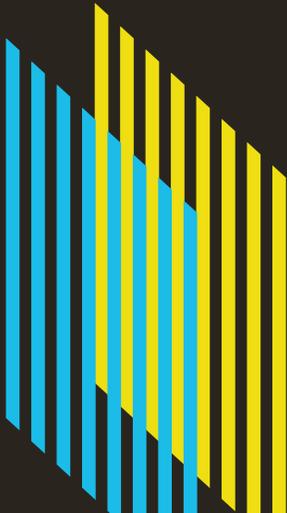


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THE GOSPEL
& GODLINESS

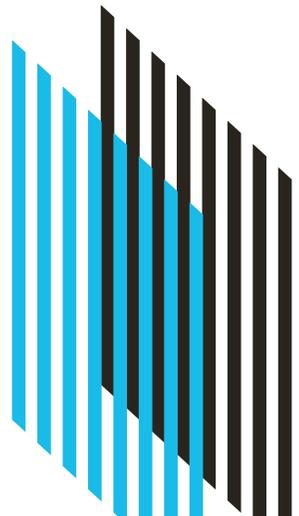
1 timothy series



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THE GOSPEL
& GODLINESS

1 TIMOTHY SERIES





Golden Hills Community Church

Visit us online @ goldenhills.org

OUR PURPOSE: To glorify God by making disciples who will impact every area of the world for Christ.

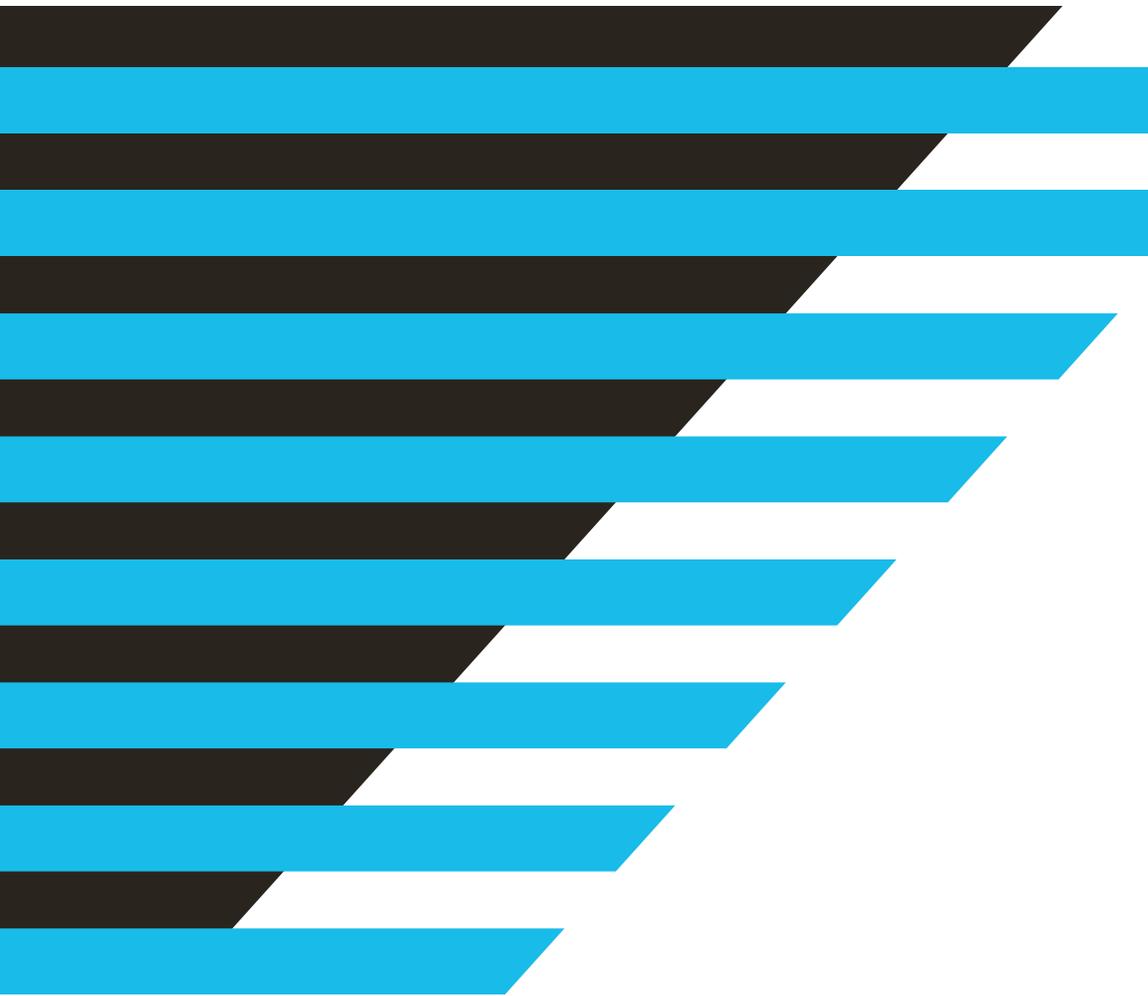
OUR PROCESS: We believe disciples can best be made when they Worship, Grow and Serve in the context of Christian Community.

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welcome

CHILDREN IN THE FAITH!

To merge the content of the gospel with the conduct of godliness is what it means to live “In Accord.”

In our culture today, it’s very difficult to not reduce the church to a building or an institution. Whenever we hear the word “church,” our minds inevitably return to those two concepts. It’s not that the word “church” shouldn’t cause us to think about a building or an institution, but it should compel us to realize that the church is much more than merely a building or an institution.

When the Apostle Paul wrote his letter to Timothy, he wanted to impart some sound wisdom for the young leader in preparation for the new responsibilities that lay ahead. Paul’s concern was for the church; he wanted to make sure it was as it ought to be. So, he writes to Timothy, **“I am writing these things to you so that...you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God”** (1 Timothy 3:14–15 *ESV*). The church is an institution and it can have places to meet in, but the church is also **“the household of God.”** By God’s grace, He has adopted us into his **“household”**

(Ephesians 1:4–6), and we ought to consider one another family. As members of God’s household, there is a way of life that we “ought” to live. This kind of life is what Paul calls “godliness.” And Paul teaches us that godliness is **“in accordance with the gospel of the glory of the blessed God”** (1 Timothy 1:11 *ESV*).

Our prayer for the next nine weeks is that God will teach us how to live godly lives in accordance with the glorious gospel of God’s grace. We’ll spend time studying the text itself, making observations of what Paul wrote and how he wrote it. At the conclusion of each section, we’ll prayerfully ask God to show us how we ought to respond. To merge the content of the gospel with the conduct of godliness is what it means to live “In Accord.” So let’s get to it!



Pastor Larry Adams



Pastor Phil Ward

1 TIMOTHY

introduction

The title for the series is taken from the concept found at the beginning and end of the letter. At the beginning of the letter Paul is concerned with the presence of false teachers (1:3–7), and the potentially destructive influence they can have on the church. For this reason, Paul commands Timothy to “**charge certain persons not to teach any different doctrine**” (1:3). However, Paul wants to make sure that the reason behind the stern warning is properly understood. So, in verse 5 Paul says, “**the aim of our charge is love.**”

The letter of 1 Timothy is filled with topics that our modern culture might find paradoxical. For instance, how exactly can we lovingly warn people to no longer teach what is considered to be false theology? Questions like this will naturally arise in the minds of modern readers. But for Paul, these issues are complementary, and are not in conflict.

Paul’s diagnosis of the false teachers is that they are not using the law in the proper way. Many Christians today hear the phrase “the law” and immediately assume that it’s bad. This is probably because of the emphasis that many Protestants place on being saved by grace through faith, not according to the law. However, Paul says, “**the law is good, if one uses it lawfully**” (1:8). How does one use the law lawfully?

Proper use of the law is when we realize that it’s meant to convict sinners of their sin, and shows them their need to be forgiven by revealing their sin. Interestingly, at the conclusion of Paul’s list of sinful behaviors (1:9–10) he writes, “**and whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine**” (1:10). This means that the list Paul offers isn’t exhaustive but is a sample of behaviors that are out of step with sound doctrine.

The significance of this clause isn’t that it safeguards Paul from being too narrow in his understanding of sin. Rather, it demonstrates that Paul links right living to right believing. In other words, Paul identifies the root of ungodly living as unhealthy doctrine—because sinful behavior is contrary to sound doctrine. And the reverse is also true: godly behavior is in accord with sound doctrine.

Paul explicitly makes the link in the next verse (1:10) when he writes “[ungodly living is] **contrary to sound doctrine**, [which is] **in accordance with the gospel of the glory of the blessed God.**” Paul links godly living with good, healthy theology.

At the end of Paul's epistle he gives another exhortation regarding false teachers. The warning is about those who teach a **"different doctrine"** that **"does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching that accords with godliness"** (6:3). Notice that Paul once again connects sound teaching and sound doctrine to godliness. Therefore, Paul's emphasis is that all of our theology must lead to right living, and right living is inextricably connected to right doctrine.

When Paul speaks of right living being in accordance with sound doctrine, what he means is that they are harmonious; they are interdependent and mutually informative. *In Accord*, then, is a focus of how sound doctrine and right living are harmoniously connected—they are in accord with one another.

General Purpose of 1 Timothy

Paul tells of the purpose of 1 Timothy in 3:14–15: **"I hope to come to you soon, but I am writing these things to you so that, if I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth."**

Our exegetical thinking and hermeneutics should always take into consideration this expressed purpose [note: exegetical means "the process of understanding the text in its original context" while hermeneutics means "interpreting the text."]

The instructions given by Paul to Timothy are not merely personal suggestions for Timothy in isolation from other ministry leaders, nor are they applicable only to the first century church in Ephesus; Paul identifies the instructions in this letter as being normative for all churches, for all time.

Contrary to popular understanding of 1 Timothy, Timothy is not identified as a pastor of a local congregation. It's better to understand Timothy as a delegate

who Paul has dispatched to represent his Apostolic authority in giving instructions to the church in Ephesus.

Timothy serves as a transitional figure that connects the churches of Paul to successive generations of leadership. In addition, because Timothy serves as a temporary leader with delegated authority, the instructions Paul gives to him are not uniquely for Timothy's particular leadership of a particular church in a particular culture; instead the instructions are for the New Testament church, which is the body of Christ, that is to be led by qualified men. The instructions are transcultural, transtemporal, and transgenerational. In other words, they are universal!

A study in 1 Timothy isn't primarily for ministry leaders, it's also for those who are disciples in the church. The instructions given in this letter are for the church. The aim is that the church—the many who are one—would know how it ought to behave. These instructions are not suggestions; they are imperative to the functionality of the church.

1 TIMOTHY

background

Author and Date

The letters of 1st & 2nd Timothy and Titus were written by the Apostle Paul, and are often referred to as the “Pastoral Epistles.” These make up the 13 letters attributed to Paul, but are three (of the four) that were written to individuals, rather than a church community. Paul was writing to Timothy, someone we first meet in Acts 16:1–2, where he joined Paul on his second missionary journey. As we see through this letter, Paul had continued to mentor and disciple young Timothy in the faith, as discipleship is a lifelong process. Neither Paul nor Timothy were pastors, but functioned more as church planters, as they were establishing congregations and equipping local leaders in sound theology. Paul probably wrote 1 Timothy between AD 51–62.

The Genre of Letter (Epistle)

All the books in the Bible have some sort of “genre.” Just as with music, movies, and any kinds of art, the Bible was written in different literary forms. One of the keys to understanding a book of the Bible is identifying the particular genre that is written, and then learning the best way to read that genre. The biblical genre of letter (epistle) is probably the most similar genre to what we might read in our modern times. When you read through 1 Timothy here are some key distinctions of the biblical genre of letter to remember:

- Letters served as legitimate substitutions for a personal visit, and so receiving a letter would be a big deal to that community/person.
- Letters were to be read out loud, as most people were illiterate, and would need to hear what was written.
- Letters follow a typical form, which includes: Opening, Body, Closing.
- Reading a letter is only hearing “one end of the telephone conversation,” as we’re not always aware of the communication that occurred between the writer and recipient. This is different from a narrative that provides the reader with what they need to know about a story.

how to USE THIS study guide

The Goal Of This Study Guide

There are two main goals for this study guide: to understand what 1 Timothy meant when Paul originally wrote it, and to discover how those truths apply to our lives today! This study guide is best used in conjunction with the Sunday sermons preached at GHCC. Some weeks the study guide will help emphasize the sermon's specific points, and some weeks the study guide might focus on areas of a passage that the sermon can't fully develop.

The Format Of This Study Guide

Our study guide will use the following format: Observing, Defining, Understanding, Responding, and Praying. These sections are deliberate ways to ask the following questions:

- **What does the passage say?**
(OBSERVING)
- **What does it mean?**
(DEFINING/UNDERSTANDING)
- **How do I apply those truths to my life?** (RESPONDING/PRAYING)

OBSERVING The first step in studying the Bible is becoming as familiar as possible with the passage. Use the **OBSERVING** section to list any details that you see in that particular passage, such as: people, places, things, action words, theological terms, etc. Don't pass over this step too quickly! Read, read, read, and then read again. Read it slow, and really try to look for what's happening in the text—and as you do this you'll become very familiar with the passage. Then, try to summarize the passage in a few sentences. Remember, at this point you are just summarizing what Paul wrote to Timothy, so don't try develop an interpretation or application (yet).

DEFINING Use the **DEFINING** section as a reference only after you've gone through the **OBSERVING** section. Our study guide writers have provided simple definitions of key words from the passage to help provide you with some deeper background. This is similar to

what you might find in a commentary or study Bible (feel free to use your own commentaries when you study). We've also provided a recommended resource list for you, which gives suggestions for tools that will help you study the Bible.

UNDERSTANDING The goal of the **UNDERSTANDING** section is to see how the original audience would have applied these truths to their lives. **UNDERSTANDING** is broken up into two parts, **Overview** and **Themes**. In the **Overview** section you will read about what that passage meant to the original audience (i.e., how Timothy would have understood the passage as someone living in first century Ephesus). This section, along with **OBSERVING** and **DEFINING**, will help us understand “what does this passage mean?” The second section is **Themes**, where we discover a few important ideas from that passage. These are things that the passage is encouraging its original audience to understand, particularly regarding how they ought to live.

RESPONDING The **RESPONDING** section is very applicational (it's our response to the text). Here we take what we learned in the **UNDERSTANDING** section and apply those truths to our lives. **RESPONDING** also has two sections, **Overview** and **Themes**, but each will focus on application. This will conclude with three **CHALLENGE QUESTIONS**, which are meant to help us understand how we can apply these truths personally, in our Small Group, and in our community (either church community or local communities).

PRAYING Discovering the background and theology of a passage should lead us to living out those truths in prayer. In this section our study guide writers have provided a sample prayer, showing how to pray the passage in light of who Jesus is and what He's done. Then, you have the opportunity to write your own prayer in a personal way.

Suggestions for Small Groups

- Read through and complete that week's passage in the workbook prior to the Sunday message.
- Bring your workbook on Sunday and take notes that might help you better understand the passage.
- Use the passage, the weekly sermon notes (provided online or at church on Sundays), or this Study Guide as a daily devotional.
- If you are leading a group, consider how to integrate the sermon notes with this Study Guide. You may choose to open your group time with a brief discussion about the thrust of the previous week's sermon and ask your group what kind of connections they were able to make. Always follow the Spirit's leading and be sensitive to His direction.

Ask God to bless our congregation as we study 1 Timothy. Pray for the members of your Small Group, our church community, and our local community.

