

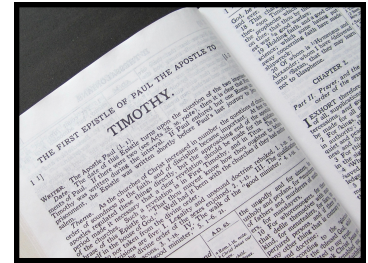
Books Of The Bible

A Survey Of First Timothy

Introduction

First Timothy was one of the last letters Paul wrote. Death was inevitable and as He looks over his life to this moment, he is writing it with all the tenderness but firmness of a father to his own son in the faith, Timothy (ch. 1:2, 18).

First Timothy was written to man who was given the responsibility of directing the church and appointing elders. The apostles and their immediate messengers would not always be with the saints, therefore it was and is important to be given written qualifications for the churches on those who would be overseers.



A comparison between Timothy and Titus:

- a) Both were commissioned by Paul:
 - i) Timothy to be in Ephesus (ch. 1:3)
 - ii) Titus to be at Crete (Titus 1:5)
- c) Both we given a responsibility (ch. 1:3; Titus 1:5)
- d) In both epistles there is consideration of Paul's personal depravity (ch. 1:13, 15; Titus 3:3), and then applying man's depravity universally (ch. 1:9-10; Titus 3:3)
- e) In both epistles there is teaching concerning elders (ch. 3:1-7) with the repeated reasoning of why certain qualifications are needed. Note the words, "For" (ch. 3:5) and "lest" (ch. 3:6, 7). Titus gives further reasons for elders which is, to "be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and convince the gainsayers" (Titus 1:9) and administer discipline (Titus 1:13; 3:10).

When It Was Written

First Timothy was written after Paul's first missionary trip and before his arrival in Rome. By the time he arrived in Lystra, Timothy was already recognized as a spiritual man (Acts 16:2; 1 Tim. 4:14); a disciple (Acts 16:1); and competent to be a fellow worker with Paul (Acts 13:3).

- a) If we follow that which is recorded of Paul's missionary trips from the time Timothy went with him, we cannot with accuracy determine when Timothy was sent to Ephesus.
 - i) The journeys took him throughout the cities (Acts 16:4) of Phrygia, the region of Galatia, Mysia, Troas (Acts 16:6-8); to Neapolis and then to Philippi (Acts 16:11-12). Interestingly, it was Paul and Silas who were cast into prison. Had Timothy at that time already been sent to Ephesus (Acts 17:19, 23)?
 - ii) Leaving Philippi they came to Thessalonica (Acts 17:1) and after an uproar, Paul and Silas were sent away and came to Berea (Acts 17:10).
 - iii) Paul was brought to Athens (Acts 17:15) and having arrived there, Paul sent for Timotheus and Silas (Acts 17:15).
 - iv) Paul came to Corinth (Acts 18:1) and from there he sailed to Syria and came to Ephesus (Acts 18:19).
 - v) He sailed from Ephesus, landed at Caesarea and went down to Antioch (Acts 18:22).
 - vi) Ultimately, Paul came to Ephesus (Acts 19:1); then into Greece (Acts 20:2); and then into Asia with Sopate, Aristarchus, Secundus, Gaius, Timotheus, Tychicus, and Trophimus (Acts 20:4). While these men were with Paul, yet they had gone ahead of him to Troas (Acts 20:5).
 - vii) They came to Chios (Acts 20:15) bypassing Ephesus (Acts 20:16).
 - viii) Paul called for the elders of the church at Ephesus (Acts 20:17), and since he was going to Rome, from the political conditions of that day they knew they would never see him again (Acts 20:38).
 - ix) It would seem Paul anticipated a return trip to Ephesus (ch. 4:13).
- b) When Paul besought Timothy to stay at Ephesus (ch. 1:3) we simply do not know, and I see no advantage in conjecture. That which is important is not the "when" of Timothy, but "why" Paul wanted him to stay. It clearly was not for the same reason Titus was left at Crete (Titus 1:5). One observation is that both men

Books Of The Bible A Survey Of First Timothy

were given a great responsibility and seemed to be of a retiring nature (2 Tim. 1:16). Being a meek man, it would have been natural for him to shrink from the work of censuring the wrong teachers, but God will never give anyone a work to do without giving the necessary abilities. If we could do it on our own how proud we would be, but when depending on the Lord, when the work is done and we look back, we will be able to say, "Praise God, it was all through Him".

