

1 Timothy

REVIVE THE CHURCH

Women's Studies



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Introduction by Dr. Rodney Navey

Revive the Church: A Study at LBC on 1 Timothy

A church can know how to function and minister in the year 2021. God gave us the instructions. For 20 weeks, Lawndale is going to dig into a letter known as 1 Timothy. Sunday morning sermons will be verse by verse exposition and instruction. On Sunday afternoons, we will gather by gender to discuss how the book addresses men and women specifically.

To prepare, read the devotional guide and the questions. You will be ready for the sermon in the AM and the discussion in the PM.

Is 1 Timothy inspired by God? Yes! God led Paul to write down the words each generation would need to function as followers of Christ in the church (1 Tim 3:14-15). Since God's Word is living and active, it speaks to each person in every culture and to each church in each generation. It's a worthy document to be studied because it is from God.

Each of the books of the New Testament has Apostolic authority. The Apostles were a group of men called by God and used by God to form the foundation of the church (2 Cor. 12:12; Eph. 2:20; 3:5). Although Paul was not in the original group, he was known as the Apostle who was "untimely born" or called a little later than the others (1 Cor. 15:8). Peter recognized Paul's Apostleship and call from God to write for God (2 Peter 3:15-16).

Paul wrote to a young man named Timothy. Timothy was a Pastor in the church at Ephesus. The letters of 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, and Titus form what has been called the Pastoral Letters. Paul was led

by God to write these letters to encourage the churches and the Pastors who led them.

As the church at Lawndale begins the study of 1 Timothy, consider carefully how the church is commanded to function. You will see some of the same pressure points from the world we face as a church in Greensboro, NC. Our goal is to please God and be the church He designed for us to be. To do so, we must fully surrender to Him no matter the cost or the popular ideas of the day.

Humanity's ideas are constantly changing; God's Word is eternal.

Pray for God to revive us. Ask for soft, teachable, moldable hearts. When you see areas we are falling short, ask for a spirit of humility and repentance. When you see areas we are doing well, ask for a spirit of humility and gratitude.

“Father, Lawndale is Your church, purchased with the precious blood of Your Son. Give us the courage to fully surrender all to You. Show us Your truth, and lead us to follow You and Your Word. You have given us Your Word, and Your Word is truth. Sanctify us by Your Word; unite us around Your Word. And change us to be more like Your Son and a worthy bride for Your Son upon His return. In Jesus' name, amen.”

Keep praying. Enjoy the background article and the devotionals. And gather with the family on Sunday mornings and evenings to worship and fellowship.

General Background of Ephesus and Paul's Ministry There

The city of Ephesus was the fourth largest city in the Roman world during Paul and Timothy's era. Being at the convergence of three major trade routes, Ephesus was a prosperous, metropolitan city with marketplaces, gymnasiums, public baths, a theater, and a library. The city was also considered to be the principle financial center of Asia during that time period.

Ephesus too was a place of pagan worship and widespread immoral behavior. Wicked practices like sorcery and magic were performed to the patron deity, whose name was Artemis. Artemis was considered by the pagans in Ephesus as the goddess of the moon, nature, wild animals, and fertility; thus, she was believed to be the deity that brought the blessings of bountiful harvests and productivity to the region. The people of Ephesus crafted an ornate temple to Artemis (called the Artemision). They believed Artemis descended from the celestial world to inhabit their temple once it was completed. (Note: the temple is considered one of the Seven Ancient Wonders of the World). Each year in April, pilgrims would travel vast distances to honor Artemis in a week-long celebration in Ephesus. Their hope in paying tribute was that Artemis would provide the blessing of harvests and fertility, thus bringing prosperity to those who honored her.

The Apostle Paul visited Ephesus at the end of his second missionary journey (ca. AD 49-52). Paul surveyed the spiritual needs in the city and left his Jewish traveling companions, Aquila and Priscilla, in Ephesus while he traveled on to Caesarea/Palestine.

Paul later returned during his third missionary journey, which led to a three-year ministry there (AD 54-57). He began teaching in the Jewish synagogue in Ephesus to reason boldly with the Jews about Jesus Christ and the Kingdom of God. But after many of the Jews obstinately maligned the “Way” (i.e. salvation through Jesus Christ), Paul moved his ministry to the lecture hall of Tyrannus for his final two years so that both Jews and Gentiles might hear the Word of God. God did extraordinary miracles during that time. Handkerchiefs and aprons that touched Paul were taken to the sick, and they were cured of illnesses and freed from demonic oppression. The ministry of Paul proved to be a success in that people came to Christ, pagan scrolls used in tribute to Artemis were voluntarily burned, and “the Word of the Lord spread widely and grew in power” (Acts 19:20).