BIBLE STUDY

resources

Commentaries on 1st Timothy

Liefeld, Walter L., *The NIV Application Commentary: 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus* (Zondervan, 1999)

Platt, David, *Christ-Centered Exposition, Exalting Jesus in 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus* (Holman, 2013)

Stott, John, *The Message of 1 Timothy & Titus: The Bible Speaks Today* (IVP Academic, 2001)

Bible Dictionaries

Longman, Tremper, *The Baker Illustrated Bible Dictionary* (Baker, 2013)

Marshall, I. Howard, and Millard, A.R., *New Bible Dictionary* (IVP Academic, 1996)

Bible Background Commentaries

Keener, Craig S., *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament* (IVP Academic, 2014)

Walton, John H., and Matthews, Victor H., *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament* (IVP Academic, 2000)

Introductions/Surveys of the Bible

Burge, Gary M., *The New Testament in Antiquity: A Survey of the New Testament Within Its Cultural Contexts* (Zondervan, 2009)

Carson, D.A., and Moo, Douglas J., *Introducing the New Testament: A Short Guide to Its History and Message* (Zondervan, 2010)

Kruger, Michael J., *A Biblical-Theological Introduction to the New Testament: The Gospel Revealed* (Crossway, 2016)

Longman, Tremper, *Introducing the Old Testament: A Short Guide to Its History and Message* (Zondervan, 2010)

Van Pelt, Miles V., *A Biblical-Theological Introduction to the Old Testament: The Gospel Promised* (Crossway, 2016)

Study Bibles

Carson, D.A., *NIV Zondervan Study Bible* (Zondervan, 2015)

ESV Study Bible (Crossway; Indexed edition, 2014)

NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible (Zondervan, 2016)

One-Volume Commentaries

Beale, G.K., and Carson, D.A., *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (Baker Academic, 2012)

Burge, Gary, and Hill, Andrew E., *The Baker Illustrated Bible Commentary* (Baker, 2012)

Wenham, Gordon J., and Motyer, Alec. *New Bible Commentary* (IVP Academic, 1994)

The Bible's Grand Narrative (Biblical Theology)

Buzzard, Justin, *The Big Story: How the Bible Makes Sense out of Life* (Moody Publishers, 2013)

Bartholomew, Craig G., and Goheen, Michael W., *The Drama of Scripture: Finding Our Place in the Biblical Story* (Baker Academic, 2014)

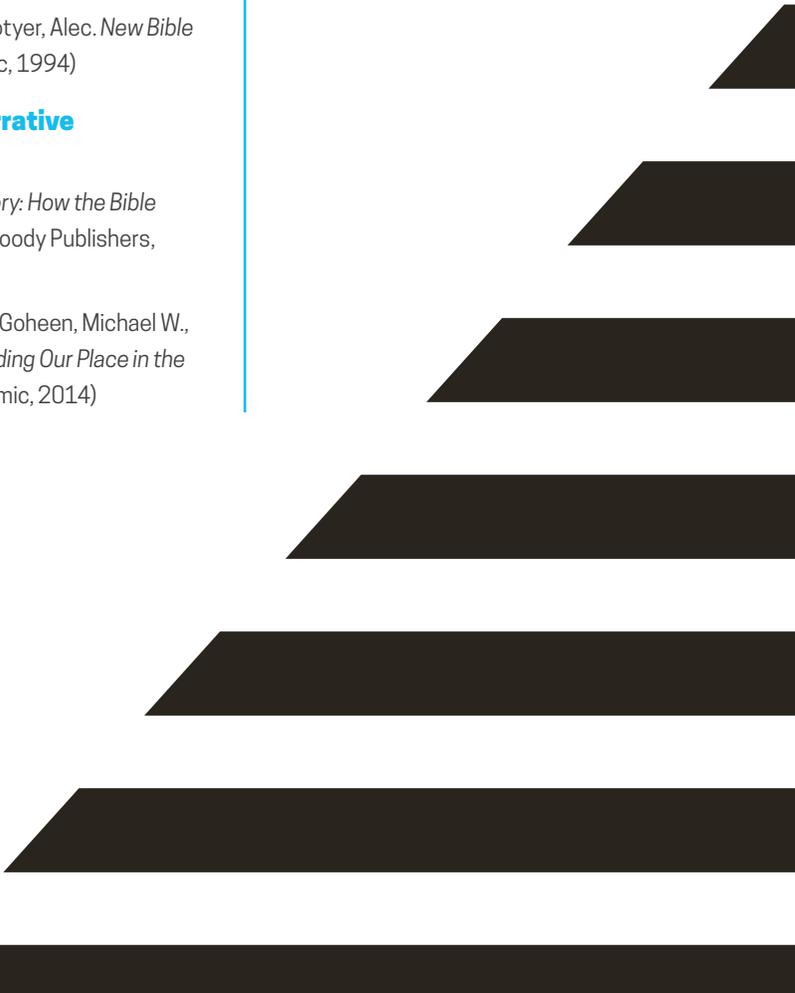
Free Online Resources

biblegateway.com

biblestudytools.com

biblicaltraining.org

ccel.org



**WE
EK**

01

**THE
GOSPEL
&
GODLINESS**



observing

THE GOSPEL & GODLINESS

1 TIMOTHY 1:1-11

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the command of God our Savior and of Christ Jesus our hope, ² To Timothy my true son in the faith: Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord. ³ As I urged you when I went into Macedonia, stay there in Ephesus so that you may command certain people not to teach false doctrines any longer ⁴ or to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies. Such things promote controversial speculations rather than advancing God's work—which is by faith. ⁵ The goal of this command is love, which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith. ⁶ Some have departed from these

and have turned to meaningless talk. ⁷ They want to be teachers of the law, but they do not know what they are talking about or what they so confidently affirm. ⁸ We know that the law is good if one uses it properly. ⁹ We also know that the law is made not for the righteous but for lawbreakers and rebels, the ungodly and sinful, the unholy and irreligious, for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers, ¹⁰ for the sexually immoral, for those practicing homosexuality, for slave traders and liars and perjurers—and for whatever else is contrary to the sound doctrine ¹¹ that conforms to the gospel concerning the glory of the blessed God, which he entrusted to me.

OBSERVATION PRACTICE

In order to become familiar with this passage, and to help understand what is being said, the first step is to make the following observations:

List any People/Places:

List any important or significant verbs (actions), repeated words/phrases, or other theological/special terms. Why do you think they are important or significant?

defining

THE GOSPEL & GODLINESS

Apostle (1:1):

Paul identifies himself as an Apostle, which means, one who is sent or a special messenger. This was a standard greeting by Paul in his letters, which he used to establish his authority as someone commanded by God to bring forth a message.

Hope (1:1):

Paul uses the word hope to describe who appointed him an apostle—Christ Jesus. Paul also includes the word “our” to remind Timothy that he too was to view Jesus in this way. Christian hope is not some kind of “wishful thinking” or a hope that teeters on doubt, but a confident assurance. Paul later states that our hope is set on the living God, the Savior of all people (4:10).

Teach False Doctrine (1:3):

This Greek word, *heterodidaskaleo*, means to deviate from the truth, like the Ephesian teachers were doing. They were deviating from the gospel, the powerful life-changing message that Jesus Christ alone saves sinners. Paul and the other apostles constantly faced this issue.

Devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies (1:4):

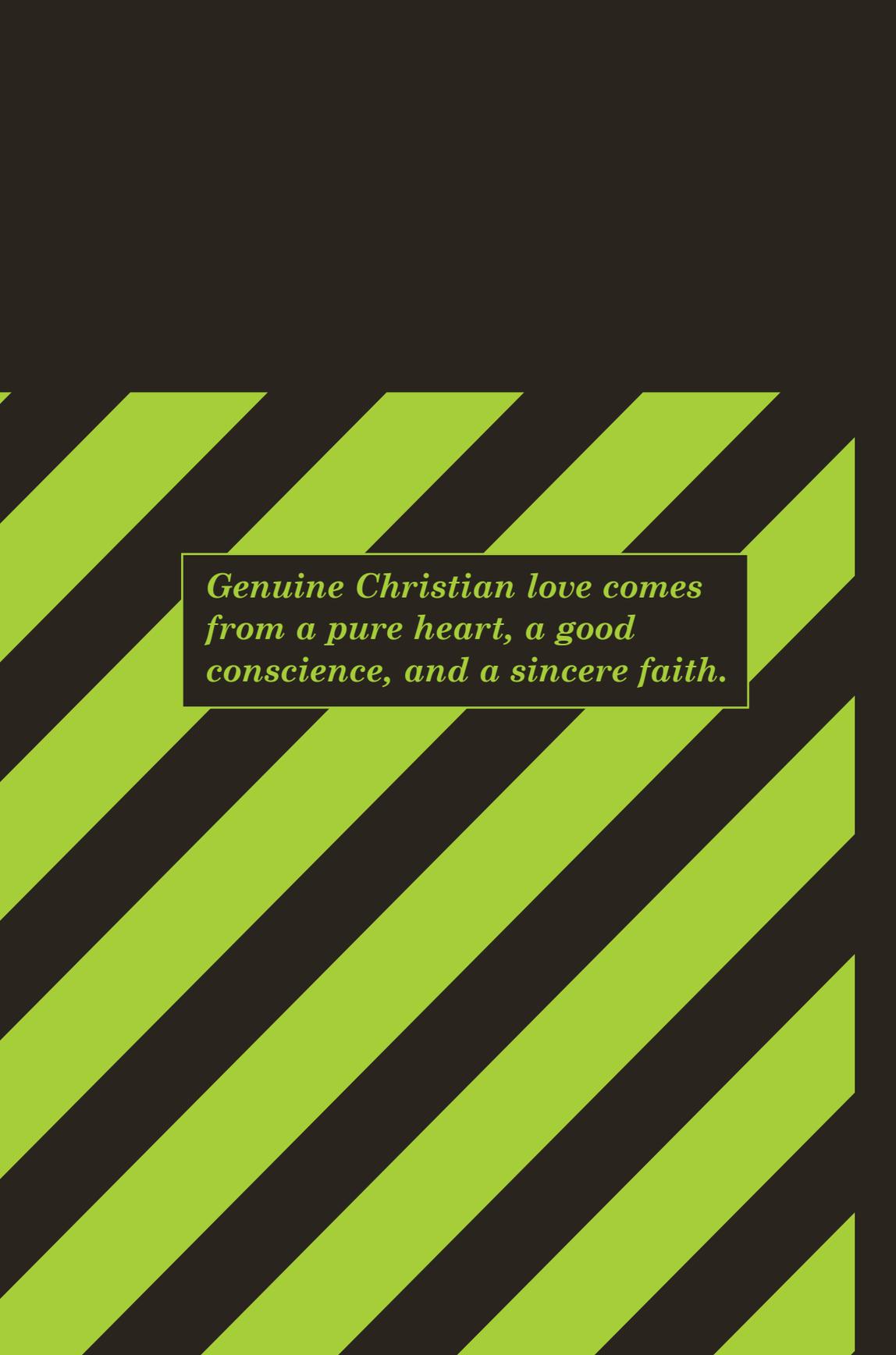
Not only were these teachers dabbling in alternatives to the genuine apostolic gospel, but they were strongly devoted to myths and genealogies. We don't know exactly what these consisted of, but we do know that their teaching created controversy and was based on speculation, not truth, and was a deterrent to the advancement of God's work (1:4).

The goal of this command is love (1:5):

One of the biggest problems with false doctrine is it leads people away from God, His law, and godly living which is motivated by love. Genuine Christian love comes from a pure heart, a good conscience, and a sincere faith (1:5).

The Law (1:7, 8, 9):

The false doctrines (myths and genealogies) were actually a misuse of the law (1:7). The law is referring to God's holy law, his moral code, and is intended to convict nonbelievers of their sin and lead them to Jesus Christ.



*Genuine Christian love comes
from a pure heart, a good
conscience, and a sincere faith.*

understanding

THE GOSPEL & GODLINESS

OVERVIEW

It's safe to say that the church Paul established in Ephesus was experiencing some growing pains. Among many other issues, some of the Bible teachers were wasting time promoting unnecessary controversial things like myths and genealogies, which only created controversy instead of advancing God's work. An even bigger problem was the fact that they were teaching false doctrine, specifically in the area of misusing the law. Paul knew these kinds of problems were incredibly dangerous because doctrinal confusion inevitably leads people away from God's truth, making it difficult to live the kind of life that honors Him. One of Paul's main concerns in this epistle was that believers would know how to conduct themselves within church. False doctrines lead people away from godly living, so Paul's urgency is deeply felt here.

In order to provide some healthy leadership in Ephesus, Paul appoints a man named Timothy to what must have been the biggest ministry challenge of his young life! Paul writes Timothy this letter in order to give him some specific instructions on how to deal with these issues, but this letter must also have served as a comfort to his anxious heart.

In the opening few verses, Paul reminds his young protégé that it was God's sovereign control that orchestrated Paul's own calling into apostolic ministry, and that God Himself gave him the authority to lead and disciple the church. Timothy was then reminded that he served a God who would provide all the grace, mercy, and peace necessary for the journey ahead. Paul then instructed Timothy to confront certain people and command them to stop teaching false doctrine, which was confusing everyone with their speculation. Paul also explained to Timothy that the law is good, and one of its main purposes is to lead sinners away from ungodliness, and into a righteous life in Jesus Christ.



THEMES

Authority Offers Hope

Paul opens his letter by identifying himself as **“Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the command of God our Savior and of Christ Jesus our hope.”** This greeting is significant because it assures young Timothy that the letter he held in his hands not only had authority, but also hope. It has authority because Paul is an apostle, a man chosen specifically by God as a special messenger, sent forth with orders to minister to Timothy during this challenging situation within the Ephesian church. Paul reminded Timothy that he was not sent by some nameless deity, but by a God who saves—a God who offers hope through His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ.

The law is good because it raises up love as the highest standard to follow.

Silence False Teachers

Throughout the history of the church there have been false teachers. Sometimes their errors are very deceptive, but in other cases the distortions are easier to spot; the false teachers in Ephesus needed to be silenced. Wasting time on meaningless, controversial discussions, and misusing the law wasn't just a problem in Ephesus, Paul ran into similar issues in Galatia and Colossi, among other places. In Galatia, false teachers were trying to pervert the gospel by adding obedience to the law as a requirement for righteousness, while others in Colossi were captivating people by teaching worldly philosophies that depended on human tradition rather than on Christ Himself (*Galatians 1:6-7 and Colossians 2:8*)! False teaching was a widespread issue in Paul's day that he addressed head on. Paul would simply not allow false teaching to go unchecked.



The Law Is Good, Don't Abuse It

Paul explains to Timothy that the law is good, but it's often misused and even abused. Paul's view on the law is reflected in Romans 7:12, when he stated that the law is holy, righteous, and good. He also notes in Romans 7:7 that we would never even know what sin is if not for the law. The composer of Psalm 119 reminds over and over that obedience to the law brings great blessing. The law is good because it raises up love as the highest standard to follow. Jesus taught that loving God and loving your neighbor was the summary of the entire law (*Matthew 22:37-39*). The text we're examining in 1 Timothy doesn't tell us exactly how the false teachers were misusing the law, but we can safely conclude that whatever they were teaching was not centered in love for God and love for others.

responding

THE GOSPEL & GODLINESS

OVERVIEW

Leading God's people is no easy task. Encouraging fellow believers to remain grounded in sound doctrine and to live subsequent God-honoring lives can be difficult, intimidating, and downright frustrating. Today, church leaders are constantly encountering "false teachers," and unfortunately, they continue to peddle bad theology in the church and in popular culture. The simple fact is, there is and always will be opponents who distort the gospel and rob it of its beauty and power (whether they're doing it purposely, or in ignorance).

From the beginning of the church, people have sought to

attach human conditions to receiving God's sovereign grace, or legalistic requirements to remaining in God's grace. A major role of the church is to guard the gospel of Jesus Christ and to teach God's truth the way He intends. This is critical because right doctrine leads to righteous living. Or in other words, good orthodoxy leads to good orthopraxy.

But how can we tell if someone is teaching false doctrine? Well, it starts with knowing right doctrine ourselves! Understanding God's amazing grace and how His powerful law is meant to work in our lives is critical to a healthy relationship with Him.

***We can obey the law because
we have the perfect law-keeper
living in us!***

THEMES

Authority Offers Hope

In a culture that loves to suppress, oppose, and distort biblical truth, it's hopeful knowing that God's Word is inspired, inerrant, and authoritative in all matters of faith and practice (*2 Timothy 3:16*). While it seems that many around us cave to theological compromise, Christians need to hear God's Word and submit to it, knowing that what God has said is true and good and right—we can trust God and take Him at His Word. If He commands us to do something, we can trust that it's purposeful and necessary. God's divine authority offers hope because He is our Savior and our Lord. He's the only one that offers grace, mercy, and peace, which are three critical pieces to living a biblically sound, God-honoring life.