The Recipient - Timothy or Timotheus

Timothy's Parents

- a) His mother and grandmother were evidently both believers (2 Tim. 1:5)
- b) His father was a Greek but there was no mention of him being saved (Acts 16:1)

His Spiritual Development

- a) We first read of Timothy when Paul was on his second missionary trip to Lystra (Acts 16:2) and it would appear Timothy had been saved during Paul's first visit (1 Tim. 1:2). He was very well acquainted with Paul (2 Tim. 3:10, 11) and Paul had a very high opinion of him. No doubt, with the commendation of his brethren, it was decided that Timothy became one of Paul's companions. Being such, Timothy travelled with Paul through Phrygia, Galatia, and Mysia; also to Troas, Philippi, and Berea (Acts 17:13-14). He was a gifted man (1 Tim. 4:14), and stayed with Silas when Paul was sent away (Acts 17:14). Later he and Silas followed Paul to Athens (Acts 17:15). He was sent by Paul to Thessalonica (1 Thess. 3:2) and Macedonia (Acts 19:21). At some point he was apprehended and then set at liberty (Heb. 13:23). He is referred to as, "our brother, and minister of God, and our fellow labourer in the gospel of Christ" (1 Thess. 3:2). Paul sought his companionship and requested he bring certain things (2 Tim. 4:13).

The Erroneous Teachings

At Ephesus there were those who were teaching wrong doctrines. Timothy was given the responsibility not to compromise doctrinal truths and was given a "charge" (indicates a command) (ch. 1:18; 5:21; 6:13) which was to "charge" the wrong teachers (ch. 1:18), those who were the affluent (ch. 6:17), and the saints in general (ch. 5:7).

We can learn what some of the false teachings were by what is said about the characteristics, or the actions of the teachers. These were men who:

- a) Were distorting the God given use of the law applying it to saints (needing to keep the law for salvation) as well as sinners. (ch. 1:9)
- b) Were adding to the law with fables, etc. (ch. 1:4)
- c) Were using the gospel to cancel the moral characteristics of the law and thereby letting lives be lived in sin. (ch. 1:10-11)
- d) Were possibly having the attitude of those who deprived their parents of provision saying, "Corban" (Mk. 7:10-12)

Key Verse

"But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." (ch. 3:15-16)

Paul writes to Timothy as one who has the responsibility to determine who those are who are qualified to be elders and to inform the saints how to live as those who are members of the household of God. The determining of those who will lead the saints is a serious matter with far reaching results. Men must not be appointed because of age, or appointed by men because of friendship, position in the world, wealth or education. Neither ought there to be appointing someone void of proper qualifications just to fill the gap.

Books Of The Bible

A Survey Of First Timothy

The Revolving Themes of 1 Timothy

In writing to Timothy Paul does not deal with themes in a singular fashion, rather, due to varied contexts mention will be made of various truths several times. For instance:

- a) In his exhortation to Timothy he will exhort him to, “war a good warfare; holding faith, and a good conscience” (ch. 1:18-19). After speaking of that by which a man or woman is adorned, and elders, deacons, and wives, etc., he will write: “These things command and teach. Let no man despise thy youth . . . be thou an example of the believers, . . . Neglect not the gift . . . given thee . . . Meditate upon these things . . . Take heed (watch) unto thyself, and unto the doctrine” (ch. 4:11-16). Again, Timothy is given a charge (ch. 5:21), and finally he is exhorted to “teach and exhort” (ch. 6:2).
- b) He will speak of the wrong teaching of those who oppose the gospel and what to do (ch. 1:3-4; 4:1-3; 6:3-6; 20-21); of that which Paul had done (ch. 1:20); oppose Timothy and seek to belittle him (ch. 4:12-16).
- c) Teaching will be given concerning ladies and their clothing (ch. 2:9); functioning in the church (ch. 2:11-12); and associated with it being wives of deacons or elders (ch. 3:11); and widows (ch. 5:3-16).
- d) The qualifications and attitude towards biblically qualified elders (ch 3:1-7; 5:1; 17-19).
- e) Timothy will be reminded twice that the life of a believer is warfare, especially if one is a leader among the saints (ch. 1:18; 6:12).
- f) The precious themes of grace and salvation are repeated several times (ch. 1:15; 2:4-6) and by Hymenaeus and Alexander being disciplined, it is so that they “learn not to blaspheme” which indicates restoration (ch. 1:20).
- g) The subject of widows is in two sections, those who have family, note the words, “if any” (ch. 5:4, 16), and those who do not have saved family to care for them (ch. 5:5-15).
- h) There are two rich doxologies (ch. 1:17; 6:15).
- i) Lay hold on eternal life (ch. 6:12, 19)