But Ephesus too was known as a place where craftsmen practiced their trades, and many were employed in the design of articles for worshipping Artemis. One silversmith by the name of Demetrius, (who made silver shrines to Artemis) was angered at his loss of revenue, since Paul was proclaiming that man-made gods were not gods at all. Demetrius called other craftsmen together and incited a riot. For two hours, these men started crying “Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!” since they prided themselves in their city being the guardian of the great temple, and these tradesmen wanted the city to continue to embrace its loyalty to its patron goddess. During the riotous commotion, two of Paul’s traveling companions, Gaius and Aristarchus, were seized. The mob ran together into the amphitheater, shouting all kinds of things; ironically, many of the people who were a part of the riot did not even know why they were there.

Fearing that the Roman authorities would move in to control the mob, a city clerk convinced the mob to stop their riotous behavior

and pursue their grievances in the courts. Paul wanted to speak to the people who had assembled in the theater; however, certain officials as well as some of Paul's fellow companions cautioned against it. When the uproar had ended, Paul called together the other believers to encourage them and share his goodbyes.

Paul continued to travel around the region, sharing the gospel. Then, as he began his trip back to Jerusalem to celebrate Pentecost, he stopped about 30 miles from Ephesus in a port city called Miletus, and he sent word for the elders of Ephesus to join him there. When they arrived, Paul talked about the difficulties of ministry (referring to his "tears" [Acts 20:19]) and the severe testing by Jewish plots against him. Though Paul knew from the Holy Spirit that prison and hardships awaited him and that his friends from Ephesus would never see him again, he encouraged them to keep watch and be shepherds over themselves and the flock to which the Holy Spirit had made them overseers. He warned them that "savage wolves" would infiltrate the flock, distort the truth, and lead disciples away. Paul called them to work hard and minister to the weak, then he knelt down and prayed with them. The Ephesian elders wept, embraced, and then they followed Paul to his departing ship (Acts 20:13-38).

Paul traveled to Jerusalem, where he would be arrested by the Jews and be turned over to the Romans. He was imprisoned in Caesarea for two years under the rule of the Roman leaders, Felix and Festus. Paul then was sent to Rome (ca. AD 61-62), where he would write the pastoral letters to the churches and individuals with whom he had had contact. Some of the letters Paul wrote while in prison in Rome included Philippians, Colossians, Ephesians, and Philemon.

Who Was Timothy?

Timothy's name means "honoring God." Despite being a young man who struggled with "frequent illnesses" (I Tim. 5:23), Timothy was a man known through the region of Lystra and Iconium as a man of whom the people of that area "spoke well" (Acts 16:2). He would become a man who would in Paul's words in Philippians 2:22 "prove himself." Paul too would reference Timothy as a man who faithfully "carried on the work of the Lord" (I Cor. 16:10). Paul loved his companion in sharing the gospel, adding that Timothy was like a "son whom I love, who is faithful in the LORD" (I Cor. 4:17).

Timothy was the son of a Jewish mother and a Gentile father. He was taught the Scriptures from his mother Eunice and his grandmother Lois (2 Tim. 1:5; 3:15). Some believe he may have been introduced to Paul while Paul was on his first missionary journey through the region, since Timothy was from Lystra, and Paul traveled through the city during that time (Acts 14:8-20).

When Paul returned during his second missionary journey, we find that Timothy already was a disciple living in Lystra (Acts 16:1). Paul, in order that he might be "all things to all people so as to win some for Christ" (I Cor. 9:19-23), took Timothy and had him circumcised because of the Jews who lived in the area (the Jews knew that Timothy's father was a Greek and Timothy needed to be circumcised to follow faithfully the Mosaic law [Acts 16:3]).

Timothy would become one of Paul's trusted traveling companions in ministry, and he was routinely sent to differing places to minister: to Corinth to represent Paul and his teachings (1 Cor. 4:17) and to Philippi because Timothy had a genuine interest in their welfare (Phil. 2:19-20). At the end of life (and imprisoned in Rome), Paul sent for Timothy to come and be with

him (2 Tim. 4:9). Timothy himself at some time was imprisoned, but later would be released (Heb. 13:23).

