

INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY OF

1 Timothy

What, where, who, why? 15th book of the New Testament, after Thessalonians; Paul wrote to Timothy in Ephesus to strengthen his ministry there (1:2, 3, 18, 19).

Pastoral letters (1 and 2 Timothy; Titus) give counsel to pastors so they will know how to behave in the church of God (3:15).

Paul and Timothy are related as apostle to pastor, elder to younger, mentor to mentoree, Moses to Joshua, founder to protégé. The energetic and persuasive apostle gives the charge to Timothy, who may have been shy and lacking in confidence, but was always loyal to his mentor and to his calling.

Doctrine, godliness (6:3): Both words are found here more often than in any other NT book.

- Doctrine:** This epistle warns against false teachers and exhorts Timothy to provide sound teaching (1:3, 7, 10, 15; 2:7, 12; 3:2; 4:1-16; 5:17; 6:1-3)
- about God: “King eternal, immortal, invisible” (1:17; 2:3-5; 4:10; 6:13-16)
 - about Christ: “one Mediator between God and men” (2:5, 6; 3:16; 6:13, 14)
 - about sin and Satan: “From such withdraw yourself” (1:20; 2:13, 14; 3:6, 7; 4:1; 5:15, 20, 22, 24; 6:4-11)
 - about gospel: “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners” (1:11, 14-16; 2:3-6; 4:10; 5:24)
 - about law, commandments: “Law is good if one uses it lawfully” (1:1, 3, 5-11, 18; 4:11; 5:7, 21; 6:14, 17)
 - about eternal life: “our Lord Jesus Christ’s appearing” (6:12, 14-16, 19)
 - don’t wrangle over details “which cause disputes rather than godly edification” (1:4-7; 4:7; 6:3-5, 20)

- Godliness,** although some mystery is involved in God’s self-revelation (2:2, 10, 3:16; 4:7, 8; 6:3-6, 11)
- faith, love, etc.: “from a pure heart,

[and] a good conscience” (1:2, 4, 5, 14, 19; 2:7, 15; 3:9, 13; 4:2, 6, 12; 5:8; 6:10-12)

- spiritual warfare, prayers: “Fight the good fight” (1:18; 2:1-3, 8; 4:5; 4:5, 10, 15; 6:11, 12, 20)
- good works: “good works of some are clearly evident” (2:10; 5:4, 10, 25; 6:18)
- caution about straying saints: “some will depart from the faith” (1:6, 19, 20; 3:6; 4:1; 5:11, 12; 6:10, 21)
- men, ministers, elders: “be a good minister of Jesus Christ” (1:12, 13, 18; 2:7; 4:6-16; 5:1, 17-19)

The love of money

First Timothy offers warning to the wealthy — almost as strong as Jesus’ words about rich men entering the kingdom with difficulty, like camels threading through needles’ eyes.

- At life’s end, we’ll all leave the same thing behind: all things (6:7).
- To increase satisfaction, reduce wants; obtaining more stuff doesn’t do it. Window-shopping and watching ads may be exercises in discontent (6:6, 8).
- Not money, but greed — the desire for wealth and the love of it — pollutes our souls; godly folk flee greed (6:9-11)!
- Rich Christians must remember two things: Trust God, not gold, and the Giver, not the gift; and what you can’t take with you, you can send ahead — so give generously (6:17-19)!

- women, widows: “brought up children . . . lodged strangers . . . washed the saints’ feet . . . relieved the afflicted” (2:9-15; 3:11; 5:2-16)
- elders, deacons: “let these also first be proved; then let them serve” (3:1-13)

Speech therapy: Tattling tongues, lies, blasphemies, fables, gossip, hasty accusations, arguments, revilings, useless wranglings, and empty chatter (1:6, 13, 20; 3:8, 11; 4:2, 7; 5:1, 13, 19; 6:3, 4, 20) can be silenced by self-control and the wholesome words of Jesus (2:2, 11, 12; 6:3).

Physical life: Food, drink, clothing, marriage, and exercise have their place in a Christian life (2:8; 4:3, 4; 4:7, 8; 5:23).

Doxologies: Glory to the blessed and only sovereign Lord and King (1:17; 6:15, 16)!

A tough text: “She [woman] will be saved in childbearing if they continue in faith. . . .” (2:15). What does this mean?

1 Timothy in a sentence: While the structure and doctrine of the first Christian congregations were still in formative stages, the apostle Paul wrote to encourage and instruct young pastor Timothy regarding firmness and integrity in teaching the truth and maintaining good order in the church of God.