Key Words

- a) Truth (19)
- b) Doctrine (8)
- c) Charge (ch. 1:3, 18; **3:7**; 6:13, 17)
- d) Faithful /true saying (ch. 1:15; 3:1; 4:8-9)

Key Concepts

God’s method for developing healthy saints is by adhering to sound (healthy) doctrine (ch. 1:10; 4:13-16)

English Equivalent of Greek Words Only In First Timothy

Word	Reference	Word	Reference
Chapter 1			
Endless	Ch. 1:4	To teach no other doctrine	Ch. 1:3; 6:3
Vain jangling	Ch. 1:6	Murderers of fathers	Ch. 1:9
Murderers of mothers	Ch. 1:9	Men-stealers	Ch. 1:10
Perjured persons	Ch. 1:10	Persecutor	Ch. 1:13
Exceeding abundant	Ch. 1:14	Acceptation	Ch. 1:15; 4:9

Books Of The Bible A Survey Of First Timothy

Word	Reference	Word	Reference
Chapter 2			
Intercessions	Ch. 2:1; 4:5	Quiet	Ch. 2:2
Acceptable	Ch. 2:3; 5:4	Ransom	Ch. 2:6
Modest / good behaviour	Ch. 2:9; 3:2	Apparel	Ch. 2:9
Broided hair	Ch. 2:9	Godliness	Ch. 2:10
Usurp authority	Ch. 2:12	Childbearing	Ch. 2:15
Chapter 3			
Blameless / unrebukeable	Ch. 3:2; 5:7; 6:14	Novice	Ch. 3:6
Double-tongued	Ch. 3:8	Degree	Ch. 3:13
Ground	Ch. 3:15	Without controversy	Ch. 3:16
Chapter 4			
Expressly	Ch. 4:1	Seared with a hot iron	Ch. 4:2
Speaking lies	Ch. 4:2	Received	Ch. 4:3
Nourished up	Ch. 4:6	Old wives	Ch. 4:7
Exercise	Ch. 4:8	Purity	Ch. 4:12; 5:2
Chapter 5			
Rebuke	Ch. 5:1	Requite	Ch. 5:4
Nephews	Ch. 5:4	Desolate	Ch. 5:5
Let . . . be taken into the number	Ch. 5:9	She have lodged strangers	Ch. 5:10
She have brought up	Ch. 5:10	She have relieved/ let them relieve	Ch. 5:10, 16
Begun to wax wanton	Ch. 5:11	Tattlers	Ch. 5:13
Bear children	Ch. 5:14	Perferring one another	Ch. 5:21
Partiality	Ch. 5:21	Stomach's sake	Ch. 5:23
Drink . . . water	Ch. 5:23		
Chapter 6			
Doting	Ch. 6:4	Surmising's	Ch. 6:4
Strifes of words	Ch. 6:4	Gain	Ch. 6:5, 6

Books Of The Bible A Survey Of First Timothy

Word	Reference	Word	Reference
Raiment	Ch. 6:8	Food	Ch. 6:8
Hurtful	Ch. 6:9	Love of money	Ch. 6:10
Pierced . . . through	Ch. 6:10	Can approach unto	Ch. 6:16
Uncertain	Ch. 6:17	Willing to communicate	Ch. 6:18
Ready to distribute	Ch. 6:18	Laying up in store	Ch. 6:19
Oppositions	Ch. 6:20	Falsely so called	Ch. 6:20

Old Testament Quotations in First Timothy

While there are several verses in which the concept can be traced to the Old Testament, I can only find one verse which is a quotation from it, that is ch. 5:18 which is quoted from Deut. 25:4. The following verses refer back but are not quotations:

- a) 1 Tim. 2:13 carries the concept of Gen. 2:7, 21, 22
- b) 1 Tim. 2:14 carries the concept of Gen. 3:6
- c) 1 Tim. 6:7 carries the concept of Job 1:21

It is important to see the authority and historical fidelity Paul gives to the Old Testament for if the narrative of Adam and Eve is only a myth then the functioning of men and women as members of the local church is a worthless argument (ch. 2:13-14).