Silence False Teachers

One thing is for sure; false teachers don't like being told they're wrong. No wonder many Christians aren't interested in confronting them! Paul, on the other hand, was way more concerned with guarding the truth than with offending people. When it comes to defending God's Word, we should all have the same concerns Paul did. One thing that makes it challenging for people to confront those who teach false doctrine is not being grounded in true doctrine themselves. As we grow in our understanding of God's law, which connects us even deeper to His love, we become more motivated to defend His truth when counterfeit teachers come our way. It's important to note, however, that not everyone is called to confront them. If you happen to encounter what appears to be a false teacher somewhere, talk to a pastor or elder and allow them to guide the process.

The Law Is Good, Don't Abuse It

Christians often hear the phrase “the law” and think it's bad or that it doesn't apply to them. Unfortunately, that kind of thinking robs believers of understanding the key role the law plays in their walk with God. Jesus proclaimed that He didn't come to abolish the law but to fulfill it (*Matthew 5:17-19*). As we mentioned earlier, Jesus taught that when we love God and love our neighbors, we are actually fulfilling the law. Followers of Jesus are called to live up to this incredible standard! But don't assume that fulfilling the law is impossible. Believers are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, which means we now have the desire and the power to obey what God says! God would never ask us to do anything that He doesn't provide the ability to accomplish. We can obey the law because we have the perfect law-keeper living in us! Praise God!

challenge questions

THE GOSPEL & GODLINESS

01 Personal Reflection and Response

How well do you know the essential doctrines of the Christian faith? In your own words, write down the basic gospel message and the reason Jesus is your only hope for salvation and eternal life.

02 Group Conversation and Response

Share with your group how you see God's holy law working in your life. Is it difficult for you to believe that God desires your obedience to His moral law? How does Jesus affect this process?

03 Ministry Reflection and Response

The church provides many opportunities to increase your understanding of sound doctrine, so you won't be taken in by false teachers. Would you consider making a commitment to learn more about the gospel and the essentials of our faith? List specific action steps that you will take.

praying

THE GOSPEL & GODLINESS

Sample Prayer:

Dear Father, thank You for Your grace-filled warnings, and for what You're teaching me! I acknowledge that there are many enemies to the gospel and everything You stand for. Help me know the truth. Help me know it in the depth of my soul. Move in my heart and create in me a desire to grow in my knowledge of You and Your Word. Guard my heart and mind against false doctrines, and help me recognize false teachers when I hear one. And lastly, Father, may Your perfect, holy law of love manifest itself in my relationship with You and toward those You've brought into my life.

Participant Prayer:

Create your own prayer based on this week's scripture. Read the scripture in light of what Jesus has done for the world, and pray that God will conform you into the image of Jesus (*Romans 8:29*). Pray for God to give you the power, through the Holy Spirit, to accomplish what the scripture says.

Write your prayer and/or prayer requests here:



notes

THE GOSPEL & GODLINESS



**WE
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02**

**GRACE
&
GODLINESS**



observing

GRACE & GODLINESS

1 TIMOTHY 1:12-20

I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength, that he considered me trustworthy, appointing me to his service. ¹³ Even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief. ¹⁴ The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. ¹⁵ Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst. ¹⁶ But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his

immense patience as an example for those who would believe in him and receive eternal life. ¹⁷ Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

¹⁸ Timothy, my son, I am giving you this command in keeping with the prophecies once made about you, so that by recalling them you may fight the battle well, ¹⁹ holding on to faith and a good conscience, which some have rejected and so have suffered shipwreck with regard to the faith. ²⁰ Among them are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan to be taught not to blaspheme.

OBSERVATION PRACTICE

In order to become familiar with this passage, and to help understand what is being said, the first step is to make the following observations:

List any People and the number of times they are mentioned:

List the qualities of Jesus that can be derived from this passage:

List any important or significant verbs (actions), repeated words/phrases, or other theological/special terms. Why do you think they are important or significant?

defining

GRACE & GODLINESS

Strength (1:12):

While Paul has significant strength to serve as an Apostle, this strength is not of himself, and is credited towards the Lord Jesus.

Appointing me to his service (1:12):

Paul emphasizes to Timothy that his service to Christ was no decision of his own, as he was appointed by Christ Jesus. In Acts 9:15 Paul is called the Lord's "**chosen instrument.**" This both lends to his credibility and reminds the reader that the credit of his salvation belongs to Christ Jesus alone.

I was shown mercy (1:13):

Paul was once an evil man, even though he thought he was behaving as a zealous Jew serving God. But God chose Paul and used him despite of his background—Paul was shown great mercy and grace, and desires that others experience this mercy as well (even the false teachers in Ephesus).

Trustworthy saying (1:15):

Trustworthy, reliable, faithful. In a church culture saturated with false teaching, Paul provides Timothy with a concise gospel message that he can trust.

Christ Jesus came into the world (1:15):

The gospel is incarnational, meaning Jesus is an eternal being who became human. He, in eternal fellowship within the Triune Godhead, was "**made flesh**" (John 1:14) with the express purpose of "**saving sinners.**"

Holding on to faith and a good conscience (1:19):

Here Paul correlates faith and conscience. Faith, in this instance, refers to "**the correct knowledge of the gospel.**" As Paul is encouraging Timothy to fight the good fight (against false teachers), he is saying that correct teaching and godly conduct go hand-in-hand. This is addressed again in 4:1-2, where Paul connects the "**abandonment of the faith**" with a "**seared conscience.**"

The background of the image consists of a black field with several parallel, diagonal yellow stripes. These stripes are slanted downwards from left to right and are of uniform width and spacing. In the center of the image, there is a black rectangular box with a thin yellow border. Inside this box, the text is written in a yellow, italicized serif font.

*...correct teaching and godly
conduct go hand-in-hand.*

understanding

GRACE & GODLINESS

OVERVIEW

Paul opens chapter 1 with a hard warning against false teaching, with Paul urging Timothy to stay in Ephesus to deal with these false teachers (1:3). In 1:12 Paul begins a recapitulation of the true gospel by offering a brief testimony. Embedded within is a presentation of the gospel that is filled with hope for Timothy and for the church. This hope is that Jesus came into the world to save sinners, and that his grace is for all who believe. Paul couldn't reflect upon his life and testimony without being moved into worship, which is the ultimate response to God's grace. In 1:17, Paul shifts from his testimony to a doxology, describing the divine qualities of God and giving Him the ultimate glory; we were saved by His grace, and for His glory!

Finally, Paul encourages Timothy to **“fight the battle well”** (against false teachers), but to fight by **“holding on to faith and a good conscience.”** Here Paul comes full circle, alluding to his instruction to Timothy in 1:3 in which he exhorts Timothy to **“stay there in Ephesus so that you may command certain people not to teach false doctrines any longer or to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies.”** Paul concludes chapter 1 by identifying two men who refused to hold on to their faith and conscience, thus “shipwrecking” their faith.



THEMES

Jesus Came To Save Sinners

Paul concisely states the gospel message: **“Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners”** (1:15). He isn’t merely stating the gospel, but is presenting a sort of mantra of the Christian faith. This mantra is intended to combat the myths and genealogies (1:4) that were being taught by false teachers in Ephesus. Paul continues with, **“of whom I am the worst”** (1:15) as if to say, “If Jesus came to save me, the worst of sinners, He came for you as well.” No one is too far-gone; no one is outside His reach; His grace is unconditional.



No one is too far-gone; no one is outside His reach

Saved By Christ For God’s Glory

Paul’s testimony in 1:12–17 begins with thanksgiving to Christ Jesus, and throughout he reminds Timothy that the work of salvation is credited to Christ alone. Paul acknowledges that he was unworthy, yet was shown mercy as **“the worst of sinners”** (1:16), experiencing Jesus’ immense patience. Paul was a blasphemer, persecutor, and violent man, yet the recipient of abundant grace.

We are saved solely by the work of Christ—his mercy, grace, and patience. And to what end? The glory of God! Paul concludes his testimony with the purpose of his salvation: to give the eternal, immortal, invisible King glory and honor forever. Paul expresses this even more succinctly in his doxology in Romans: **“For from him and through him and for him are all things. To him be the glory forever!”** (Romans 11:36). We were saved by Christ alone, for the eternal glory of God.

We Fight For The Gospel

One of the reasons that Paul wrote this letter to Timothy was to instruct him in how to deal with the growing problem of false teachers. A false gospel was being taught, and Paul didn’t take it lightly, as he treated this as a spiritual attack against God’s people. For this reason, he instructs Timothy to fight for the gospel.

Of all the analogies Paul could’ve used to encourage Timothy, he chooses a battle. Why? Because there is opposition, and the opposition is at war against us (Ephesians 6:12). What does it look like to fight this battle? Paul instructs Timothy to fight by **“holding on to faith and a good conscience.”** Paul isn’t describing a physical battle, and he’s not even describing an offensive posture. He basically tells Timothy, “If you want to fight well, then stand firm. Remain faithful, and keep a pure conscience.”

responding

GRACE & GODLINESS

OVERVIEW

If we are to take seriously Paul's warning against false teaching, we must be prepared to **“fight the good fight”** just as Timothy was instructed. The charge is to **“hold on to faith and a good conscience.”** So, what does this look like in the twenty-first century? We begin by seeking out the true gospel. In this passage, Paul communicates the gospel through the experience of his testimony. The gospel isn't merely a teaching, but it is something that is lived, breathed, and experienced. Our testimony is valuable, and it should communicate the truth of the gospel. Like Paul exemplifies in chapter one, our testimony should ultimately inspire worship. When we recall the grace of God in our lives, we should be led to glorify God.

Consider how your life has changed as a result of God's grace.

THEMES

Jesus Came To Save Sinners

Sin is minimized in our culture, and in some cases, even celebrated. While concepts such as inclusion and acceptance are positive values, they are often over-emphasized at the expense of truth, leaving us with self-justification to not address sin in our own lives. If we are to fight for the truth of the gospel, it requires the acknowledgement of sin in our lives and in our culture. Paul's concise gospel statement, that **"Jesus came to save sinners,"** has very little meaning if we are unwilling to take sin seriously.

Consider how your life has changed as a result of God's grace. Take time to think about the impact of sin in your life. Recall the ways that you've been healed or saved from sinful patterns.

Saved By Christ For God's Glory

We were saved by Christ for the glory of God. Expressed in the negative, "we did not save ourselves, and our salvation is not primarily for us." Take a second to think about that. We often struggle because we lose sight of the reason we are here—to glorify God. When we neglect this we become stressed and unfulfilled, as we live for our own pleasure. Does that mean God's glory comes at the cost of our happiness? Of course not! He created us to be fully satisfied in Him. Praise God that our fulfillment is the very thing that brings Him glory.

In order to live for the glory of God, we must necessarily die to ourselves (*Galatians 2:20, Ephesians 4:22*). Do you trust Jesus when he says **"whoever loses his life for me will find it"** (*Matthew 16:25*)?

We Fight For The Gospel

Even today, there are many competing gospels. We are told that salvation can be earned if we only work hard enough. We hear a gospel centered on human effort and for human glory. Paul's encouragement to Timothy to **"fight the good fight"** is applicable to us today. We must strive to stay committed to the true gospel—and to do this we must study and meditate on the gospel. In order to fight for the gospel we must have some knowledge of what it is. And while the gospel is deep and profound, there is no need to overcomplicate it.

We must not be afraid to scrutinize what we hear from those teaching the gospel. We can learn from the Berean Jews, while eager to hear the gospel, they examined the scriptures daily to confirm the message to **"see if what Paul said was true"** (*Acts 17:11*).

challenge questions

GRACE & GODLINESS

01 Personal Reflection and Response

Have you been wrongly pressured to earn God's favor?

02 Group Conversation and Response

Considering Paul's encouragement to Timothy to "**fight the battle well**" against false teachers in the church, how have you seen false teaching lead to ungodly conduct? Have you experienced this personally, or from people you care about?

03 Ministry Reflection and Response

How can we, as a church, remain committed to the gospel and avoid the appeal of false teaching? How can you play a role in this through love?

praying

GRACE & GODLINESS

Sample Prayer:

God, thank You for Your saving grace. Thank You for being a patient God, slow to anger, and abounding in love. Help us to trust You and to rest in what You've done for us. Give us wisdom in dealing with false teaching, and give us understanding to know You and Your gospel more intimately every day.

Participant Prayer:

Create your own prayer based on this week's scripture. Read the scripture in light of what Jesus has done for the world, and pray that God will conform you into the image of Jesus (*Romans 8:29*). Pray for God to give you the power, through the Holy Spirit, to accomplish what the scripture says.

Write your prayer and/or prayer requests here:



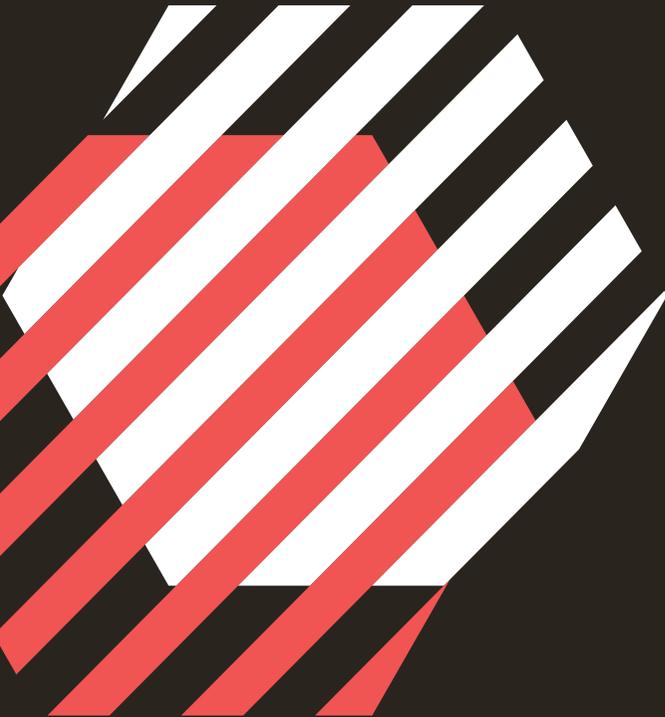
notes

GRACE & GODLINESS



**WE
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03

OUR
GODLY
MEDIATOR



observing

OUR GODLY MEDIATOR

1 TIMOTHY 2:1-7

“I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people—² for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. ³This is good, and pleases God our Savior, ⁴ who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. ⁵ For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus, ⁶ who gave himself as a ransom for all people. This has now been witnessed to at the proper time. ⁷ And for this purpose I was appointed a herald and an apostle—I am telling the truth, I am not lying—and a true and faithful teacher of the Gentiles.”

OBSERVATION PRACTICE

In order to become familiar with this passage, and to help understand what is being said, the first step is to make the following observations:

List any People:

List any important or significant verbs (actions), repeated words/phrases, or other theological/special terms. Why do you think they are important or significant?

defining

OUR GODLY MEDIATOR

I urge (2:1):

Paul is using a very strong Greek word to express his urging. This is no mere recommendation or request, but an appeal of the utmost importance!

Petitions, prayers, intercession, and thanksgiving (2:1):

These are urgent appeals to God to meet a need, and are expressions of contentment or gratitude. In Rome it would be normal to worship rulers as deity (i.e., the Caesar would be viewed as a god), and give this sort of thanksgiving to them. Paul is redirecting Roman-Gentiles to turn to the true God, Yahweh the God of Israel.

For all people (2:1):

The context of the scripture indicates that the **“all people”** refers to **“kings and all those in authority”** as well as **“the Gentiles”** (2:7). Therefore, a more descriptive explanation of this phrase might read: “pray for all kinds of people in authority, even kings and rulers, and not just Jewish people but the Gentiles too, because God wants to save all kinds of people.”

Who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth (2:4):

The **“all”** here is referring to the same **“all”** as in verse 1 (pray for all kinds of people). God’s saving work in Jesus has a great saving effect for all kinds of people, not just the Jews, and not just the slaves or outcast Gentiles, but even Gentile leaders and rulers.

