be reverent (I Timothy 3:11)

They should not be slanderers (I Timothy 3:11)

They should be temperate (I Timothy 3:11)

They should be faithful in all things (I Timothy 3:11)

Why is it important to recognize the qualifications of their wives?

How can the wife of a man disqualify him from service in the kingdom?

IV. CHRISTIAN LEADERS MUST KNOW HOW TO CONDUCT THEMSELVES (vs.14-16)

¹⁴These things I write to you, though I hope to come to you shortly; ¹⁵but if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. ¹⁶And 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.

What was the purpose for sending these teachings before Paul arrived?

Why do you think Paul ends this chapter with a creed (confession of faith)?

Conclusion: We need strong Christian leaders in the church today. We need qualified elders, deacons, and ministry leaders. It would serve us well to study and apply the things written in this letter. Will you be a leader? Will you serve in the kingdom?

A Study Guide for the First Letter to Timothy

GULF SHORES CHURCH OF CHRIST (Teacher: Ray Reynolds)
CHAPTER FOUR: A Christian Leader Should Be Living With Hope

Introduction: After dealing with the qualifications of elders and deacons, Paul turns his attention to the ministry of Timothy as a young evangelist. He also moves from discussions on the “house of God” (I Timothy 3:15) to the minister of God (I Timothy 4:6-21). In this chapter Paul will encourage Timothy to learn the truth and live with hope. Let’s study together...

Discussion:

I. CHRISTIAN LEADERS MUST KNOW THE TRUTH (vs.1-5)

¹Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, ²speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron, ³forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. ⁴For every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving; ⁵for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.

Paul warns that in latter times the church would suffer from deceiving spirits, demons, hypocritical liars, and those who would depart from the faith. Was that accurate?

Paul was concerned that false teachers might take over the church and begin to teach false doctrine. What are the six departures from the faith he listed?

What does Paul say about eating creatures of the earth? How is that different from what the Jews taught? How had things changed from the Old Testament times?

Which creatures are good for food? What does that mean?

How can we sanctify our food?

II. CHRISTIAN LEADERS MUST TEACH THE TRUTH (vs.6-11)

⁶If you instruct the brethren in these things, you will be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished in the words of faith and of the good doctrine which you have carefully followed. ⁷But reject profane and old wives’ fables, and exercise yourself toward godliness. ⁸For bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come. ⁹This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance. ¹⁰For to this end we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of those who believe. ¹¹These things command and teach.

How can a minister receive spiritual nourishment? Why is that important?

What is the difference (if any) between words of faith and good doctrine?

Why is it important to reject profane teaching and old wives’ tales (fables)?

What is the purpose of bodily exercise? Spiritual exercise? Which is better?

There is another “faithful saying” in this context. What does it mean?

What should Timothy command and teach?

III. CHRISTIAN LEADERS MUST EXEMPLIFY THE TRUTH (vs.12-16)

¹²Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity. ¹³Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. ¹⁴Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership. ¹⁵Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all. ¹⁶Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.

Why was Paul so concerned about Timothy's youth in ministry? If it was such a concern, why didn't he wait to put Timothy into the ministry?

How could Timothy lead with authority according to Paul? By what example?

Why should Timothy give attention to reading, exhortation, and doctrine?

What are the dangers of neglecting a special gift from God?

What was the purpose of this laying on of hands (II Timothy 1:6, 6:6)?

How is this related to the prophecy concerning Timothy (I Timothy 1:18)?

Why does Paul encourage Timothy to meditate? What is the purpose?

When we take care of our own spirituality how does it affect those around us?

Conclusion: When we follow God as a Christian leader we should know the truth, teach the truth, and we exemplify the truth. This should give us hope and inspire those around us. We need strong Christian leaders in the church today. It would serve us well to study and apply the things written in this letter. Will you be a leader? Will you live in hope?

A Study Guide for the First Letter to Timothy

GULF SHORES CHURCH OF CHRIST (Teacher: Ray Reynolds)
CHAPTER FIVE: A Christian Leader Should Be Working in Love

Introduction: Christian leaders should work on their relationships with others. Paul offers counsel for interpersonal relationships specifically as it affects ministry. He encourages Timothy to administer correction and constructive criticism when necessary. However, we should be on guard for ageism and/or sexism. Because of Timothy's background, we know he had already suffered from the effects of racism (**Acts 16:1-3, II Timothy 1:5**). In this chapter Paul will encourage him to be motivated by love while working with others. Let's study together...