Overview of the Book of 1 Timothy

The book of *1 Timothy* was written in the early AD 60s (likely 62-63) following Paul's first imprisonment in Rome. Some believe that Paul was released from prison briefly and traveled eastward toward Macedonia, writing his letter to Timothy while on his travels. Others believe Paul wrote his letter to Timothy while he remained in Rome under continued "arrest" but with more leniency and flexibility to move about the city during his awaited appeal to Caesar.

1 Timothy was a word of encouragement for Timothy who had been sent to Ephesus in order that he might refute those who propagated false doctrines and that he would continue the organizational development and ministries of the early church there. Timothy may very well have been previously with Paul during his three-year ministry in Ephesus, since it was from Ephesus that Paul sent Timothy and Erastus to Macedonia (Acts 19:22).

1 Timothy is a letter of practical advice for a young pastor, and it gives instruction concerning doctrine, order, and ministry in the church. The themes included in the letter to Timothy are as follows:

- 1:3-11: Warning against false teachers. Importance of sound doctrine
- 1:12-20: Emphasis upon the grace of God through Christ
- 2:1-15: Instruction on public worship. Importance of prayer as a priority. The importance of Jesus Christ as the mediator between God and man

- 3:1-16: Qualifications of deacons and overseers
- 4:1-5: Warning against false teachers. Issue deals with false teachers claiming that marriage and certain foods were wrong
- 4:6-16: Discussion of sound doctrine and discipline. Encouragement to Timothy to be a “good minister of Christ Jesus” and “to set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith, and in purity” (4:6, 12)
- 5:1-16: Discussion of treatment of older men and women. Also addressed is the ministry to widows in the church. Practical instructions concerning the ministry of the church to various groups that comprise its membership
- 5:17-20: Discussion of Elders
- 6:1-2: Discussion of those who serve (slaves)
- 6:3-5: Warning against false teachers, who were motivated by “financial gain” (6:5)
- 6:6-10: Warning about the love of money, as “a root of all kinds of evil” (6:10)
- 6:11-21: Encouragement to Timothy to flee evil and pursue righteousness. Final expressions of praise to God and concluding thoughts to Timothy

1—Guardian of the Truth

Read 1 Timothy 1:1-11. Sound doctrine is of utmost importance in a healthy church family. Paul had urged his protégé Timothy to stay in Ephesus to protect the church from the teachings of any “different doctrine” (v. 3). Individuals who considered themselves teachers were guiding others from the “stewardship from God that is by faith” (v. 4). Their teaching promoted confusion, division, and sin. Sound doctrine does not contradict the Word of God. It is always in “accordance with the gospel of the glory of the blessed God.”

1. When sound doctrine is not protected, the church is exposed to dangerous substitutes. What do those look like in verse 4? As women, how do you think we can be distracted from sound doctrine today?
2. Authentic love should issue from our life in Christ. What are the three factors identified in verse 5? Discuss why each of these will impact love and sound doctrine?
3. We must not trust any teaching that has swerved from the authority of God’s Word (vv. 6-7). What “confident assertions” have women embraced that are contrary to Scripture?
4. Sound doctrine will always be “in accordance with the gospel of the glory of the blessed God” (vv. 10b-11). When we do not live our lives according to sound doctrine, it dishonors God. Discuss various ways that our influence can help younger women evaluate their choices in accord with sound doctrine.

2—The Church Serves the Head of the Church

Read 1 Timothy 1:12-20. Paul was careful to give Jesus all the credit for how far he had come in his spiritual journey. He had not forgotten who he had been and was not ashamed to share his past for God’s glory (vv. 13-15). His salvation was a complete act of perfect patience from God’s mercy, and it provided a testimony for others who would believe (v. 16). Now, Paul was charging Timothy to wage the good warfare in his spiritual journey by holding to faith and a good conscience. Others had failed in this warfare, and they would have to experience the consequences of their choices.

1. How does Paul display humility in this passage?
2. Paul uses his past as a testimony of God’s great mercy. What does he say about his life before Christ? How can we use our testimony to encourage other women? Why do you think many Christian women struggle to share from their past or their failures?
3. Timothy is told he is to “wage the good warfare.” Why is this an appropriate description of our spiritual journey? How does Paul model for us the blessing of a mentor in this passage?
4. What is Paul’s intent for Hymenaeus and Alexander (v. 20)? How is this an act of love?