One mediator...the man Christ Jesus (2:5):

While Jews might associate Moses as their historic mediator between God and the nation of Israel (*Deuteronomy 5:5*), and the Romans might associate the pagan priests (who make sacrifices to the many gods) as different mediators, Paul is making it clear that Jesus the Messiah is the true mediator for all people (Jew or Gentile). Jesus does this mediation in the presence of the one true God, Yahweh. Christ was not merely finding a compromise between humanity and God, but is the only one who could go between God and humanity, as He is the God-man.



*Christ's ransom of sinners is
the centerpiece of His work.*

**Who gave himself
as a ransom (2:6):**

The concept of ransom is from the Roman slave system, where slaves could be purchased/ransomed and released from their slavery. Christ ransomed sinners when He substituted Himself for sinners on the cross. Christ's ransom of sinners is the centerpiece of His work. As the only true mediator, He provides freedom (from the slavery of sin) for all who believe.

understanding

OUR GODLY MEDIATOR

OVERVIEW

Understanding the word **“all”** in this passage can be tricky if we don’t look to the surrounding words (the context) for its meaning. When we read **“all”** in 2:1 (with the continuing references in verses 2, 4, 6), Paul goes on to tell us whom the **“all”** is referring to: **“I urge that...prayers...be made for all people—for kings and all those in authority...”** Paul himself defines all as **“all kinds of people.”** Another way of saying this could be to “pray for all kinds of people, even for rulers and authority figures, not just the average person.” We should then keep this same understanding of **“all”** in mind while reading the rest of this passage. And so, when we read in 2:4 that God wants **“all people to be saved,”** we know this means: “God wants all kinds of people to be saved” (even rulers and people in authority). Paul continues this in 2:6 where he says that Jesus **“gave himself as a ransom for all people,”** which we can understand as “Jesus gave himself as a ransom for all kinds of people (even secular rulers and authority figures).”

The main point of this passage is that while it’s the sovereign work of God (alone) to save people, Christians should pray for Him to save others. It’s amazing to know that the all-powerful God invites His people into the process of making an impact in the kingdom!

...“pray for all kinds of people, even for rulers and authority figures, not just the average person.”

THEMES

Pray For All Kinds of People To Be Saved

Even though God has established the governing authorities to practice good conduct (*Romans 13*), it seems like leaders often abuse their power. Naturally then, kings and rulers were oftentimes seen as enemies of the church; after all, when Paul was writing to Timothy the infamously evil ruler Nero (who put many Christians to death) was emperor of Rome. So you can see how someone would pray for these wicked men to have a downfall, or for harm to come to them.

While it is important to pray that our governing authorities act justly, that's not Paul's utmost concern. For Paul, it is more important that we pray for the salvation of our leaders. Paul says that it's **"good and pleasing to God"** (*2:3*) when we pray for our leaders, because rulers, even evil-Gentile ones, can have a place in the kingdom of God if they repent and believe the gospel.

Jesus Gave Himself

One of the noblest traits of Jesus was His selflessness and sacrifice. The New Testament writers are constantly emphasizing this as they share stories of Him (*passages like Mark 10:45; Luke 22:27; John 6:38; 13:1-17*).

Philippians 2:5-11 is known as the "Carmen Christi" (the Christ hymn). Many scholars believe that this passage was a common song about Christ in the early church, and that Paul is quoting it in Philippians 2. It's a beautiful passage that not only highly emphasizes the deity of Jesus, but also focuses on his servanthood—specifically what Christ gave up for others. Because Christ emptied himself of His position and honor, stepped into His creation, and sacrificed Himself for others, He is the only perfect mediator between God and humans, and our perfect model of how to sacrificially serve others.

Jesus Is The World's One Mediator

The concept of a mediator was very common in the pagan-Roman world, as the Roman emperors were venerated and worshipped as "mediators" between the many Roman gods and the people. The Caesars were viewed as gods, with his image being engraved on coins. Roman citizens even publically declared that "Caesar is lord," to show to whom their allegiance was directed.

When Paul declares, **"Jesus is the world's one mediator"** (as well as the phrase "Jesus is Lord"), he's not merely making a theological claim, but is making an enormous political claim as well. For Paul (and Timothy) to make such claims would be treasonous, as it directly challenges and rejects Roman religious-political teachings. Contrary to the Roman belief, there is only one God, and there is only one mediator between that God and humanity—Jesus Christ, not any emperor.

responding

OUR GODLY MEDIATOR

OVERVIEW

Paul and Timothy lived in a pagan society where the rulers were worshipped as a god, and where Christians would receive chastisement (and later persecution) because of their faith. It's understandable to hate pagan leaders who are hostile towards Jesus, and to wish negativity, curses, and death on them. However, Paul is consistent in how he instructs others to view leaders—we pray for their salvation! If you read Romans 12:9-21, Paul is clear that we are to have genuine love, to hate evil, to be constant in prayer, to bless those who persecute us, and to never be overcome by

evil (among other things). In the next chapter (*Romans 13:1-7*), Paul speaks about submitting to the governing authorities. Paul is assuming that we submit (*Romans 13*) through the lens of love (*Romans 12*). And we do all of this because of the model that the Lord Jesus presented, as He loved his enemies, even to the point of being put to death by them.

As followers of Jesus, we pray for our leaders, even leaders with whom we disagree, or who practice evil. We don't merely pray for leaders to "stop doing bad things," but that they would sincerely repent of their sin and follow Jesus.

This salvation is available to all people, regardless of ethnicity, social class, gender, or national identity.

THEMES

Pray For All Kinds of People To Be Saved

Praying for leaders is a biblical command, yet it's something that is often neglected. When we watch the news and hear of a corrupt dictator like North Korea's Kim Jong-un, it's easy to roll our eyes and shake our heads at his lunacy. And while we might pray for him to be restrained from doing evil (against his own people, or others), how often do we actually pray for him, by name, for God's saving power to rescue him?

What about our leaders in America? Do we merely pray that God might change their political views (if they don't line up with our own), or do we actually pray for the spiritual status of that leader? Too often we find ourselves praying for specific policies rather than for the politicians who make those policies.

Jesus Gave Himself

The center of being a "Christ follower" ought to be the notion of self-sacrifice. When we have the proper view of Jesus and what He did, we will see the God who stepped into His own creation, emptied Himself of His eternal glory, and humbled Himself by serving His creation—even to the point of death.

Anytime we look at serving others with the slightest sense of arrogance or elevation over that person, the first thing we must remember is the heart of the Gospel, and how Jesus gave Himself for His creation. Once we do this we'll realize that when the infinite God of the universe stepped into His own creation (to serve it), He did something significantly more sacrificial than anything I could ever do for my neighbor. And so I should constantly seek to serve others.

Jesus Is The World's One Mediator

Paul's message that "Jesus is the world's only mediator" was very good news for non-Roman citizens (and for those who might not be able to afford to make sacrifices to the Roman gods). But this good news doesn't end with Paul and Timothy, because Jesus continues to be the mediator between humans and God today (*Hebrews 8:6; 9:15; 12:25*).

The obvious point is that there is no other way to salvation than through Jesus—He alone is the one who secures us before the Father (*John 6:37*). This salvation is available to all people, regardless of ethnicity, social class, gender, or national identity. And while we live in a world where people (even Christians) still look to political leaders for security, we must remember that there is only one mediator between God and humans—Jesus—and He alone is the one we ought to serve, worship as King, and find reconciliation with God!



challenge questions

OUR GODLY MEDIATOR

01 Personal Reflection and Response

Jesus was the ultimate servant who “gave Himself” for others. When you give of yourself do you do it out of love or obligation? Do you find yourself only serving those whom you love, or do you try to serve your enemies as well?

02 Group Conversation and Response

Do you sometimes find it easy or difficult to pray for leaders? How might a leader’s politics play a part in this? Do you sometimes have trouble wanting someone to be saved because you disagree with their beliefs?

03 Ministry Reflection and Response

Our first step in loving others is to want what’s best for them, and that begins with recognizing that Jesus is Lord. As a group will you commit to 30 days of daily prayer for leaders—not that they would have the same political view as your own, but that they would sincerely come to know Jesus? Pray for democrats and republicans, kings, queens, and princes, and even dictators. Pray that even people like Kim Jong-un will become your fellow believer in Christ!

praying

OUR GODLY MEDIATOR

Sample Prayer:

Dear Father, thank You for sending Jesus to rescue sinners, of which I am one. You did not save me because I was good, but because I was bad, and so I pray for the salvation of the whole world, especially for rulers, and more specifically for rulers who are bad. I pray for local and national leaders in America, as well as leaders around the world, that all kinds of people in authority may come to the saving knowledge of the true King of kings, Jesus.

Participant Prayer:

Create your own prayer based on this week's scripture. Read the scripture in light of what Jesus has done for the world, and pray that God will conform you into the image of Jesus (*Romans 8:29*). Pray for God to give you the power, through the Holy Spirit, to accomplish what the scripture says.

Write your prayer and/or prayer requests here:



notes
**OUR GODLY
MEDIATOR**



**WE
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04

THE
LIFE
OF
A
GODLY
WOMAN



observing

THE LIFE OF A GODLY WOMAN

1 TIMOTHY 2:8-15

Therefore I want the men everywhere to pray, lifting up holy hands without anger or disputing. ⁹ I also want the women to dress modestly, with decency and propriety, adorning themselves, not with elaborate hairstyles or gold or pearls or expensive clothes, ¹⁰ but with good deeds, appropriate for women who profess to worship God.

¹¹ A woman should learn in quietness and full submission. ¹² I do not permit a woman to teach or to assume authority over a man; she must be quiet.

¹³ For Adam was formed first, then Eve. ¹⁴ And Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner. ¹⁵ But women will be saved through child-bearing—if they continue in faith, love and holiness with propriety.

OBSERVATION PRACTICE

In order to become familiar with this passage, and to help understand what is being said, the first step is to make the following observations:

List any People:

List any important or significant verbs (actions), repeated words/phrases, or other theological/special terms. Why do you think they are important or significant?

defining

THE LIFE OF A GODLY WOMAN

Therefore (2:8):

Following the instruction of 1 Timothy 2:1-7, Paul is taking Timothy from a larger cosmic scope of praying for all kinds of people by breaking it down further, concerning observations for men and women in the church.

I want the men everywhere to pray (2:8):

Similarly to Paul's "*I urge*" (2:1), here he is giving explicit direction for all believing men to pray no matter what position he may hold or where he may be.

Lifting up holy hands...without anger or disputing (2:8):

The lifting of holy hands is common language for a posture of prayer, used by Jesus himself, and throughout the Old Testament, to indicate dependency and purity. Prayers should be lifted without quarrel or anger on behalf of the saints; which was an issue for the Ephesian church.

I do not permit a woman to teach or assume authority over men (2:9-12):

Paul begins his instruction for how women should present themselves in expressing godliness. He wants them to be modest, to do good (demonstrating godliness and servitude/devotion to God and His church), as well as submit to the authority of the church (elders/pastors).

She must be quiet (2:12):

The Greek word here for quiet indicates silence, and specifically in this context, to be teachable. Paul is not saying that a woman's role is to be silent at all times or that she does not have a place to teach and serve within the church, rather, in this context, she should be silent in her teaching or executing authority over the elders and pastors in the church.

For Adam was formed first, then Eve (2:13):

Things have not been going well with the teaching in the Ephesian church (1:3-7). Doctrine has been taught incorrectly with the wrong authority, and so Paul takes Timothy back to the Fall in his recount of Adam and Eve in Genesis 3. There is a God-given created order: Adam (man) first, then Eve (woman).

Christ's ransom of sinners is the centerpiece of His work.

Women will be saved through child-bearing (2:15):

If they continue in faith, love, and holiness with propriety (2:15):

God, after the transgress of Eve in the Garden, gave Adam and Eve their roles. Adam was to work and to keep (*Genesis 3:17-20*) and Eve was to help and give life (*Genesis 3:16*). In the curse of the Fall, God gave Eve this role to be a life-giver. We see that the promised Messiah is to come from the woman and so procreation had a kingdom-minded focus. In the New Testament the role shifts from awaiting the Messiah (as Christ had already come through Mary) to being a life-giver through discipleship, not the actual act of giving birth (although a testament to God's creation and evidence of the curse of the Fall). All women, therefore, are able to fulfill this role through the act of spiritual mentoring, discipline, teaching—mothering.

Continuing in faith, love, and holiness with propriety (soundness of mind) is pointing back to the need of proper doctrine to be taught, not false teaching. Believers endure the Christian life by abiding in faith, hope, and love.

understanding

THE LIFE OF A GODLY WOMAN

OVERVIEW

There is a problem in the Ephesian church—they've lost their way and have been subjected to the teaching of false doctrine. They needed to be corrected by Timothy, so Paul gives thorough instruction to help correct the issues with truth. Coming off the previous section of 2:1–8, Paul gives specific instruction for male and female believers to pray for all kinds of people in all circumstances. He understands that the Ephesian church is having issues with the men not praying for those in authority positions, or not praying without anger and frustration. Likewise, the women are wrongly seeking attention and asserting authority in a manner that does not display godliness, so he provides specific correction. Paul does this beautifully, as he reminds Timothy that God has a plan for redemption and salvation despite the curse given to men and women in Genesis 3.

Neither the men nor women were living up to their God-given roles; things were backwards, and therefore, godliness and the truth of the gospel was not being promoted within the church. Paul goes on to remind Timothy that this was a result of sin entering into this world (the Fall); so we shouldn't be surprised at this, but instead, should correct it and assert God's authority by addressing the doctrinal health of the church. God shows grace and mercy by revealing His plan of salvation, despite Eve's curse. This happens through her life-giving nature, which brought about salvation for God's people, through the birth of Christ, and continues to provide salvation for those who hear and believe the gospel.



God shows grace and mercy by revealing His plan of salvation, despite Eve's curse.

THEMES

Men Of Holy Prayer

There was something awry in the Ephesian church. Along with the incorrect teaching of doctrine and devotion to myths, one of the issues Paul addresses is men and prayer—specifically an issue with anger. We know from 2:3 that God sees our prayers for all people as good and pleasing. Therefore, He calls the men to offer up prayer, but to do so without the hindrance of anger and quarrel. The prayers offered should be done with reverence no matter where they are lifted up, especially by men who are church leaders, as an example of Christlikeness in their lives. This is done with the instruction to **“lift up holy hands,”** indicating a need for purity and pure intentions. This would have been a difficult task if the church leaders were filled with anger and hate.

Women Who Worship God

Paul turns his attention toward women as he instructs them to display proper godliness, which out of their devotion to the truths of scripture will produce goodness. This godliness was distorted and improper within the Ephesian church. The women were asserting authority over the church’s elders, and trying to teach over the assembled congregation. Not only were they misusing authority and teaching improper doctrine, they were gaining attention by means of flashy apparel and jewels, causing attraction for the wrong reasons. Paul gives Timothy instruction that instead, the women needed to **“adorn”** (which is a verb, requiring action) themselves with respect, modesty, self-control, good works, and quietly learn (or submit) to the teaching of the godly men in leadership within the gathered congregation (2:9–11).

Goodness of God’s Created Order

Paul alludes to Genesis 3, reminding Timothy of the God-given order to creation; Adam created first, and then Eve. Because of the Fall, women would now suffer in childbearing, and would want to rule over her husband; men would have to work harder than ever to produce and provide.

The God-given order for the roles of men and women are to be displayed as: man—the Christlike head and provider, woman—the helper, life-giver who submits to Christlike headship.

There’s a beautiful picture of mercy and grace, which is the promise of salvation, given in this Genesis allusion. God did not leave Adam and Eve without consequence nor hopelessness. Through Eve the promise of the Savior would come (Genesis 3:14). As the generations and covenantal promises continued, we did receive the promised Messiah.

responding

THE LIFE OF A GODLY WOMAN

OVERVIEW

How we handle Paul's teaching in this section of 1 Timothy is so important to the health of our churches. At conversion we submitted to the idea that God is the provider of our salvation and therefore reigns in our life, which means we submit to His will as revealed in scripture. Yet, as we read throughout the Bible, as well as see current personal and cultural examples, enmity with God's good design will always be something to fight for, until we are fully redeemed in the New Creation.