Discussion:

I. CHRISTIAN LEADERS MUST EXHORT THE ELDERLY (vs.1-2)

¹Do not rebuke an older man, but exhort him as a father, younger men as brothers, ²older women as mothers, younger as sisters, with all purity.

Why was this an important reminder for young Timothy?

Why should we be teaching our youth about respect for the elderly?

What does it tell the world when Christian youth do not respect elderly Christians?

How should older men be treated? Why?

How should older women be treated? Why?

II. CHRISTIAN LEADERS MUST ENCOURAGE THE WIDOWS (vs.3-16)

³Honor widows who are really widows. ⁴But if any widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show piety at home and to repay their parents; for this is good and acceptable before God. ⁵Now she who is really a widow, and left alone, trusts in God and continues in supplications and prayers night and day. ⁶But she who lives in pleasure is dead while she lives. ⁷And these things command, that they may be blameless. ⁸But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. ⁹Do not let a widow under sixty years old be taken into the number, and not unless she has been the wife of one man, ¹⁰well reported for good works: if she has brought up children, if she has lodged strangers, if she has washed the saints' feet, if she has relieved the afflicted, if she has diligently followed every good work. ¹¹But refuse the younger widows; for when they have begun to grow wanton against Christ, they desire to marry, ¹²having condemnation because they have cast off their first faith. ¹³And besides they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house, and not only idle but also gossips and busybodies, saying things which they ought not. ¹⁴Therefore I desire that the younger widows marry, bear children, manage the house, give no opportunity to the adversary to speak reproachfully. ¹⁵For some have already turned aside after Satan. ¹⁶If any believing man or woman has widows, let them relieve them, and do not let the church be burdened, that it may relieve those who are really widows.

Why did Paul categorize the widows?

Widows that should receive financial assistance vs. those who should not (v.3).

Widows that have children/grandchildren vs. those without (v.4)

Widows that live a godly lifestyle vs. a worldly lifestyle (vs.5-6)

Widows that are under sixty years old vs. sixty years and older (vs.9-10)

Widows that should remarry vs. those that are not obligated (vs.11-16)

*Why did the church need to distinguish between widows who needed support and those who could be cared for by their relatives (**Acts 2, 4, 6**)?*

What is Paul's advice for a widow who has children and/or grandchildren? What does he say to their family (I Timothy 5:8)?

What specific things should a widow do if she wants to be on the role? Why is her financial assistance dependent upon these characteristics?

What is special about the number 60? Why does this qualify as an older person? Does that carry over into other discussions of elders or elderly people?

What is the significance of a woman managing her house (I Timothy 5:14)? What can we learn from this word manage (i.e. supervise, shepherd, lead)?

Why do you think churches have ministries for children, youth, college, singles, young adult, middle adult, senior adult, golden agers, but neglect to have a ministry devoted to widows?

III. CHRISTIAN LEADERS MUST EXALT OTHER CHURCH LEADERS (vs.17-25)

¹⁷Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine. ¹⁸For the Scripture says, "You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain," and, "The laborer is worthy of his wages." ¹⁹Do not receive an accusation against an elder except from two or three witnesses. ²⁰Those who are sinning rebuke in the presence of all, that the rest also may fear. ²¹I charge you before God and the Lord Jesus Christ and the elect angels that you observe these things without prejudice, doing nothing with partiality. ²²Do not lay hands on anyone hastily, nor share in other people's sins; keep yourself pure. ²³No longer drink only water, but use a little wine for your stomach's sake and your frequent infirmities. ²⁴Some men's sins are clearly evident, preceding them to judgment, but those of some men follow later. ²⁵Likewise, the good works of some are clearly evident, and those that are otherwise cannot be hidden.

Why is it important to support elders in every possible way, including financial?

What evidence do we have to church elders being on the payroll? What are the benefits? What are the dangers? Discuss.

Why is it dangerous to rebuke an elder of the church? What steps must be taken if it is to be done scripturally? What if a person does not take the steps in making an accusation?

What is the significance of the rebuke given toward those who need discipline?