3—The Church and Politics

Read 1 Timothy 2:1-7. Our goal should always be to strive for what is “pleasing in the sight of God our Savior” (v. 3). Paul explains that a Christian is to lead a “peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way” (v. 2). This kind of lifestyle provides an atmosphere for others to see the difference that Jesus makes in our lives. It is necessary that “supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings” be made for everyone, including those in authority. Paul’s position was not a political leader but a “preacher and an apostle.” However, he knew all Christians should pray and participate in their community so that their presence would influence the culture and those in authority.

1. Why do you think Paul urged prayer first of all? What types of prayers does Paul identify, and who are they to be made for? Why is the term “all people” significant in verse 1?
2. Describe the lifestyle a Christian is to strive for (v. 2). How do these traits honor God?
3. In verses 3 and 4, we read that God is pleased by a godly lifestyle because He desires all people to be saved. How is our lifestyle significant in helping others come to the knowledge of the Truth? Did the lifestyle of others have an impact on you? Explain.
4. We can be influential as instruments of God in the lives of others. However, we are not the ones who bring people to God. How do we know this is true from verse 5? Why is Jesus the only one who could bring reconciliation between God and mankind?

4—The Church and Gender

Read 1 Timothy 2:8-15. This passage has implications concerning the importance of gender to God’s design. As a loving God, His plan reveals the provision and purpose He has for His children and His church. When we have placed our trust in the sovereign plan of God, this passage takes on new meaning. Our ultimate goal is always to bring God honor through obedience to Him in our lives and in the church. Rather than being limited by the passage, we are informed and empowered to serve as He sees fit.

1. We know from many passages throughout the New Testament that God desires His people to be united. How is that indicated in verse 8? What is the contrast presented in the verse?
2. Identify the traits required of godly women in verses 9-10.
3. Knowing God designed the complementary roles of men and women in the creation, discuss how His original design may have been disregarded (investigate verses 9-12)
4. Adam was not deceived; he had been given explicit instruction from God and knowingly disobeyed. Discuss what had gone wrong in the original family of Adam and Eve.
5. The fact that Paul addressed women is culturally significant. Women who live in honor of God’s plan will play an influential role as they continue “in faith and love and holiness, with self-control” (v. 15). Why are these traits important for the next generation to see in our lives?

5—The Church’s Leadership Part 1

Read 1 Timothy 3:1-7. Godly leadership is required for the church to be an organized body of believers serving in unity according to God’s plan. A church body will only become as healthy as its leadership. In this passage, we find the qualifications of the overseer. It is crucial to notice how very personal these qualifications are. It is a checklist unlike what you would find for other leadership positions in our culture today. Overseers will be accountable to God for the “noble task” they have been given.

1. Explain the reason Paul uses the word “Therefore” in verse 2?
2. Why do you think it is necessary for all of God’s people to study and know the qualifications of an overseer?
3. Identify the various qualifications listed. Which qualification do you find to be the most surprising?
4. Recent converts may be gifted with leadership skills, but why is leadership in the church not an appropriate position for them (v. 6)?
5. Why would the overseer’s perception among outsiders need to be part of this list?

6—The Church’s Leadership Part 2

Read 1 Peter 5:1-3. We are moving from Paul’s letter to Timothy so we can evaluate another biblical passage on church leadership. Peter uses the concept of shepherding for the oversight of God’s people (v. 2) and refers to the body of believers as “the flock” (vv. 2-3). In these few verses, he addresses several concerns that hinder men from providing godly leadership. It is helpful to remember that Peter had personally experienced the sacrificial ministry, death, and resurrection of the chief Shepherd (v. 4).

1. Who is Peter addressing in this passage? Why do you think it is important that the entire flock is given this information in God’s Word?
2. How does the work of a shepherd of sheep help us understand the role of a pastor?
3. Identify the concerns Peter addresses in verses 2 and 3.
4. What reasons might a shepherd not “willingly” exercise oversight?
5. Being an example for others is an essential part of our testimony. A pastor needs to be part of the family of believers in order for the flock to see the example of his life (v. 3). How can God use our example in the lives of others?

7—The Church’s Leadership Part 3

Read 1 Timothy 3:8-13. In this lesson, we will focus on the role of deacon. These men have the honor of serving, something Jesus modeled when He washed His disciples' feet. They accept the responsibilities of being a blessing to their local church family for the glory of God. The value of their position is revealed by the qualifications put forth in this passage. Representing Christ as a servant to His people requires a life of devotion and obedience.