Aspects of God

- 1) God is:
 - a) Presented as the supreme authority:
 - i) Paul is “an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God” (ch. 1:1).
 - ii) He is “the King eternal” (ch. 1:17)
 - b) Eternal and distinct:
 - i) He is “immortal, invisible, the only wise God” (ch. 1:17) with the emphasis on His eternal monarchy and exclusiveness as the only wise God and worthy of honour and glory.
 - c) Not only supreme but also sovereign:
 - i) The Sovereign One who is in complete control and will fulfill His purposes for Christ (ch. 6:14).
 - d) Intensely holy:
 - i) He dwells in the light of moral perfection, and is the unapproachable God (ch. 6:16).
- 2) God longs for the blessing of man and the only Saviour, for:
 - a) He is presented as, “God our Saviour” (ch. 1:1; 2:3)
 - b) He desires “all men to be saved” (ch. 2:4).
- 3) What is the “House of God”? I suggest that in first Timothy it is not the local church, but it is the house of God character. This is strongly suggested by:
 - a) The immediate context where there are two other “houses” or “households” mentioned, with the emphasis in both is “ruling or guiding” (ch. 3:4, 12).
 - b) In Gen. 28:17 there is the first reference to the “house of God” and there is no building and no congregation.

Books Of The Bible A Survey Of First Timothy

- c) “House of God” is only mentioned in three New Testament epistles, and neither in Heb. 10:21 or 1 Pet. 4:17 is it local in view. Consequently, consistency necessitates 1 Tim. 3:15 to be taken in the same way.
- d) That which is in view is character, a character conforming to and becoming to God, that aspect being order and holiness.
- e) God is presented as “God our Saviour” (ch. 1:1; 2:3); the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God” (ch. 1:17) with the emphasis on His eternal monarchy and exclusiveness as the only wise God and worthy of honour and glory.
- f) The desire of God for all men to be saved” (ch. 2:4).
- g) The Sovereign One who is in complete control and will fulfill His purposes for Christ (ch. 6:14).
- h) He dwells in the light of moral perfection, and is the unapproachable God (ch. 6:16).

The Teachings Concerning Christ

I am not dealing with why Christ is presented the way He is, but simply to observe the glory of His uniqueness and preeminence. There are several major truths mentioned:

- a) His oneness with God our Saviour and the exclusiveness of Him as our Hope (ch. 1:1)
- b) He is the one mediator between God and man . . . the ransom for all (ch. 2:5-6)
- c) He is God’s appointed King (Psa. 2:6) and is supreme, being “King of kings, and Lord of lords” (ch. 6:15)
- d) Surely one of the greatest summarized creeds of the scriptures concerning the Lord is: “Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory” (ch. 3:16).

The Teachings Concerning The Holy Spirit

He is seen fulfilling one of the causes for which He came. The Lord said: “He will shew you things to come” (Jn. 16:13), and this He does (ch. 4:1).

Suggested Structure

Possibly the best structure I have found is that of G. Campbell Morgan who in his book, “the Analyzed Bible, has the following outline, slightly adjusted. Observe that an outline is only in broad brush strokes and does not present the thought flow and purpose of the book.

- a) The introduction (ch. 1:1-3)
 - i) Paul’s introduction of himself, his declaration and authority (ch. 1:1)
 - ii) Paul’s greeting to Timothy, his desire for Timothy, but not interfering with his conviction before God (ch. 1:2-3)
- b) Paul’s charge to Timothy
 - i) The avoidance of erroneous teachings which are contrary to sound doctrine and the glorious gospel (ch. 1:4-20)
- c) Timothy’s charge to the church (ch. 1:4-3:16)
 - i) The church and its commission, the obligations, gospel, Paul’s work for God, and the authority of the scriptures (ch. 2:1-14)
 - ii) The church and its leadership (ch. 3:1-14)
 - iii) The church as the pillar and ground of the truth of God (ch. 3:15-16)
- d) Paul’s charge to Timothy (ch. 4:1-6:13)
 - i) Concerning the truth (ch. 4:1-11)
 - ii) Concerning himself (ch. 4:12-16) (note the references to “thy,” “thou,” “thee,” “thyself”)
 - iii) Concerning the saints (ch. 5:1-6:2)
 - iv) Concerning himself (ch. 6:13)

Books Of The Bible
A Survey Of First Timothy

- e) Concluding thoughts (ch. 6:17-21)
 - i) Last charge concerning others (ch. 6:17-19)
 - ii) Concerning Timothy and his responsibility (ch. 6:20-21)
-

**May God grant us good understanding as He, by His Holy Spirit, deigns to guide us into all truth.
John 16:13**

Rowan Jennings, Abbotsford, British Columbia