How can hasty decisions choosing leaders hinder the flock of God? How can we avoid it?

What specific advice does Paul give to Timothy about his stomach problems? What does that tell us about Paul's concern for this young man? Do you think Dr. Luke helped?

Why is it important to consider a person's actions before they reach judgment?

Conclusion: Clearly one of the themes of this chapter is that we need to get along with one another. It doesn't matter whether you are old or young, male or female, a seasoned Christian or new to the faith... we must work together in the kingdom. We need strong Christian leaders in the church today. It would serve us well to study and apply the things written in this letter. Will you be a leader? Will you work in love?

A Study Guide for the First Letter to Timothy

GULF SHORES CHURCH OF CHRIST (Teacher: Ray Reynolds)

CHAPTER SIX: A Christian Leader Should Be Persevering in the World

Introduction: The apostle Paul will conclude his first letter to Timothy by encouraging him to find contentment. He encourages him to persevere in the world and not let worldliness affect his spiritual walk with God. He addresses faithfulness, godliness, righteousness, and steadfastness in the faith. Let's study together...

Discussion:

I. CHRISTIAN LEADERS MUST PURSUE FAITHFULNESS (vs.1-5)

¹Let as many bondservants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor, so that the name of God and His doctrine may not be blasphemed. ²And those who have believing masters, let them not despise them because they are brethren, but rather serve them because those who are benefited are believers and beloved. Teach and exhort these things. ³If anyone teaches otherwise and does not consent to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which accords with godliness, ⁴he is proud, knowing nothing, but is obsessed with disputes and arguments over words, from which come envy, strife, reviling, evil suspicions, ⁵useless wranglings of men of corrupt minds and destitute of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain. From such withdraw yourself.

Why should bond servants honor their masters?

What are the benefits to working for a brother/sister in Christ?

How should we respond when people teach useless and godless things?

Why is this necessary? Does this constitute public discipline?

II. CHRISTIAN LEADERS MUST PURSUE GODLINESS (vs.6-10)

⁶Now godliness with contentment is great gain. ⁷For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. ⁸And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content. ⁹But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. ¹⁰For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

How can godliness with contentment be a blessing to us?

Why should we keep birth and death in our minds if we seek to find contentment?

What are the basic tenants of true contentment? Why only these things?

How can desiring to become rich harm a Christian?

What can we learn about the love of money?

How does the love of money impact believers?

Why are earthly riches and spiritual discipline at odds with one another? How can we find a balance? Should we find a balance?

III. CHRISTIAN LEADERS MUST PURSUE RIGHTEOUSNESS (vs.11-16)

¹¹But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness. ¹²Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. ¹³I urge you in the sight of God who gives life to all things, and before Christ Jesus who witnessed the good confession before Pontius Pilate, ¹⁴that you keep this commandment without spot, blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ's appearing, ¹⁵which He will manifest in His own time, He who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, ¹⁶who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see, to whom be honor and everlasting power. Amen.

What are the things a man of God should pursue? Why?

What does it mean to fight the good fight of faith?

Is our public confession a once-for-all-time event in front of witnesses? Explain.

How can we keep this commandment without spot and be blameless until Jesus comes?

What attributes are ascribed to Jesus in this passage?

IV. CHRISTIAN LEADERS MUST PURSUE STEADFASTNESS (vs.17-21)

¹⁷Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy. ¹⁸Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share, ¹⁹storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life. ²⁰O Timothy! Guard what was committed to your trust, avoiding the profane and idle babblings and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge— ²¹by professing it some have strayed concerning the faith. Grace be with you. Amen.

Why does Paul address riches yet again in this chapter? What else does he repeat in his conclusion to this letter?

How can we be rich in good works? Why should we be willing to give and to share?

In what ways are we building our foundation in eternity? Explain.

What does it mean to guard what was committed to your trust?

Christianity is based on faith in the gospel, but some may stray from that faith. Should that affect our Christian walk? Explain.

What is the final phrase in this letter? Why is that important?

Conclusion: Paul concludes this letter with the same thoughts he expressed in the introduction. It is important to remember sound doctrine, avoid spiritual ruin, and focus on the grace of God. We need strong Christian leaders in the church today. It would serve us well to study and apply the things written in this letter. Will you be a leader? Will you persevere?