1. The qualifications in verse 8 might be seen in a “good person,” but verse 9 indicates something more important about these men. How would you explain it? (refer to v. 16)
2. Why do you think it states that these men need to be tested (v. 10)? How can this happen?
3. If a deacon is married, why do you think Paul found it necessary to address his wife's qualifications? Describe each of the traits listed in verse 11.
4. Often, we treat roles in the church as preparation for our lives away from the church. According to this passage, the qualifications of our lives at home prepare us for our roles at church. Why do you believe this is the order God designed?

8—The Church’s Manual

Read 1 Timothy 3:14-16. 1 Timothy 3:15 clearly explains what Paul wanted to communicate in this letter. The followers of Christ would need instructions on “how one ought to behave in the household of God.” Additionally, we learn from this passage why the church is so important and the need to maintain the Truth.

1. How do verses 14 and 15a indicate the importance Paul places on church polity?
2. Good parents teach their children rules and order so they can live productive lives. God is just as gracious to us as members of His family. This letter teaches us how to “behave in the household of God.” Discuss how order in the church (as in the home) enhances the ability to express our freedom in Christ.
3. Paul describes the household of God as a “pillar and buttress of the truth” (v. 15). Describe what pillar and buttress mean in this passage. How do you participate in this effort?
4. Verse 16 is a beautiful statement on the “mystery of godliness.” Read 1 Corinthians 2:14 and 2 Corinthians 3:15-16. How do these verses help us understand why Paul calls it a mystery? Discuss how this makes a church different from a social club.

9—The Church's Unsaved Members

Read 1 Timothy 4:1-5. Verse 1 may seem confusing if it is thought to be saying that a person can lose her salvation. That interpretation would be contradictory to what we learn as we consider the whole counsel of God. Instead, Paul is designating a contrast between those who would turn from the Truth that can bring eternal life to embrace what is deceitful. It is particularly sad to read that the teachings of demons will lure people, by their sinful choices, from experiencing the joy and satisfaction of knowing Jesus as the Lord of their lives.

1. During this time, as we await the return of King Jesus, there will be people involved in the church who are deceived. What do we learn about them in verses 1 and 2?
2. Why do you think Satan uses false teaching to attack marriage (v. 3)? What are ways we see the sanctity of marriage attacked in today's society? How has this impacted the culture?
3. The church must be equipped with believers who know the Truth (v. 3b). Why is that our best defense against false teaching? How can we promote this among younger women?
4. What is legalism, and why is it harmful? The Bible prepares us to help other women see the goodness of God while legalism will hinder that (vv. 3-5). Why do you believe legalism is often acknowledged as Truth?
5. In verse 5, Paul states the resources we need to help us be discerning. What are they, and why does the order they are given seem significant?

Notes

10—The Church Must Train Its Men

Read 1 Timothy 4:6-7. To be a “good servant of Christ Jesus,” is the desire of an authentic follower of Jesus. A Christian woman guards against being distracted from the Truth by her training in the Word. Paul specifically mentions the distractions of “irreverent, silly myths” (v. 7). In this lesson, we will discuss how neglecting the Word leaves us vulnerable to distractions.

1. We do not know the exact nature of the myths Paul refers to in verse 7, but we know what these words mean and how they can be applied to the false teaching we hear today. A good study exercise is to define each term found in a verse. Define the following words: irreverent, silly, myth.
2. Why must we avoid anything that is irreverent? Give some examples that Christian women face on a regular basis. How can we help other Christian women avoid these pitfalls?
3. Why do you think the world is enticed by ideas that we know are irreverent, silly myths? Think of any common myths that reject the authority of God’s Word in today’s culture.
4. What will be the consequence for our church today and in the future if we neglect the study and application of God’s Word in a society influenced by irreverent, silly myths?

11—The Church’s Training Program

Read 1 Timothy 4:6-10. When a church carries out the work of training its members, all instruction must be grounded in the authority of Scripture. “Good doctrine” (v. 6) is essential for our lives to be pleasing to God. Paul tells Timothy, “train yourself for godliness” (v. 7). Studying the entire counsel of God’s Word deserves our most excellent effort. To be trained in sound doctrine gives women an accurate world view to experience the real and eternal value of their lives.