We know that correct (or right) theology should lead to correct (or right) living, which will glorify God. Instead of fighting against our God-given roles, there is great freedom in embracing them and living freely within the context of each assigned role for man and woman. Let's take a closer look at the implication of the themes.

Our role as believers is to pray for all people, in all positions, in all places, because God wants all people, in all positions, and in all places to know the truth of who Christ is.

THEMES

Men of Holy Prayer

Reverent and peaceful prayer is the means of God's wanting "**all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth**" (2:4). When we're filled with hate for various authority or political figures, it's almost impossible to sincerely pray for them—we'll actually only pray that they become more like "us" and follow our way of thinking. This is sin on our part, and halts the promotion of the gospel.

Our role as believers is to pray for all people, in all positions, in all places, because God wants all people, in all positions, and in all places to know the truth of who Christ is. This requires reverence and submission on the part of person praying, to lay aside personal agenda and, instead, trust that the God of the universe will have His will done, using our reverent prayers to accomplish His purposes.

Women Who Worship God

Paul is not against women adorning themselves (1 Peter 3) or teaching in the church (having a voice); his issue was their unhealthy self-promotion that diminished the natural order of the church structure—this is sinful. It's common to see people, especially on social media, who read what they want from the scriptures, dismissing or explaining away anything they disagree with, which desperately works against the gospel. We see this in everything from gender roles, to healthy self-image and modesty in dress.

This can easily infiltrate a Christian woman's life, buying into the lie that her outward beauty is of first priority, rather than an honest display of godliness.

Women have immense freedom to use their life-giving gifts within God's boundaries—it's beautiful and powerful to see the life of the church flourish with the gifts God has given women as they abide in "**faith, love, holiness, and self-control**" (2:15).

Goodness of God's Created Order

To understand Biblical gender roles is to remember God's big picture for His creation—that Christ is the head of the Church, just as man is head over the leadership of the church and in the family; Christian women are to submit to Christlike leadership within the church and within marriage. Power and headship is easily abused when men don't submit their lives to Christ's example of headship, and to the Bible's authoritative rendering of manhood.

We live in a society that has distorted God's design for women, and instead promotes individualism and self-indulgence. Women are tempted to refuse following God's plan, and twist scripture for their own desires. This is an example of false doctrine/teaching, the thing Timothy is supposed to correct. Believers should strive to represent and protect, with the Spirit's help, their role in the godliest way possible, not following the world's example, but God's perfect design.



challenge questions

THE LIFE OF A GODLY WOMAN

01 Personal Reflection and Response

Do you have any anger or hostility towards leaders (especially political ones) that has hindered how you pray for them? How might you struggle with God's created order for men and women? How can you pray for God to help you more accurately reflect His image as either a man or a woman?

02 Group Conversation and Response

How are our prayers hindered when we have an improper view of our leaders? If you see a brother or sister out of line in their God-given role, how can you gently remind them of their need to reflect God's purpose? Having done this week's study, has your perspective of men and women's role in the church changed?

03 Ministry Reflection and Response

As Christians we must remain true to God's Word, even when we don't like what it has to say, or when it goes against secular culture. This means we must have a Christlikeness about ourselves, and struggle with important questions like how to pray for those we disagree with. How can the church come alongside others to encourage a life of Christlikeness, specifically in the area of gender roles? Brainstorm.

praying

THE LIFE OF A GODLY WOMAN

Sample Prayer:

Lord, thank You for Your ordained design for men and women. We want to bring You glory in all things. As we go about our day-to-day lives, will You help us to be convicted by the Holy Spirit to fight against the cultural pressures to conform to social norms? Help my brothers in Christ to pray holy prayers for all people, as an example of headship within the home and church for Your desire to save all people. Please be with my sisters in Christ to lead lives that promote worship and submission to Your design, as they serve in the home and in the church as You intended. We ask these things believing that Your Holy Spirit provides the power to do so, through Christ our mediator, who is restoring all things, including me, into his likeness.

Participant Prayer:

Create your own prayer based on this week's scripture. Read the scripture in light of what Jesus has done for the world, and pray that God will conform you into the image of Jesus (*Romans 8:29*). Pray for God to give you the power, through the Holy Spirit, to accomplish what the scripture says.

Write your prayer and/or prayer requests here:

notes

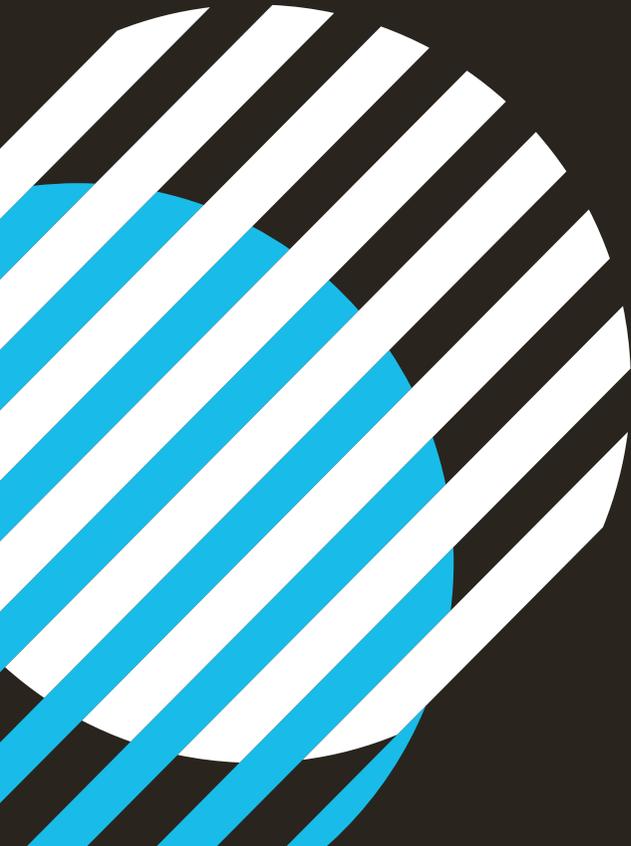
THE LIFE OF A GODLY WOMAN



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05

GODLY
LEADERS
FOR
GOD'S
HOUSEHOLD



observing

GODLY LEADERS FOR GOD'S HOUSEHOLD

1 TIMOTHY 3:1-16

Here is a trustworthy saying: Whoever aspires to be an overseer desires a noble task. ² Now the overseer is to be above reproach, faithful to his wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, ³ not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. ⁴ He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him, and he must do so in a manner worthy of full respect. ⁵ (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?)

⁶ He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. ⁷ He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap.

⁸ In the same way, deacons are to be worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain. ⁹ They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience.

¹⁰ They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them

serve as deacons.

¹¹ In the same way, the women are to be worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything.

¹² A deacon must be faithful to his wife and must manage his children and his household well. ¹³ Those who have served well gain an excellent standing and great assurance in their faith in Christ Jesus.

¹⁴ Although I hope to come to you soon, I am writing you these instructions so that, ¹⁵ if I am delayed, you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God's household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth.

¹⁶ Beyond all question, the mystery from which true godliness springs is great:

He appeared in the flesh,
 was vindicated by the Spirit,
 was seen by angels,
 was preached among the
 nations,
 was believed on in the world,
 was taken up in glory.

OBSERVATION PRACTICE

In order to become familiar with this passage, and to help understand what is being said, the first step is to make the following observations:

List any People:

defining

GODLY LEADERS FOR GOD'S HOUSEHOLD

**Whoever aspires
to be an overseer**
(3:1):

The New Testament uses the terms elder, shepherd, and overseer to describe the same church office (*note*: the King James translates this word as “bishop,” but that is not a church position that was established until much later in church history). This particular passage is talking about the role of church elders, specifically their ethical character and position as teachers. Elders are men who are above reproach in their character, as they are faithful to their wife, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, are not given to drunkenness, etc. Aside from these ethical character traits, they have the specific role of teaching the congregation.

Above reproach
(3:2):

To be blameless. This doesn't mean to be morally perfect or without sin (as no one would meet that requirement), but the point is that church leaders ought to have a good reputation with Christians and non-Christians alike.

Deacons (3:8):

Deacon comes from the Greek word *diakonos*, and has a basic meaning of “servant” (like a waiter who serves food). While all Christians are called to be servants (just as Jesus “**came to serve, not to be served**” [Mark 10:45]), the early church had established the title of deacon as an official office of leadership, along with elder. The character requirements for deacon are similar (although not identical) to elders. The significant difference is that the deacon does not hold a position of ruling authority or teaching. Rather, the deacon is responsible for serving the members of the church, especially the widows and most needy.

The church is literally a household in that all who follow Jesus are brothers and sisters in the faith.

The women (3:11):

The Greek word (**gune**) that Paul uses could either be translated as *wives* (ESV, NIV1984, KJV) or *women* (NRSV, NIV2011, NASB). The two possible translations present drastically different interpretations, as “**their wives**” would indicate that the wives of the deacons are to hold to a certain conduct, while “**women**” would be referring to female deacons (deaconesses) who are serving in the same capacity as men.

The household of God (3:15):

Paul goes on to define the household of God as “**the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth**” (ESV). The church is literally a household in that all who follow Jesus are brothers and sisters in the faith. But the early Christians also met in houses (unlike today, there were no formal facilities where believers gathered). Church buildings aren’t the pillar and buttress of the truth; it is true believers who are.

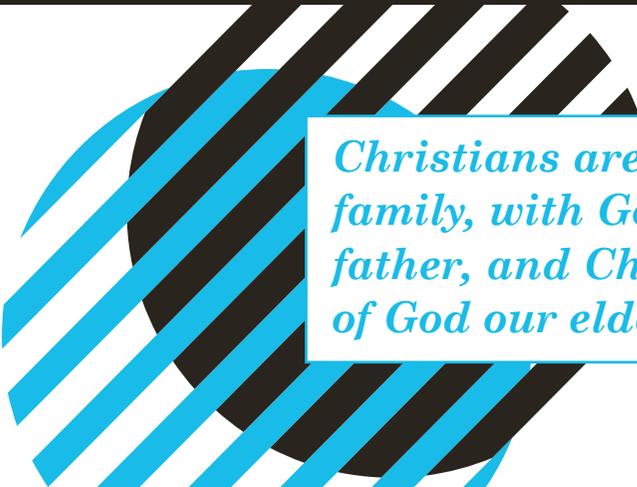
understanding

GODLY LEADERS FOR GOD'S HOUSEHOLD

OVERVIEW

Chapter 3 is a continuation from chapter 2, as Paul instructs and defines what healthy church leadership ought to look like. When we read a biblical passage we should always look for the author's purpose; sometimes this takes work, but sometimes the author clearly tells us his point. In 3:14–15 Paul gives us the purpose for this passage: “...***I am writing you these instructions SO THAT, if I am delayed, you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God's household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth***” (emphasis added). Paul was planning on visiting Ephesus in order to establish the church and its leadership, but he was delayed. And so he is making sure that Timothy knows the proper way for a church to function, especially for the two primary church leadership roles: elders and deacons.

This isn't a mere church planting strategy for this particular church, but the way things ought to be moving forward. In chapter 2 Paul deals with the controversial topic of women in leadership. Here he continues to explain that it's men who God has granted the authority to oversee the church. While passages like this have been used to devalue and discriminate against women we must remember that Paul isn't claiming that women are inferior to men (or can be treated as second-class citizens), but that both genders, in their equality, serve a different function in the household of God.



Christians are a divine family, with God our father, and Christ the Son of God our elder brother.

THEMES

Qualifications For Elders (Overseers)

Paul is describing the responsibilities and character of a church elder (see the definition in the Discovery section). Paul describes it as **“noble”** for men to seek this office, though it is only truly noble if the man is doing so from a place of Christ-like humility. Paul makes the point that elders are well thought of by outsiders (non-Christians). It’s not that outsiders are the ones approving of who will lead the church, but that the character of the elder is consistent in all areas of his life.

Elders are men who display a strong Christian character, holding the main responsibility of teaching and overseeing the local congregation, mainly by protecting against false doctrine and ensuring that sound doctrine is taught. Some other biblical passages that discuss church eldership are: [Acts 15:1–35](#); [20:17–38](#); [1 Timothy 5:17–25](#); [Titus 1:5–9](#); [Hebrews 13:7–16](#); [1 Peter 5:1–5](#).

Qualifications For Deacons

The deacon has similar qualifications as the elder, as deacons likewise are to be high character people that are deemed trustworthy and of good reputation (both within and outside the church). However, the role that the deacon assumes is very different from that of elder. While elders teach and oversee the congregation, the deacons act as servants, with no teaching or ruling responsibilities.

In the first-century it was seen as shameful to be a servant, as people in Jewish and Roman cultures did anything they could to avoid shame, and instead seek honor. However, following Jesus—who is the true and ultimate servant—the early church made serving a virtue of the highest level. The deacon (literally, a server) was established as a foundational leadership office, specifically in order to help the practical, material, and spiritual needs of widows, and other people who are lacking.

How The Church Ought To Behave

In 3:14 Paul says he hopes to visit soon. In the ancient world a letter served as a substitution for a personal visit (receiving a letter was an honor). Paul’s goal was to visit the Ephesian church and help instruct them on how to live the Christian life. He then identifies the church as a **“household,”** which is a common biblical way of referring to God’s people. Christians are a divine family, with God our father, and Christ the Son of God our elder brother.

This also has a double meaning; for the first few centuries of the church Christians met in houses (not in buildings). The church is the pillar and foundation of the truth ([3:15](#)); it’s not the church buildings, but the gathered people of God who proclaim the gospel of Jesus and live as His ambassadors on earth.

responding

GODLY LEADERS FOR GOD'S HOUSEHOLD

OVERVIEW

The head of the church isn't any earthly person or organization, but is Christ Himself (*Ephesians 5:23-24*). However, the people of God are to be organized in a way that can be seen on earth (the visible church), with God calling a variety of people to lead. As ambassadors for Christ, we organize and lead as well as we can, but we can also have confidence knowing that we cannot ruin or destroy the church, because Jesus Himself said that not even the gates of

hell would overcome His church (*Matthew 16:18*).

The mission of the church is to be the foundation of truth. So the People of God pursue holiness and godliness, we use wisdom in choosing leaders, and are diligent in proclaiming the name of Christ to the nations. However, we live with the confidence that the success and survival of the church doesn't rest on our shoulders, but on God's alone, through the power of the Holy Spirit.

...all Christians are called to live virtuous lives and to be holy, because God is holy.

THEMES

Qualifications For Elders (Overseers)

Elders should be mature men who exemplify Christ's character. These are the men who lead the church, teach the church, and guard the church from false doctrine. While this is a very important office, elders aren't moral "super-Christians." Everything that is asked of an elder (in terms of character) is asked of all of God's people. For instance, compare some of the character traits of elders with other biblical teachings demanded of all Christians: self-controlled (*Galatians 5:22*), hospitable (*1 Peter 4:9; Leviticus 19:34*), not a drunkard (*Ephesians 5:18; Romans 13:13*), not violent but gentle (*Romans 12:19*), not quarrelsome (*2 Timothy 2:24*), not a lover of money (*Luke 16:14*).

The ability to teach and oversee a congregation is a spiritual gift, one that not all Christians are given. However, all Christians are called to live virtuous lives and to be holy, because God is holy (*1 Peter 1:16*).

Qualifications For Deacons

While not everyone is called to serve in the formal "office" of deacon, all Christians are to serve as unofficial deacons. This is because the heart of being a Jesus follower is mimicking His example of service and sacrifice. Paul talks about this in *Philippians 2:1-11*, where he shares the example of Jesus giving up His eternal position of glory with God, in order to step into His own creation and redeem it by becoming a servant (note: in this passage the Greek word for servant is **doulos**, not **dikainos**, but the same concept would apply).

Jesus was the true and ultimate servant, and so we shouldn't ever fall into the temptation of making other people the standard of goodness (whether a pastor or other person we admire). Let us always look to Christ and attempt to follow Him and how He served.

