

1 Timothy - The Believer's Behavior



- *When have you been disappointed in someone who claimed to be a Christian but their lifestyle contradicted their profession?*
- *Have you thought about who is watching you at your job, in your neighborhood, at school, other places in society and what impression your behavior leaves on them?*

Billy Graham once visited a university outside the United States. He was talking with a Hindu student who said, "I would become a Christian if I could ever see what a real Christian looks like." Billy Graham later stated that what caused him the greatest conviction was that this student was looking at him when he made the comment.

Today, there is some confusion about the Christian life and how a believer should conduct himself. The book of 1 Timothy is of great help in answering this issue. Paul sent Timothy to pastor the church at Ephesus, the world's fourth largest city in Paul's day. Immorality and occult-type religions filled the area. Furthermore, false teachers infiltrated the church and were confusing the people about the Christian life. Paul wrote the letter of First Timothy to encourage Timothy in his ministry and to instruct him about how to conduct himself and what to teach the people about living the Christian life. Paul strongly emphasizes the believer being an example to others in living for Christ. Paul was basically saying that the world is watching us, and we must show them what a true Christian is.

Central Lesson:

The world is **WATCHING** us—we must behave like a believer.

Author: The book identifies the Apostle **PAUL** as the author (1:1). However, since the early 19th century, critics have attacked the authenticity of Paul's authorship for 1 Timothy and the other Pastoral Epistles (2 Timothy and Titus). Even though the Pastoral Epistles all claim to be written by Paul, the critics allege that they were "pious forgeries" written in the second century. The Early Church Fathers identified Paul as the author throughout the first three centuries. They assert this more for 1&2 Timothy & Titus than any other epistles except Romans and 1 Corinthians.

Date: First Timothy was written about A.D. **64**. The book of Acts ends with Paul in a Roman prison (Acts 28), and the Bible gives very little details of Paul's life and ministry after Acts 28. A study of the Pastoral Epistles requires Paul to have been released from his Acts 28 Roman imprisonment. Apparently, Paul continued his missionary endeavors, perhaps taking the gospel into Spain as he had hoped, according to Romans 15:24, 28 and as early church tradition claims that he did. Later, Paul experienced a second imprisonment in Rome, where he was eventually beheaded.

Title: The book is named after the recipient—**TIMOTHY**, who was one of Paul's converts (1 Tim. 1:2, 18; 1 Cor. 4:17; 2 Tim. 1:2) and closest companion. Timothy's name means "**one who honors God.**" Timothy was half Jewish and Gentile. Timothy's father was a Greek (Acts 16:1) who apparently had died before Timothy met Paul. His mother, Eunice, a single parent, and grandmother, Lois, were devout Jews who became believers in Jesus Christ (2 Tim. 1:5). They taught Timothy the Old Testament Scriptures from his childhood (2 Tim. 3:15) but Timothy did not actually become a Christian until he met Paul.

Although Timothy was very young—probably in his late teens or early twenties—he had a reputation for godliness (Acts 16:2), and Paul took him with him on his missionary journey (Acts 16:1-5). Timothy became Paul's disciple, friend, and co-laborer for the rest of Paul's life and ministry. Paul often sent Timothy to the churches as his representative (1 Cor. 4:17; 16:10; Phil. 2:19; 1 Thess. 3:2), and at the time of writing the epistle of 1 Timothy, Timothy was serving as pastor of the church at Ephesus (1 Tim. 1:3).

Key Verses: 1 Timothy 3:15. (NLT). *"so that if I am delayed, you will know how people must conduct themselves in the household of God. This is the church of the living God, which is the pillar and foundation of the truth."*

Key Chapters: 1 Timothy chapter **3**. This chapter describes the **character qualities** of a mature Christian qualified to be a spiritual leader. These qualities are **not** the picture of a super-Christian but a picture of what every Christian should look like. Spiritual leaders should be chosen from such a group of mature Christ-followers. This chapter describes the character qualities we should seek to attain today. Paul describes the character qualities of elders (3:1-7), deacons (3:8-10, 12-13), and deaconesses (3:11).

Key Word: Set an **EXAMPLE** (4:12; 1:16). Paul told Timothy to *"set an example for the believers,"* which implies that others are watching us. We must give them a Godly influence and example.

Outline: Warren Wiersbe, outlines the book as:

- I. The Church and Its Message (Chapter 1)**
Teaching sound doctrine (1:1-11). Preaching a glorious Gospel (1:12-17). Defending the faith (1:18-20)
- II. The Church and Its Members (Chapters 2-3)**
Praying men (2:1-8). Modest women (2:9-15). Dedicated officers (3:1-13). Behaving believers (3:14-16).
- III. The Church and Its Minister (Chapter 4)**
A good minister (4:1-6). A godly minister (4:7-12). A growing minister (4:13-16)
- IV. The Church and Its Ministry (Chapters 5-6)**
To older saints (5:1-2). To widows (5:3-16). To church leaders (5:17-25). To servants (slaves) (6:1-2). To trouble-makers (6:3-5). To the rich (6:6-19). To the "educated" (6:20-21)

Central Lesson: The world is watching us—we must behave like a believer.

Next Steps: ► Accept Christ as your Savior. ► As a Christian, dedicate your life to Christ. ► Invite someone to next Sunday's study. ► Attend a small group. ► Read the Bible this week. ► Pray for friends that need Jesus.