

St. Matthew AME Church
Pastor's Bible Study – 22 December 2020

The First Letter of Paul to Timothy

1st and 2nd Timothy, along with Titus, are known as Pastoral Epistles

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Acts 16 tells us that Paul, the author of these books, *came also to Derbe and to Lystra. A disciple was there, named Timothy, the son of a Jewish woman who was a believer, but his father was a Greek. 2 He was well spoken of by the brothers at Lystra and Iconium. 3 Paul wanted Timothy to accompany him, and he took him and circumcised him because of the Jews who were in those places, for they all knew that his father was a Greek....* (1-3 RSV)

The name Timothy, who is Paul's "true son in faith", originally means "honoring God". It is generally believed Paul wrote the epistle in Macedonia following his first imprisonment in Rome.

The twofold purpose Paul has in writing this epistle, according to one writer, are to: (1) instruct Timothy on how to conduct himself while administering the affairs of the church in Ephesus; and (2) encourage Timothy by providing counsel concerning his own spiritual progress. Sound doctrine for the church and the preacher is the theme.

Chapter 1 is faith, the faith of the church—its doctrine – with an emphasis *on the character and caliber of her leaders.*

- Paul charges Timothy to carry out his responsibility in keeping with prophecies made concerning him and confront those who are teaching false, different doctrine.
- The charge is to *wage the good warfare, having faith and a good conscience.* Timothy is reminded of two men, Hymenaeus and Alexander, who had rejected such things. As a result, they had *made shipwreck of their faith* and had been turned over to Satan by Paul that they might learn not to blaspheme (18-20).

Chapter 2 is the order of the church. It offers prayer instructions as well as instructions for women.

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- *Just as men are to pray everywhere, so women are to adorn themselves properly. This involves modest apparel worn with propriety and moderation, but it also includes good works, as is proper for women professing godliness. Let a woman learn in silence with all submissiveness. Therefore, a woman is not permitted to teach or have authority over a man (8-12).*
- Basing this restriction on the relationship of Adam, Eve, and the fall, Paul reminds them they can be *saved in their natural role of childbearing if they continue in faith, love, and holiness, with self-control (9-15).*
- Four critical points to take away from the chapter is for all men to make supplication, prayer, intercession and give thanks.

Chapter 3 concerns the officers of the church. Bishops and deacons are presented with a job description.

- He hopes to return to Ephesus but if delayed he instructs Timothy on how we are to behave in the church, *the pillar and bulwark of the truth.*
- What are the basic facts of the mystery of godliness? God was manifested in the flesh - Preached among the Gentiles - Justified in the Spirit - Believed on in the world - Seen by angels - Received up in glory (15-16).

Chapter 4 Paul begins this chapter of instruction describing how the Spirit has revealed that in latter times there would be an apostasy (the rejection of Christianity by someone who was a Christian; defection, revolt, departure, rebellion) in which some would depart from the faith giving examples of false doctrine (that which is not a part of our faith message) such as people abstaining from certain foods and marriage.

- *For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving for then it is consecrated by the word of God and prayer (4).*
- *Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young but set an example for the believers in life, in speech, in love, in faith, in purity (12).*
- *Do not neglect the gift that is within you... (14).*

Chapter 5 tells us of our responsibility towards family members, especially widows young and older and how to treat elders, *especially those who labor in preaching and teaching (18).*

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Chapter 6 This final chapter begins with instructions concerning slaves and their duties toward their masters, especially toward those masters who believe (1-2).

- A description then follows of those who might teach otherwise and not consent to the wholesome words of our Lord and His doctrine which is according to godliness (3-5).
- Mentioning the value of godliness when accompanied by contentment, Paul warns of the need to be content with food and clothing, and the danger facing those who desire to be rich (6-10).
- Timothy is then charged to flee such things and to pursue things becoming a man of God. He is encouraged to fight the good fight of faith, and to lay hold on eternal life. He is then solemnly urged by Paul to keep the commandment without spot and blameless until our Lord's appearing, whom Paul describes in the most amazing terms (11-16).

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The epistle ends with instructions for Christians who are rich in this world (*“For the love of money is the root of all evils; it is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced their hearts with many pains.”* V10), and with an impassioned plea for Timothy to guard what was committed to his trust, avoiding profane and vain babbling over false doctrine which has led others away from the faith (17-21).

In 1 Timothy, then, we deal with the basics of the local church, with the emphasis that it is the character and caliber of her leaders that will determine whether the church is really a church of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Second Letter of Paul to Timothy

In 2 Timothy, Paul deals with the afflictions of the church in chapter 1 and the activity of the church in chapter 2. Then the apostasy of the church and the allegiance of the church follow in chapters 3 and 4.

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By the time Paul wrote his second letter to Timothy, the young pastor had been ministering to the church at Ephesus for four years, and it had been almost that long since he had received his first letter from Paul.

Once again, he is in a Roman prison (1:16; 2:9), apparently rearrested as part of Nero's persecution of Christians. Unlike Paul's confident hope of release during his first imprisonment (Phil. 1:19, 25–26; 2:24; Philem. 22), this time he had no such hopes (4:6–8).

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- In his first imprisonment in Rome (about A.D. 60–62), before Nero had begun the persecution of Christians (A.D. 64), he was only under house arrest and had opportunity for much interaction with people and ministry (Acts 28:16–31).
- At this time, five or six years later (about A.D. 66–67), however, he was in a cold cell (4:13), in chains (2:9), and with no hope of deliverance (4:6).

Abandoned by virtually all those close to him for fear of persecution (see 1:15; 4:9–12, 16) and facing imminent execution, Paul wrote to Timothy, urging him to hasten to Rome for one last visit with the apostle (4:9, 21). Whether Timothy made it to Rome before Paul's execution is not known. According to tradition, Paul was not released from this second Roman imprisonment but suffered the martyrdom he had foreseen (4:6).

Chapter 1 Paul expresses his concern for Timothy, and it is here we get *for God did not give us a spirit of Timidity but a spirit of power and love and self-control* (7). He is imprisoned and alone.

Chapter 2 Paul gives special Instructions to Timothy to *be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus* and to endure as a good soldier, a farmer, and an athlete (4-6).

- He shares that he has *endured everything for the elect* (10) and warns Timothy to *avoid godless chatter ... the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kindly to everyone* (16-26).

Chapter 3 Timothy is warned about the last days when there will be stress. He lists those persons to avoid giving an example of two who opposed Moses (8). Warning about the last days they will be terrible times, he knows Timothy has the

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means of combatting them through his learning from childhood including those who teach the resurrection had already taken place.

- Timothy knows the “sacred writings”, Old Testament, and Paul says, *All scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work* (14-16).

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Chapter 4 one writer stated this letter was like Paul's “state of the church”.

- In the end he charges Timothy to “preach the word, be urgent in season and out of season, convince, rebuke and in teaching (1-2).
- Paul again request that Timothy come to see him, knowing he is about to die – *For I am already on the point of being sacrificed; the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith* (6-7).
- He sends his greetings and gives the benediction; *The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you.*

“What a great encouragement it must have been to the young pastor of the church at Ephesus to know that his mentor boldly modeled his perseverance in the faith, even to the point of death.”