How The Church Ought To Behave

Well-meaning Christians oftentimes make statements like "Christianity isn't about rules, it's about a relationship." While the relationship aspect is extremely important, we can't ignore that there are actually rules for following Jesus. For instance, Jesus Himself said that we are to: Love God with all our heart, mind, soul, strength, and we are to Love our neighbor as ourselves (*Matthew 22:37-40*). If that's not a rule, I don't know what is. Someone doesn't become a follower of Jesus by obeying rules, but those who truly love God will earnestly desire to behave in a way that's pleasing to God.

We are to behave in a certain way because it demonstrates to the world that the church, which is a pillar and foundation the truth, represents a holy God who is perfectly above reproach. We are to be holy because God is holy (*1 Peter 1:16*).



challenge questions

GODLY LEADERS FOR GOD'S HOUSEHOLD

01 Personal Reflection and Response

Read through Romans 12 and note how Paul instructs Christians to behave (both what they are supposed to do, and what they are supposed to avoid). Which of these behaviors do you struggle with? Which come easier for you?

02 Group Conversation and Response

All of God's people are to be above reproach, but there are certain people who are called into leadership positions. Are there people you know who are called into church leadership positions, but might need some encouragement to pursue such a commitment?

03 Ministry Reflection and Response

How can we serve the leaders of our own church? Do we regularly pray for them? How can we provide regular encouragement by means of notes, emails, and "thank yous"? What can you think of to encourage your leaders?

praying

GODLY LEADERS FOR GOD'S HOUSEHOLD

Sample Prayer:

God, we thank You for including us as members of Your visible church, and for equipping leaders to oversee and shepherd us. We pray for those leaders (and their families), that they would continue to follow You and oversee our congregation with wisdom, compassion, and love. We thank You for Jesus, the true elder—the perfect shepherd—who is the perfect model of self-control, gentleness, and humility. Please allow us to model Him in our community.

Participant Prayer:

Create your own prayer based on this week's scripture. Read the scripture in light of what Jesus has done for the world, and pray that God will conform you into the image of Jesus (*Romans 8:29*). Pray for God to give you the power, through the Holy Spirit, to accomplish what the scripture says.

Write your prayer and/or prayer requests here:



notes

GODLY LEADERS FOR GOD'S HOUSEHOLD



WE EK 06

TRAINING
FOR
GODLINESS



observing

TRAINING FOR GODLINESS

1 TIMOTHY 4:1-16

The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. ² Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron. ³ They forbid people to marry and order them to abstain from certain foods, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and who know the truth. ⁴ For everything God created is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, ⁵ because it is consecrated by the word of God and prayer.

⁶ If you point these things out to the brothers and sisters, you will be a good minister of Christ Jesus, nourished on the truths of the faith and of the good teaching that you have followed. ⁷ Have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives' tales; rather, train yourself to be godly. ⁸ For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to

come. ⁹ This is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance. ¹⁰ That is why we labor and strive, because we have put our hope in the living God, who is the Savior of all people, and especially of those who believe.

¹¹ Command and teach these things. ¹² Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity. ¹³ Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching. ¹⁴ Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through prophecy when the body of elders laid their hands on you.

¹⁵ Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress. ¹⁶ Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers.

OBSERVATION PRACTICE

In order to become familiar with this passage, and to help understand what is being said, the first step is to make the following observations:

List any People:

List any important or significant verbs (actions), repeated words/phrases, or other theological/special terms. Why do you think they are important or significant?

SUMMARY

In your own words, summarize this passage in 1–2 sentences:

OBSERVING QUESTIONS

01 How does Paul describe the false teachers in verses 1–5?

02 What does Paul say regarding Timothy's character in verses 6–16?

03 In what ways does this passage speak about doctrine?

defining

TRAINING FOR GODLINESS

**Abandon the
faith and follow
deceiving spirits
(4:1):**

The Word of God is clear that there is a constant temptation for Christians to abandon the true doctrines of Scripture. Paul teaches that heresies are appealing because they are motivated by deceptive spirits. Just as Eve was tempted by the lies of Satan, demonic spirits continue to deceive through false teachers.

**They forbid people
to marry and order
them to abstain
from certain foods
(4:3):**

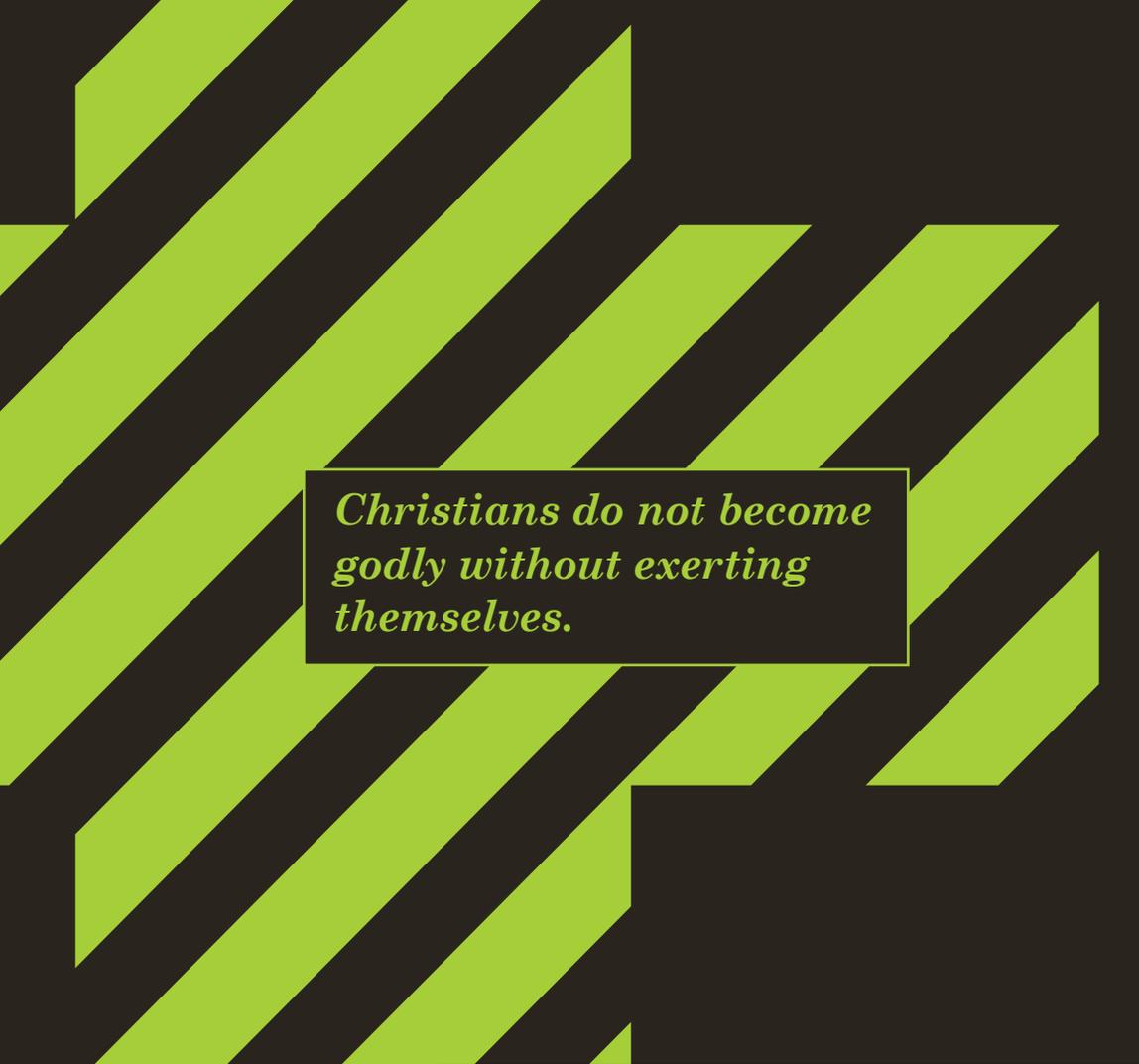
This phrase provides a brief depiction of what these false profits were teaching. It is probable that these false teachers were known as Gnostics. They taught that certain natural human experiences, like marriage and eating, were intrinsically immoral.

**For everything
God created is
good and nothing
is to be rejected if
it is received with
thanksgiving (4:4):**

Natural human experiences like marriage and eating are intrinsically good, because God created all things good. While the Mosaic law instructed Israel to avoid certain foods (*Leviticus 11*), under Christ, the law of Moses is no longer in effect since Christ has fulfilled the requirements of the law (*Matthew 5:17; Romans 7:4-6*). Therefore, the church is not required to abstain from these foods (*Acts 11:1-10*). Finally, it must be noted that there are certain components of creation that have been affected and distorted by the Fall. For instance, though a psychedelic mushroom and marijuana may naturally grow in the wild, abusing these drugs for the sake of escaping a sober mind is not ethically moral or beneficial (*1 Peter 1:13-16*).

**Train yourself to
be godly (4:7):**

Paul exhorts Timothy to train himself for the sake of godliness. Christians do not become godly without exerting themselves. While this effort is powered by the work of the Holy Spirit through the grace of God, Christians are called to work out their salvation with fear and trembling (*Philippians 2:12-13*).



*Christians do not become
godly without exerting
themselves.*

**Who is the Savior
of all people, and
especially of
those who believe
(4:10):**

**Watch your life
and doctrine
closely (4:16):**

In no way is this teaching any sort of universalism (where everyone on earth is automatically saved), as the Bible clearly teaches that God specifically saves those who place all of their faith and hope in the accomplishments of Jesus Christ (see chapter 2:1-7 for reference to “**all people**”).

Paul wants Timothy to recognize the importance of paying close attention to both what he believes and how he lives. Christians cannot merely focus on their morals, nor only on their theology. Paul is advocating that Christians must concern themselves with both of these aspects of life, i.e. life and doctrine.

understanding

TRAINING FOR GODLINESS

OVERVIEW

It is clear that during the time of this letter there were serious threats to the gospel. In this section of 1 Timothy, we get a little insight into what kinds of false teachings were finding their way into the church. Not only this, but we also see the source of those teachings and the results they bring to the lives of those who follow them. Ultimately, Paul tells Timothy why he ought to correct this false teaching and what he ought to pursue in order to guard his own life and doctrine.

Dealing with false teaching (and teachers) is one of the main reasons why Paul wrote this letter to Timothy (1:3-4). In this particular section of the letter, Paul tells Timothy why he must correct this group of people. First, their teaching does not align with what God says to be true in His Word (4:3-4). Second, these teachers will ultimately **“abandon the faith”** (4:1), which proves they were not true followers of Christ in the first place. Paul then encourages Timothy toward a positive pursuit.

What Timothy ought to devote himself to is training in godliness (4:7), in addition to preaching and teaching (4:13). Both Timothy’s life and doctrine are important. He cannot devote himself to one while neglecting the other. At the end of chapter 4, Paul tells Timothy **“watch your life and doctrine closely”** (4:16). In order to effectively minister to this congregation, Timothy must strive to please God in both areas of his life.

The ultimate goal of correcting false teaching, pursuing godliness, and maintaining sound doctrine is so that Timothy will save himself and his hearers (4:16). In these two things, the way one lives and the doctrine to which one holds, it is revealed whether or not someone is truly a follower of Christ.



THEMES

Avoid False Teaching & Apostasy

While we've seen the theme of false teaching throughout the book, in chapter 4 we finally get a glimpse of what is actually taking place within this church. Certain people in the congregation have devoted themselves to **"deceiving spirits and things taught by demons"** (4:1). Paul says that those who teach these things have seared consciences. In other words, they've become numb to the teaching of the truth and the conviction of the Holy Spirit. Their teachings are a form of asceticism (forbidding marriage and certain foods), and their end is to **"abandon the faith"** (4:1). Paul's response is reminiscent of Genesis 1:31 **"God saw all that he had made, and it was very good."** Christians like Timothy had the freedom to eat any food that the Old Testament Law once forbid. Christ's blood purchased freedom to do so. This would have been on the forefront of Paul's mind as he wrote this letter.

Strive For Godliness

Timothy's life was to be an outworking of the gospel. Paul calls him to **"train yourself to be godly"** (4:7). Another version of this verse reads **"discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness"** (NASB). Later, Paul emphasizes specific areas of Timothy's life that ought to reflect godliness. 4:12 reads **"set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity."** Paul's reasoning for such a serious pursuit of godliness was that it not only affects this life but also the one to come (4:8). Timothy's life was on display in front of this church and anyone else to whom he ministered. If Timothy were to live a life contrary to his teaching and to the gospel it would have undermined his ministry to the church at Ephesus.

"Watch your life and doctrine closely."

Seek Sound Doctrine

Paul puts a heavy emphasis on Timothy's teaching and doctrine throughout this chapter. He was to avoid the various heresies that had infiltrated the church, and correct those who had succumb to them (4:6-7). Paul then states the matter positively by calling Timothy to preach what is clearly taught in God's Word. Paul's final exhortation in this chapter is sobering: **"Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers"** (4:16). Doctrine is a significant and weighty issue; it ultimately leads to life or death.

responding

TRAINING FOR GODLINESS

OVERVIEW

Although none of us are preachers or teachers in the context of a first century local church, we are all (hopefully) members of a twenty-first century local church. As this is the case, Paul's words to Timothy are just as relevant to our lives as they were to his long ago. In this passage we are given a way to combat false teaching, a pattern of life to follow ourselves, and an example to look for in a local church and pastor.

If we are to remain faithful to Christ we must also remain faithful to His Word.

THEMES

Avoid False Teaching & Apostasy

False teaching (and teachers) are exactly that—false! In order to understand what is false, however, we need to know what is true. Paul combats false teaching with truth from God’s Word. We ought to follow the same pattern, and to do so we need to be biblically literate. Knowing what God’s Word says and means is not optional for Christians. We see in this passage that some abandoned the faith because they devoted themselves to a teaching that was not biblical (4:1). If we are to remain faithful to Christ we must also remain faithful to His Word. They are one and the same. How can we do such a thing if we do not read it, study it, know it, and cherish it?

Strive For Godliness



Paul’s call for godliness isn’t exclusive to Timothy. In 4:12 he says that Timothy is to be an example of godly living to the church at Ephesus. In other words, all Christians are called to live upright and godly lives (Titus 2:11–12). This call is inherent to the gospel message. When Christ saved us He not only cleansed us of our sin, but He also gave us a new heart, and put His Spirit within us. In doing so He actually enables us, even causes us, to live a life that’s pleasing to Him (Ezekiel 36:25–27). Paul pushes Timothy toward godliness, because he knows that God has not only granted him righteousness in Christ, but He’s also given him the ability to live righteously! God’s call on our lives is the same as that on Timothy’s. Our part in this call is to train ourselves to be godly.

Seek Sound Doctrine

Whether or not we recognize it, we are exposed to doctrine whenever we listen to a sermon, sing a worship song, or go to a Bible study. Timothy’s doctrine was to be founded on Scripture rather than myths or speculations (4:7,13). The same ought to be true of ours. Our worship services ought to always center around the public proclamation of God’s Word. When we worship through song the lyrics ought to have theological grounding. It can be tempting to get caught up in emotional experience or unfounded theological ideas. Instead, our primary focus on Sunday, and every other day, ought to be what Scripture clearly teaches.

challenge questions

TRAINING FOR GODLINESS

01 Personal Reflection and Response

What steps can you personally take to grow in your understanding of God's Word? Additionally, in what areas of your life do you need to pursue godliness? What practical steps can you take to see that happen?

02 Group Conversation and Response

In what ways does doctrine affect someone's life? In other words, can someone's beliefs affect the way that person lives? If so, how?

03 Ministry Reflection and Response

Members of the church are called to hold one another accountable. Not only must they encourage others to turn away from patterns of sin and false teaching, but they also have the responsibility to encourage others to live righteous lives. In what ways are you engaging in relationships that promote this sort of accountability?

praying

TRAINING FOR GODLINESS

Sample Prayer:

O Lord, without You I am unable to know the truth or live a life that is honoring to You. Yet, You saved me and gave me a new heart. You gave me the ability to live a life that is pleasing to You! Please help me to live according to the truth clearly expressed in Your Word. Please cause my heart to long to know what You have said in Your Word. By Your grace please help me to faithfully devote myself to reading and studying the Bible, in order that I might know and worship You for who You are.