1. Why is it important to know that the church you belong to trains its members according to the authority of God’s Word? Do you know the doctrines of your church? Why would this be crucial for a believer to investigate?
2. What is the difference between “bodily training” and training in godliness? How do you think most Christian women see the importance of these two? How are our priorities evident?
3. The entire Word of God fits together to help us understand biblical doctrine. Women should be intentional in their daily reading of God’s Word. How does this help in defending against false teaching that takes Scripture out of context?
4. What experience have you had with teaching that was not based on sound doctrine?
5. Paul uses the words “toil and strive” (v. 10) as he describes his efforts. By evaluating the rest of verse 10, why do you think this should be an appropriate lifestyle for every believer?

12—The Church’s Public Perception

Read 1 Timothy 4:11-16. Paul wanted Timothy to know the significance of a person’s influence in others' lives, both in their words and actions. Timothy would model for others how a Christian should live out faith in Christ (vv. 12, 15). He would also be responsible for equipping others to live out their faith (vv. 11, 13-14). We are all responsible for how our words and actions influence others, and we must be teachable as we learn how that should look.

1. Why do you think Paul was concerned that people would despise (look down upon) Timothy for his youth? Discuss ways the generations should be a blessing to one another?
2. What are the four ways that Paul calls Timothy to be an example? Brainstorm examples of how godly women can positively influence other women in each of these areas of life. Do you have an example of how an older woman negatively influenced you?
3. Timothy was told to “practice these things.” What is the result when a musician is diligent in her practice? How can that be compared to what Paul is talking about?
4. A godly disciple-maker will never encourage you to do anything that contradicts God’s Word but will inspire obedience to His will for you. Have you had a Paul-type mentor in your life who encouraged you to do what God has required of you (v. 14)?
5. Timothy needed a teachable heart as he read this letter. The public perception of believers can draw others to Jesus. We must be teachable and learn to live so that others can see the difference that God has made in our lives. Why are we often stubborn? How can we cultivate teachable hearts?

13—The Church is a Family and Partners with Families

Read 1 Timothy 5:1-16. In this lesson, we learn about the importance of intergenerational community in our church. Additionally, we find that God’s plan is for the nuclear family to function with godliness, caring for one another. It is significant how much emphasis this passage places on the lives of women. God has designed womanhood to influence the family, the church, and society for His glory.

1. Considering verses 1 and 2, why do you think God designed the church to operate as a family? What benefits are missing if a church is dominated by only one generation?
2. What are the life circumstances of women who are “truly widows” (vv. 3, 16)? What is true about their relationship to God (v. 5)? Why is a “self-indulgent” life said to be dead even while she lives?
3. Why do we need the influence of older women who have “set their hope on God and continue in supplications and prayer night and day” (v. 5)?
4. Consider verse 13. What snares are listed in verse 13? How can women help one another avoid these problems for themselves and their church family?
5. We know that God has not called every woman to marriage, but as part of the local church family all godly women are a blessing as spiritual mothers and sisters (v. 2). How can the church help women embrace this eternal influence?

14— The Church’s Responsibility to Its Leaders

Read 1 Timothy 5:17-25. How should a church relate to its leadership? Paul knew that the topics of honor, wages, and accountability had to be addressed for churches to maintain the healthy leadership God desires. Additionally, as his “true child in the faith” (1 Timothy 1:2), Paul’s care for Timothy is evident.

1. Paul quotes Deuteronomy 25:4 (v. 18). Discuss how it applies to providing for those called to vocational ministry.
2. Paul addresses protection of leadership from the possibility of false accusations (v. 19) and protection of the church from leaders who “persist in sin” (v. 20). Why do you think church leaders are targets for these two concerns? How can the church help its leaders?
3. Can you give an example of how prejudging or partiality (v. 21) can hinder church health?
4. How does Paul model a healthy disciple-making relationship in the remaining verses of this passage?
5. Timothy must have had a teachable heart for Paul to give him such a great responsibility. What indications do we find in these verses that Timothy had a desire to live above reproach? How can we help women with teachable hearts?

15—The Church's Equality

Read 1 Timothy 6:1-2. In this passage, we learn that no matter our station in society, how we live out our faith impacts how others view God and the Bible. Scripture does not condone slavery but reveals that we can present God's faithfulness no matter our circumstances. How we relate to others (especially those in authority) reveals our trust in Him. When we are conscientious and caring rather than contentious or condescending, we can represent Christ well to others.