Participant Prayer:

Create your own prayer based on this week's scripture. Read the scripture in light of what Jesus has done for the world, and pray that God will conform you into the image of Jesus (*Romans 8:29*). Pray for God to give you the power, through the Holy Spirit, to accomplish what the scripture says.

Write your prayer and/or prayer requests here:



notes

TRAINING FOR GODLINESS



WE EK 07

THE
PRACTICE
OF
GODLINESS



observing

THE PRACTICE OF GODLINESS

1 TIMOTHY 5:1-6:2 5:1-6; 8-12; 16-21 selected

Do not rebuke an older man harshly, but exhort him as if he were your father. Treat younger men as brothers, ² older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters, with absolute purity.

³ Give proper recognition to those widows who are really in need. ⁴ But if a widow has children or grandchildren, these should learn first of all to put their religion into practice by caring for their own family and so repaying their parents and grandparents, for this is pleasing to God. ⁵ The widow who is really in need and left all alone puts her hope in God and continues night and day to pray and to ask God for help. ⁶ But the widow who lives for pleasure is dead even while she lives.... ⁸ Anyone who does not provide for their relatives, and especially for their own household, has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

⁹ No widow may be put on the list of widows unless she is over sixty, has been faithful to her husband, ¹⁰ and is well known for her good deeds, such as bringing up children, showing hospitality, washing the feet of the Lord's people, helping those in trouble and devoting herself to all kinds of good deeds.

¹¹ As for younger widows, do not put them on such a list. For when their sensual desires overcome their dedication to Christ, they want to marry.

¹² Thus they bring judgment on themselves, because they have broken their first pledge....

¹⁶ If any woman who is a believer has widows in her care, she should continue to help them and not let the church be burdened with them, so that the church can help those widows who are really in need.

¹⁷ The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching. ¹⁸ For Scripture says, "Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain," and "The worker deserves his wages." ¹⁹ Do not entertain an accusation against an elder unless it is brought by two or three witnesses. ²⁰ But those elders who are sinning you are to reprove before everyone, so that the others may take warning. ²¹ I charge you, in the sight of God and Christ Jesus and the elect angels, to keep these instructions without partiality, and to do nothing out of favoritism....

OBSERVATION PRACTICE

In order to become familiar with this passage, and to help understand what is being said, the first step is to make the following observations:

defining

THE PRACTICE OF GODLINESS

Widows (5:3):

Widows were often in need of receiving aid, as it wasn't commonplace to employ women in the ancient world. Since older widows (5:9) were not likely to remarry, it was especially important for the church to care for these vulnerable church members. Hence, Paul provides two qualifications for widows to be supported by the church: age and godliness.

Anyone who does not provide for their relatives... has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever (5:8):

Providing financially for one's own family is of utmost importance. Paul has just instructed the church to refrain from providing for widows who have relatives capable of meeting their needs (5:4). Now, he warns the church that those who fail to provide financially for the needs of their own family have in essence denied **"the faith."**

They want to marry... broken their first pledge (5:11):

Paul is counseling the church against permitting young widows to sign this **"pledge."** It is likely that when widows signed it they were committing to remain widows. Thus, Paul does not want young widows to commit themselves to remaining widows for the rest of their lives, since that could likely result in them breaking their word.

Worthy of double honor (5:17):

Paul instructs Timothy that the church should financially provide for elders who labor in preaching and teaching. Hence, Paul quotes Jesus, **"a laborer deserves his wages"** (5:18; *Matthew 10:10*).

Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands (5:22):

Paul warns the church to avoid appointing men as elders too quickly. The reason is that sometimes **"sins appear later"** (5:24). It is important to test a man and allow his spiritual maturity to demonstrate itself over time.



*Providing financially for
one's own family is of
utmost importance.*

Yoke of slavery
(6:1):

Slavery in the ancient Greco-Roman world differed from the 18th and 19th century trans-Atlantic slave trade in a number of substantial ways. First, slavery in Roman culture was often established as a financial arrangement, as the relationship between a slave owner and slave was often that of an employer and employee. Second, slaves in the ancient world were often well-educated and functioned within society as teachers. Third, slavery in the ancient world was not radicalized in accordance with skin color. All of these factors distinguish the ancient practice of slavery from trans-Atlantic slave trade. In addition to these distinctions, it must also be stated that within Exodus 21, God explicitly condemns the act of kidnapping a human being with the intention of selling him or her. The trans-Atlantic slave trade of the 18th and 19th centuries was precisely that, the kidnapping and selling of human beings as though they were animals (see more on forms of slavery in the Defining section of Week 8).

understanding

THE PRACTICE OF GODLINESS

OVERVIEW

In 5:1–6:2 Paul addresses his young protégé regarding the different types of members that make up the local congregation. He begins in 5:1–2 by providing Timothy with some practical wisdom as he seeks to shepherd the church, which is made up of people of different ages, demographics, and genders. For example, Paul tells Timothy to interact with older men as though he were interacting with a father. Instead of rebuking older men, Timothy is told to encourage them. In 5:3–16 Paul turns his attention to a different subgroup of this congregation. Here, Paul places his focus on how this congregation is to care for and show honor to the widows within this church. Paul's primary concern is that the church would utilize wisdom as they discern which widows to care for. Paul offers a list of qualifiers to help the church discern who to care for. For example, the widow must exceed the age of sixty, be marked by good works, and lack relatives capable of caring for her.

Paul transitions again in 5:17–25 to a different group of individuals within the congregation, the elders. Timothy is instructed that the congregation must not be hasty to appoint church elders, as these men need to publically demonstrate their proven character. Additionally, Paul states that the church has the responsibility to financially support its elders who lead, preach, and teach. Finally, in 6:1–2 Paul turns his attention to a subset of individuals within the church who happen to be slaves. Slaves are told to regard their masters with respect and serve them wholeheartedly since this brings glory to God.



THEMES

Caring For Those Truly In Need

There are two important components of this theme within chapter 5. First, the church has the responsibility to care for those in need within the congregation. Widows who have sincere needs should receive help from the people of God. This fulfills Christ's great commandment to **"Love your neighbor as yourself"** (*Matthew 22:39*).

Second, the church has the responsibility to discern which of its congregants have legitimate needs. This is why Paul tells Timothy to only provide for widows who are older than 60 years of age. Additionally, Paul instructs Timothy to reserve the church's funds for widows living godly lives. Ultimately, God calls the church to demonstrate wisdom and discernment when providing for the needs of its members.



The Church's Responsibility Of Caring For One Another

As Paul provides Timothy guidance on how the church should care for the needy within its midst, he qualifies himself. He tells Timothy that a widow should seek assistance from her family, if possible. For instance, a widow should seek support from a son or daughter before seeking the support of the church. The text is clear that children and grandchildren can practice their own godliness by taking care of their parents and grandparents (*5:4*). Paul even goes so far as to say that anyone who is unwilling to support his or her own family, is worse than an unbeliever (*5:8*).

...the church has the responsibility to discern which of its congregants have legitimate needs.

Support And Respect For Elders

Paul instructs the church to provide financial care for the elders who lead well. By encouraging the church to offer **"double honor"** to its elders who labor in preaching and teaching, Paul informs the church that they ought to provide financial support for its leaders (*5:17-18*). Paul supports this notion with two Scriptural references, **"Do not muzzle an ox,"** and **"The worker is worth his keep"** (*Deuteronomy 25:4; Matthew 10:10*).

In addition to providing financial support to its pastors, the church should show respect towards its elders. This is why Timothy is told to prohibit the church from charging its elders without the evidence of two or three witnesses. Unless the church tests accusations against its leaders, the body of Christ runs the risk of upheaval and distrust.

responding

THE PRACTICE OF GODLINESS

OVERVIEW

Within this passage are a number of important truths by which the church should seek to abide. The church is regularly approached by its own members and by individuals from the community who are in need of some sort of assistance. Due to the volume of requests the church receives, it takes wisdom to discern which situations are worthy of its financial help. For this reason, Paul provides the church with some practical means for discerning which individuals the church has the responsibility to assist. As the church seeks to discern how to spend its resources on various opportunities of service, the

people of God must recognize their responsibility to also care for those members of their own family. Paul clarifies children and grandchildren are called to care for their family members. If someone fails to do this, they are considered **“worse than an unbeliever” (5:8)**.

Finally, this passage highlights one more responsibility that the church should not neglect, respecting its leaders. Paul states that the church should provide financial assistance to its leaders. He then goes on to state that the body of Christ should carefully consider the validity of accusations cast upon its leaders.

...the people of God must seek to show true hospitality and generosity in a time of need.

THEMES

Caring For Those Truly In Need

It's not uncommon to be approached by someone who is looking for financial assistance. How is the church to discern whether or not to give in any particular situation? Two realities must be recognized. First, the body of Christ is limited in its financial resources. Second, it is not always helpful to give handouts to people, as they may abuse the generosity of others to their own detriment. These two realities call the church to apply wisdom. This is exactly what God's Word is calling for in this passage. The church must learn to follow Paul's instruction by discerning whether or not a given individual is in true need. Once this has been accomplished, then the people of God must seek to show true hospitality and generosity in a time of need.

The Church's Responsibility Of Caring For One Another

Christians have been called to show love and generosity to family members. Sometimes it can be most difficult to care for the needs of those who are closest to us. Whether we do not feel appreciated by our family members, or whether we want our generosity to be seen by others within our communities, we are often quick to neglect the needs of those closest to us. At times, this sort of love and sacrifice will result in someone travelling long distances on a regular basis in order to be with a parent or grandparent in need of care. In other circumstances, this may mean that a son or daughter will need to move across the country in order to care for family.

Support And Respect For Elders

Teaching and preaching God's Word demands time and attention. For this reason, many of the leaders at Golden Hills spend the majority of their workweek solely devoted to teaching and preaching. Thus, these church leaders depend on the congregation to survive financially. This reality should prompt the church to show generosity to its pastors.

In a similar way, a pastor's livelihood is dependent on his godly character. If a pastor has a moral failure, he should (rightfully) be removed from his position. However, if a pastor has not fallen morally, but is accused of some sort of moral failure unjustly, this individual is susceptible to losing his means of financial stability. For this reason, the church should show discernment as it vets accusations aimed at its pastors. The church should resist the sinful temptation to gossip and spread rumors, especially in a scenario involving a pastor or leader in the church.



challenge questions

THE PRACTICE OF GODLINESS

01 Personal Reflection and Response

How do you respond when someone in need asks for your assistance? Are you quick to supply for their needs? Are you quick to question the validity of their need? Based on our study, what is the appropriate response to those who seek your assistance?

02 Group Conversation and Response

How can your Small Group partner with the ministries of Golden Hills to care for the needs of the weak and vulnerable? How can you seek to provide for the needs of those within your Small Group who are in need?

03 Ministry Reflection and Response

Is there anyone you know to whom you could show the love of Christ by providing for their needs? How will you go about discerning the validity of his or her need? How will you go on to provide any needed assistance?

praying

THE PRACTICE OF GODLINESS

Sample Prayer:

Lord, we seek You for wisdom. We often respond with selfishness and greed when we are made aware of our needs. We are quick to place such responsibilities upon others. We confess these sins to You, as we know that they offend You and harm the outreach of our church. Father, help us to see Your generosity in Christ! For when we truly understand the great measure of love and selflessness displayed in the gospel, we begin to recognize the foolishness of our greed. As we come to understand Your grace towards us, we ask that You would help us to live generous lives. We also pray that You would make us a generous people when it comes to taking care of our leaders and pastors.

Participant Prayer:

Create your own prayer based on this week's scripture. Read the scripture in light of what Jesus has done for the world, and pray that God will conform you into the image of Jesus (*Romans 8:29*). Pray for God to give you the power, through the Holy Spirit, to accomplish what the scripture says.

Write your prayer and/or prayer requests here:



notes

THE PRACTICE OF GODLINESS



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08

THE
PURSUIT
OF
A
GODLY
MAN



observing

PURSUIT OF A GODLY MAN

1 TIMOTHY 6:1-16

All who are under the yoke of slavery should consider their masters worthy of full respect, so that God's name and our teaching may not be slandered. ² Those who have believing masters should not show them disrespect just because they are fellow believers. Instead, they should serve them even better because their masters are dear to them as fellow believers and are devoted to the welfare of their slaves. These are the things you are to teach and insist on. ³ If anyone teaches otherwise and does not agree to the sound instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ and to godly teaching, ⁴ they are conceited and understand nothing. They have an unhealthy interest in controversies and quarrels about words that result in envy, strife, malicious talk, evil suspicions ⁵ and constant friction between people of corrupt mind, who have been robbed of the truth and who think that godliness is a means to financial gain. ⁶ But godliness with contentment is great gain. ⁷ For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. ⁸ But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. ⁹ Those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and

into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. ¹⁰ For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.

¹¹ But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness.

¹² Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses. ¹³ In the sight of God, who gives life to everything, and of Christ Jesus, who while testifying before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, I charge you ¹⁴ to keep this command without spot or blame until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁵ which God will bring about in his own time—God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords, ¹⁶ who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honor and might forever. Amen.

OBSERVATION PRACTICE

In order to become familiar with this passage, and to help understand what is being said, the first step is to make the following observations:

List any People:

defining

PURSUIT OF A GODLY MAN

Yoke of slavery

(6:1):

Roughly one-third of the Roman Empire was made up of slaves (50–60 million people). Not all slavery systems throughout history are the same: Hebrew slaves were impoverished Israelites who could become servants for a period of time, and the African trans-Atlantic slaves of the Americas were owned as property and functioned under brutal conditions. The Roman slave system was rather diverse, as some slaves were simple employees, and some even owned slaves themselves. There were, however, some brutal forms of slavery that existed in Rome, which included grueling labor, harsh treatment, and sexual abuse (see the Defining section from Week 7 for more information on slavery).

Believing master

(6:2):

With so many slaves in the Roman Empire, one could imagine that some slave owners had become followers of Jesus. It might be natural for us to look back and condemn those slave owners for participating in that institution rather than abolishing it, but Paul's purpose is not to cause an overthrow of Roman socio-economic structure; rather he is attempting to instruct those people how to function within their secular system in the way that will most glorify God.

Unhealthy interest in controversies and quarrels about words (6:4):

Paul isn't condemning all discussions or arguments about theology, after all, Paul's writing a letter arguing a theological point. Paul is arguing against people he identifies as "**pseudo-intellectuals**" (wanna-be intellectuals). They believe that they are knowledgeable about a subject, but in reality they don't have enough information to actually engage a topic in a meaningful way.

*...those who pursue
righteousness are the
true people of God...*

**But you, man
of God...pursue
righteousness
(6:11):**

**The good fight of
the faith (6:12):**

Paul is affirming that those who pursue righteousness are the true people of God, in contrast to those false teachers who aren't seeking after righteous things, but are instead trying to flatter themselves with empty knowledge, cause contention with their theology, and seek after money (*Proverbs 15:9*).

Like any good Roman citizen familiar with their military, this phrase would have immediately brought to mind the concept of war. Jesus' followers are to engage in war and fight against evil, but the church's weapons aren't violent. Rather, they are demonstrated by righteousness, godliness, love, and gentleness. This is best demonstrated in Jesus, who didn't conquer evil through violence, but by becoming a sacrificial lamb (*Revelation 5:5-6*).

understanding

PURSUIT OF A GODLY MAN

OVERVIEW

Paul continues his theme of warning the church about false teachers and false doctrines, and for Christians to pursue righteousness and godliness. Throughout Paul's letters he stresses the importance of unity within the church (*Ephesians 4:1-6, etc.*), however, church leaders should never sacrifice right theology for the sake of getting along. Church leaders ought to pursue sound theology, but should do so with an encouraging attitude that is centered in love (*Galatians 5:22-23*). Paul is making it clear that right theology is extremely important, even to the point of declaring that those who don't have right theology are **"lacking in righteousness."** This is emphatic at the end of 6:1, where he writes: **"so that God's name and our teaching may not be slandered."** The Greek word slandered is *blasphēmō*, to which we get the English word *blasphemy*. Blasphemy occurs when someone commits an insult to God, or does something offensive to God's people.