1. Brainstorm circumstances where we should show respect to authority. Why do you think so many people have difficulty doing this?
2. Verse 1 explains that bondservants could protect how others would see God and His Word. How could they do this?
3. What temptation is found in verse 2?
4. Read Colossians 3:23-24. How do these verses relate to our text? Why do these things need to be taught and encouraged in a church family (v. 2)?
5. Discuss how God used you in the life of someone who had authority over you or how someone blessed you by their conviction to do everything as unto the Lord.

16—The Church Tests Its Leaders and Teachers

Read 1 Timothy 6:3-10. The church is to be protected from teaching that, "does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus" (v. 3). Teachers who profess to have a "different doctrine" indicate they are "puffed up" and promote controversy (v. 4). Teaching "deprived of the truth" (v. 5) often treats godliness as a means of gain. Biblical Truth teaches "godliness with contentment is great gain" (v. 6). Pride and the love of earthly gain (fame or money) have no place in the heart of a Christian.

1. How would you explain what is meant by "teaching that accords with godliness" (v. 3)?
2. What does Paul say a false teacher produces (vv. 4-5)? What makes people vulnerable to a different doctrine (v. 5)? What then, is our protection against it and why?
3. Discontentment is one of Satan's most successful schemes (*consider Eve*). How are women lured into various forms of discontentment?
4. What consequences of the love of money are listed in verses 9 and 10? How can we keep a proper perspective about money (vv. 6-10)?

17—The Church Fights For Its King

Read 1 Timothy 6:11-16. In our last questions, we discussed guarding against false teaching and the love of money. In 1 Timothy 6:11, we are told to “flee these things.” Now we will consider what we are told to pursue. God wants us to know Him and to experience the joy and peace of a trusting relationship with Him as we fight “the good fight of faith” (v. 12).

1. According to 1 Timothy 6:11, what attributes did Paul tell Timothy to pursue? What does “pursue” mean?
2. Give an example of how every woman can pursue righteousness in her friendships.
3. How can we pursue godliness in the influences of our personal life?
4. Discuss the meaning of steadfastness. How is steadfastness at work in Paul’s charge to Timothy in verses 13 and 14?
5. It is curious that the attribute of gentleness is followed by Paul’s directive to “Fight the good fight of faith” (v. 12). How do you believe gentleness helps us to fight the good fight of faith?

18—The Church is Rich in Good Works

Read 1 Timothy 6:17-19. In heaven, the sin nature will have no rule over the children of God. However, “in this present age” (v. 17), there are pitfalls that can hinder us from experiencing the eternal treasure God has provided and planned for us. One of those hindrances is money, and in this passage, Paul gives directions to help those who are financially wealthy to use it appropriately. Then, they will be less likely to be caught in the snares it can create.

1. In the first half of verse 17, Paul warns against two problems a wealthy person can face. What are they, and how would you describe them?
2. Paul explains that God “richly provides us with everything to enjoy.” These provisions are different from the “uncertainty of riches” pertaining to finances. Brainstorm some of the enduring blessings God has given to all His children in this present age.
3. Do you remember a time when the love of money hindered you from enjoying the best things God gives His children in this life?
4. What three instructions are listed in verse 18? Do you have a story of how God used a person who obeyed one of these instructions?
5. How does this passage confirm a flaw in any teaching that suggests all faithful Christians should have financial wealth?

19—The Church Guards the Good Deposit

Read 1 Timothy 6:20-21. These two verses bring us to the conclusion of Paul’s letter and summarize a theme repeated in the body of the letter—to protect the Truth God has given. Timothy would face a constant conflict between God’s Truth and what is “falsely called knowledge” (v. 20). This battle is just as true today as it was when Satan first deceived Eve in the Garden. God has given His Word so that His children are equipped to guard their rich deposit.

1. The word “guard” (v. 20) is an action word. What actions can we take to guard against false knowledge?
2. What two things does Paul say to avoid? Define them. Discuss examples you see of these in today’s society, and how should we be intentional to avoid them?
3. Read Genesis 3:1-6. In verse 3, Eve gives an incorrect account of what God commanded Adam in Genesis 2:16-17. What is different? Why is adding to God’s Word as concerning as taking away from it?
4. What three desires do we see in Eve that convinced her to eat the fruit (Genesis 3:6)? How can these same three desires lure women away from God’s will today?
5. Just as Paul is a blessing to Timothy, older godly women can be a tremendous blessing to their younger sisters in Christ (Titus 2:3-5). What hinders this ministry in most churches today? How can we promote relationships like Paul and Timothy had between the women of our church?

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