Paul goes on to encourage Christian slaves to have integrity in their work. He is directing this to slaves who have both believing and non-believing masters, so that by showing respect to their masters they'll never give an opportunity for God's name to be slandered. This is consistent with Paul's focus on godliness, and how Christians ought to pursue righteousness. Even in the early church, showing respect to friends and enemies alike was placed as an utmost Christian virtue, as it best displayed the love that Jesus has for the world.

*...church leaders should
never sacrifice right theology
for the sake of getting along.*

THEMES

Respecting Our Masters

Slavery was a major aspect of Roman culture, as about one-third the population was slaves, and most families employed at least one slave. It seems appropriate that Paul provided practical and tangible advice to this prevalent group. While Paul writes in Galatians 3:28 that even slaves share in the same inheritance as the free person, as well as exhorting slaves and masters in Ephesians 6:5–9, he isn't giving approval to the institution of slavery; he's merely teaching Christians how they ought to live in light of this oppressive system.

Slaves often had a reputation for being disrespectful, and so Paul wanted them to avoid making a negative name for themselves and for their God. They shouldn't do sub-par work for their pagan masters, and they shouldn't assume that since they worshipped the same God as their Christian masters that they could take advantage of them with poor workmanship.

Controversies And Quarreling Over Theology

It was common in Greek and Roman cultures to have deep philosophical conversations. However, there were also people who are known as “*pseudointellectuals*,” meaning they claim to have a scholarly grasp and knowledge on a subject, but in actuality they aren't as informed as they think. Part of the problem was that they are spending time arguing about the details and nuances of words rather than the bigger picture and context that the words are trying to argue. One can imagine how such empty arguments would create friction (6:5).

Paul is making the point that people shouldn't be teaching unless they have good moral character and an adequate understanding of the scriptures and theology. This is why he was so emphatic about the qualifications for elders in chapter 3:1–7, not only that they were to be above reproach and of strong character, but that they also are teachers.

The Love Of Money

The ancient Egyptians were buried with their important belongings, thinking they could take those things to the afterlife. However, as anyone who ever visited those tombs would quickly discover, the artifacts stayed behind. In 6:7 Paul is confirming that we take out of the world the same things that we bring into the world—nothing. This is a very simple, yet profound, warning to those false teachers who had a love of money. In fact, Paul goes on to provide one of the Bible's most famous sayings: “**for the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil.**”

For the early Christians who were familiar with the teachings of Jesus, they would have heard this phrase and immediately thought back to Jesus' teachings from the Sermon on the Mount (*Matthew 5–7*), specifically where He discusses how God's people ought to view possessions and riches (*Matthew 6:19–24*).

responding

PURSUIT OF A GODLY MAN

OVERVIEW

Just as unity was an issue in the early church, it is still a problem in the church today. And just as there was a temptation to abandon sound theology for the sake of unity in Paul's day, this has become a major problem for the church in America (and around the world). The question becomes, where is the tension between preaching and practicing right theology while maintaining brotherly and sisterly unity with other Christians (whose denominations

or traditions vary from what we might call "sound doctrine")?

Regardless of where one stands in their theological convictions, Jesus' followers cannot abandon love for others in the name of "right theology." A person can hold to all the correct theology they can study, but if they don't have love for others, their theology will be useless. This is why Jesus told His disciples: **"By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another"** (John 13:35).

A person can hold to all the correct theology they can study, but if they don't have love for others, their theology will be useless.

THEMES

Respecting Our Masters

Have you ever worked with someone who professed to be a Christian, but was a terrible employee? It's embarrassing! We obviously don't live in a society that's slave driven, but the same principle applies in that how Christians engage their jobs has a direct reflection on how society views Jesus.

The majority of us have "masters" (superiors), but if you're a "master" yourself, read Ephesians 6:9. It's absolutely crucial that Christians practice this same sort of work ethic that Paul commands to slaves. A poor work ethic not only impedes on the Christian's ability to witness, but worse than that, it's a poor representation of God, Himself. So regardless of your boss's religious status, Christians are to be good workers in order to glorify God (visit the sermon archives at goldenhills.org, and search for Pastor Phil Ward's series on the *Theology of Work* during July of 2016).

Controversies and Quarreling Over Theology

This passage is often misunderstood as a reason to not have theological conversations or to not be passionate about theology; Paul's point couldn't be further from this! Christians ought to care about sound theology, as this helps us understand God better, and instructs us as we are conformed into the image of Christ.

As we study God's Word it's important to try and dive into the finer points of theology, but we can't get bogged down by the minutia of the text, only to then fail to actually grasp what the author is trying to communicate. Ultimately, any discussion of theology ought to be done from a place of love and gentleness, and not from a place that creates friction or conceit. Theology is important, but ought to be discussed in a healthy manner.

The Love of Money

Money isn't the root of all evil, it's the love of money that's the root of all kinds of evil. We've all known wealthy people who have a healthy view of their possessions, as they understand that what they own belongs to God and is to be used for His glory. On the other hand, we've all known people (even professing Christians) who seemingly make money and possessions to be an idol. The money and possessions aren't the issue; it's how the person views the money that is.

When Jesus taught us to pray "**give us this day our daily bread**" (*Matthew 6:11*), He was teaching people to literally depend on God for everything, each day of their lives. And so while we are very fortunate to live in a time where we can keep money in banks, stockpile food, and have insurance to cover us in the event of an emergency, we oftentimes put those safeguards in the place of God.



challenge questions

PURSUIT OF A GODLY MAN

01 Personal Reflection and Response

How do you approach conversations about theology? Do you fall into the trap of conceit and quarreling, which often causes friction? Or do you just not engage in those discussions?

02 Group Conversation and Response

Where's the line between financial comfort and idolatry? Have you actually sought God's guidance in how to view money, or have you found ways to justify a comfortable lifestyle? How does/can the "American Dream" get in the way of the biblical teaching on money, idolatry, and generosity?

03 Ministry Reflection and Response

How can we (tangibly) use our time, jobs, and financial resources, to glorify God?

praying

PURSUIT OF A GODLY MAN

Sample Prayer:

Father, we thank You for sending us your Son Jesus, who is the one that truly makes You known to the world (*John 1:18*). Please help us to grow in becoming like Him, as we learn to be better workers, better teachers, and better stewards of our money. Give us the mind to engage Your Word, to seek to understand it as deep as possible, but to never engage in unhealthy conversations. Guide us in godliness as we pursue righteousness.

Participant Prayer:

Create your own prayer based on this week's scripture. Read the scripture in light of what Jesus has done for the world, and pray that God will conform you into the image of Jesus (*Romans 8:29*). Pray for God to give you the power, through the Holy Spirit, to accomplish what the scripture says.

Write your prayer and/or prayer requests here:



notes

PURSUIT OF A GODLY MAN





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TAKING
HOLD
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A
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observing

TAKING HOLD OF A GODLY LIFE

1 TIMOTHY 6:17-21

Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.

¹⁸ Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. ¹⁹ In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.

²⁰ “Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to your care. Turn away from godless chatter and the opposing ideas of what is falsely called knowledge, ²¹ which some have professed and in so doing have departed from the faith.

“Grace be with you all.”

OBSERVATION PRACTICE

In order to become familiar with this passage, and to help understand what is being said, the first step is to make the following observations:

List what you consider to be the main word in each of the three paragraphs.

In the first paragraph, is Paul addressing those wanting to get rich, or those already rich?

List the five main words repeated twice in the first paragraph.

defining

TAKING HOLD OF A GODLY LIFE

Arrogant (6:17):

Hupsēlōs (lofty) + *phrēn* (the mind, understanding). Thus, “to think in a haughty way,” “high-minded,” “proud.” The rich are usually successful in many ways, so it is easy for them to think they are better.

Uncertain (6:17):

Wealth is liable to vary or change because it can quickly come and go. Proverbs 23:4–5 says, “**Do not wear yourself out to get rich....Cast but a glance at riches, and they are gone.**”

Enjoyment (6:17):

Not self-indulgent living, but enjoying the good things God has given. Physical pleasure is not sinful, but a gift to us from God (*Ecclesiastes 5:19–20*).

Rich (6:18):

The Greek word emphasizes those who don’t need to work, those already wealthy.

Generous (6:18):

Meaning “to give a share of the good you have.”

Willing to share (6:18):

A word in Greek which comes from the root, *koinonia*, meaning “fellowship.” The rich are to share both their friendship, as well as their good things.

Coming age (6:17):

The Bible suggests two distinct ages: “**this age**” and “**the age to come**” (*Matthew 12:32*). We are already in the end of this age (*1 Corinthians 10:11, also called, “the last days” Acts 2:17*). We eagerly anticipate the coming age of the New Creation.

Take hold of life that is truly life (6:19):

The Greek construction of “take hold” indicates true life is something we can have and go after right now. It is a present opportunity, not just life eternal in the future. True life is already in existence. By being generous (6:18) we participate now in the true life that flows from God.

By being generous we participate now in the true life that flows from God.

Guard (6:20):

To watch over, protect, defend and shield.

Falsely called knowledge (6:20):

Two Greek words: **pseudonymos** (“under a false name”) + **gnosis** (“knowledge”). Thus, knowledge that really isn’t knowledge, although it is falsely called knowledge.

You (6:21):

The letter is to Timothy, but this final greeting is to you (plural). Paul intended for his letter to be read to the entire church.

understanding

TAKING HOLD OF A GODLY LIFE

OVERVIEW

This sixth chapter largely addresses Christians and money. Paul first addresses false teachers who wanted to get rich at the expense of those they teach (6:3–5); then provides correction and encouragement (to be content) to those who want to get rich (6:6–10). Paul returns to the subject of finances, this time addressing those who are already rich.

Paul reminds the rich that money is a gift from God for us to enjoy (6:17) and to be shared generously with others (6:18). When one has a lot of money, there are easy traps to fall into: thinking you're better than others (arrogance), and trusting in your money instead of God. On this last point, Paul reminds us that money can be gone in an instant. Paul previously said that we are to provide for our family (5:8), but now adds that we are to help others: **“be generous, willing to share”** (6:18). Christians do this because it reflects Jesus' character, helps others, and God will reward us with future treasures. The biblical pattern is that God generously gives to us, and we receive His gifts with joy. When we generously give we are imitating God. And those who receive what we give receive our gift with joy, which completes the pattern. In this way, we are like God, which brings Him glory, and brings us joy (Acts 20:35).

Lastly, Paul closes with an encouragement to Timothy to guard all that Paul has taught. Don't follow things that sound good but are false knowledge. Stick with a studied understanding of the Bible.



THEMES

Riches

Paul's exhortation to **"to be generous and willing to share"** did not mean he wanted people to stop providing for their family. 1 Timothy 5:8 says, **"Anyone who does not provide for their relatives... has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever."** The subjective question then, is how much is enough to provide for our own family? Paul's main point was to not get tied to the things of this world (the problem of the rich young ruler in *Matthew 19:21-24*), but to use them to help others (*Luke 12:33-34*). And Paul assures us that God will reward that kind of generosity. The key is having the character quality of being a generous person, which comes from loving others and seeing their needs. Once you truly love, generosity comes naturally.

Rewards

"The coming age" (6:19) is both in the Old Testament (**"I will create new heavens and a new earth,"** *Isaiah 65:17*, also see *Isaiah 66:22*), and in the New Testament (**"Then I saw 'a new heaven and a new earth,' for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away"** *Revelation 21:1*). When Revelation says **"passed away,"** that is similar to our bodies "passing away." God will still resurrect our bodies even though they "pass away." The Greek word **"new"** in Revelation 21:1 does not mean "brand new," but "new" in the sense of a refurbished couch with new batting and a new cover. Its quality is new; it's not new in time. That means in eternity we will be on a resurrected earth where **"laying up treasure,"** means a lot more than simply earning a better crown.

Once you truly love, generosity comes naturally.

Guard

When Timothy was told to **"guard what has been entrusted to your care,"** I wonder if he thought of Roman guards who protected prisoners, mountain passes, or Roman Senators. Timothy was told to guard true knowledge. It probably included everything Paul had written in 1 Timothy, as well as the gospel of Jesus Christ. Paul knew how valuable the gospel was. In Romans 1:16 he wrote, **"I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes."** Paul added in Colossians 2:8, **"See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the elemental spiritual forces of this world rather than on Christ."** Paul had entrusted the gospel of Christ to Timothy, and now he tells him to guard it. But how do you guard ideas? You keep them from being changed.

responding

TAKING HOLD OF A GODLY LIFE

OVERVIEW

Most of us are the “rich” people to whom Paul is referring. So what does it mean to put our hope and reliance in God and not in what we own, our bank accounts, and our insurance policies? It’s easy to say, “I trust in God, not my money!” But how do we know that’s true? Is it just an attitude we’re supposed to have, or is it something we are actually to do? Paul indicates it is revealed by whether or not we are generous and help others.

We are all motivated to live well in this life. But we can get so focused on this life we forget about the next life. God wants to motivate us to “lay up treasures for the coming age.” Why? **“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also”** (Matthew 6:21).

Our ultimate reward and heavenly treasure is the joy of experiencing God’s presence for eternity.

THEMES

Riches

Does providing for our family only include food and shelter, or vacations, cars, and the latest iPhone? Each person will answer that question differently. But 6:17 indicates whatever we have it is God who **“provides us with everything for our enjoyment.”** One application is to thank God for what He’s given us. A second is to ask: After we provide for our family, what do we do with our discretionary funds? How many ways can we find to be generous? And what about the things we no longer need, or things we own and don’t plan on giving away, (like loaning a car, letting someone stay with us or at our cabin). There are many ways **“to be generous and willing to share.”**



Rewards

The winner of an Olympic race gets a gold medal. But the actual reward is much more than that; not only will they experience the joy of their family and friends patting them on the back and being told how proud they are, but they have the satisfaction of knowing they are the best in the world at that sport. That same type of happiness will occur when Jesus says, **“Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!”** (Matthew 25:23).

Our ultimate reward and heavenly treasure is the joy of experiencing God’s presence for eternity. David even writes about this in Psalm 16:11: **“You make known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.”**

Guard

Earlier we asked, “How do you guard ideas?” Our answer was, “You keep them from being changed.” In order to do that you have to know what the true idea is or you won’t know the false idea when you hear it. In our time we have lot of options being presented as “the truth.” Jesus said, **“If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free”** (John 8:31–32). According to Jesus we can know truth, and it starts with holding to His teaching. In the book of John there are at least 24 times when Jesus used the phrase, **“I tell you the truth.”** Do we know what Jesus (and the rest of the Bible) teaches? Do we know it well enough to defend it? Can we guard what has been entrusted to us?

challenge questions

TAKING HOLD OF A GODLY LIFE

01 Personal Reflection and Response

Can you honestly say you're ultimately depending on the Lord? How would you handle it if (like Job) you lost your house, job, retirement money, and/or bank account?

02 Group Conversation and Response

Do we think of ourselves as better than poor people, say for instance, homeless people? What are ways we could be more generous with the possessions/riches that God has blessed us with?

03 Ministry Reflection and Response

Think of a friend you have and seek to love them by meeting one of their needs. It might be your time, a listening ear, a car ride, or help with something they have to do. Another idea is to give an anonymous gift (***"When you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you"*** Matthew 6:3-4).

praying

TAKING HOLD OF A GODLY LIFE

Sample Prayer:

God our Father, thank You for providing us with so many good things for our enjoyment. Through Your Holy Spirit help us detach from the things of this world, and put our hope in You. Jesus, give us Your eyes of love for others, and wisdom to know when to help and when to refrain. Help us also know more about the coming age so we can set our hearts on it. Jesus, thank You for speaking the truth when You were here. Help us know and understand that truth so we can guard it and live it out. Amen.

Participant Prayer:

Create your own prayer based on this week's scripture. Read the scripture in light of what Jesus has done for the world, and pray that God will conform you into the image of Jesus (*Romans 8:29*). Pray for God to give you the power, through the Holy Spirit, to accomplish what the scripture says.

Write your prayer and/or prayer requests here:



notes

TAKING HOLD OF A GODLY LIFE





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