

English: Bible Commentary for 1 Timothy

Formatted for Translators

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1 TIMOTHY 1 Commentary

1:1-2

How is “Christ Jesus our hope”?

[1:1]

Christians have hope because of Jesus. That is, they are confident about something because of Jesus. He gives them this now and in the future. Because Jesus died on the cross and was made alive again, anyone who believes in Jesus can have peace with God now and in the future (see: Romans 5:1-2; Colossians 1:19- 22). They will live forever with him in heaven after they die (see: 1 John 3:2-3) Jesus also gives confidence to Christians because he sent the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit lives inside of Christians. He gives them power, and he caused them to be sanctified. (see: Romans 8:29; Ephesians 1:4-6).

See: Atonement; Holy Spirit; Indwelling of the Holy Spirit; Sanctify (Sanctification)

Why did Paul call Timothy his “true son in the faith”?

[1:2]

Paul wrote that Timothy was his “true son in the faith.” This is a metaphor. He wanted to write he was Timothy’s spiritual father. That is, he taught Timothy about how to do the things that honor God in the same way a father teaches his child something. Therefore, Paul knew Timothy did the same types of things that Paul did. These things were because they believed in Jesus.

See: Metaphor; Spirit (Spiritual)

Why did Paul greet the Christians with “grace, mercy, and peace”?

[1:2]

See: Ancient Letters

1:3-7

Why did Paul leave Timothy in Ephesus?

[1:3]

Paul left Timothy in Ephesus to teach people. He also “commanded”(παράγγελλω/g3853) false teachers not to teach. False teacher taught things that Paul and the other Apostles did not teach. Paul wanted Timothy to stop people from teaching things that he did not teach.

See Map: Ephesus

What were “endless genealogies”?

[1:4]

Some false teachers wanted other people to know their genealogies. That is, they wanted people to know their ancestors were greatly honored. They thought having honored ancestors was better than the gospel (see: Titus 3:9). Scholars think these teachers wanted other people to know that their ancestors were in honored the Old Testament.

See: 6:3-5; 2nd Timothy 2:16-18

See: Ancient Letters; Ancestor and Descendant (Fathers, Forefathers, Patriarchs); Gospel

What was “the commandment” about which Paul wrote?

[1:5]

Some scholars think Paul told Timothy to “command”(παράγγελλ(α/g3852) false teachers to stop teaching things Paul did not teach. Other scholars think Paul told Timothy to teach the gospel with love. This fulfilled all of God’s law (see: Romans 13:10).

See: Law of Moses

What did it mean to have a “pure heart”?

[1:5]

A person with a pure heart does things and thinks things that honor God (see: 2 Timothy 2:22).

How did a person have a “good conscience”?

[1:5]

A person has a good conscience by believing in the gospel and doing the things that Jesus said to do (see: 3:9). They also do not think about things that do not honor God (see: Titus 1:15).

See: Conscience; Gospel

What was “sincere faith”?

[1:5]

A person with “sincere faith” completely trusts in God. Paul wrote that teachers with sincere faith did the things that honor God, and they do not do the things that honor themselves.

See: 1 Thessalonians 2:3-12

See: Gospel

Why did Paul write “miss the mark”?

[1:6]

Scholars think Paul spoke about people those who believed in the gospel then later did not believe in the gospel (see 6:20-21; 2 Timothy 4:4).

What was “foolish talk”?

[1:6]

Some scholars think “foolish talk” is something said that has no meaning. That is, someone said things that did not help Christians honor God.

1:8-11

Why did Paul write, “the law is good”?

[1:8]

Paul wrote that the law is good because God tells people what he wants them to do through the law of Moses(see: Psalm 19:7; Romans 7:12). God made people know their sin and their need to be saved from it through the law of Moses.

See: Law of Moses

Why did Paul write that the, “law is not made for the righteous man”?

[1:9]

Some scholars think Paul wanted to write that the law of Moses was made so that those who were sinning will know that the things they did were wrong. They think it was not made for the people who already do the things that honor God. Other scholars think Paul wrote to the people who did good things, but they did not do them to honor God. Instead, they did these good things so other people would think they were righteous, but they were not righteous. They think Paul wanted them to know that the law of Moses was not given to make people righteous, but it was given so that people would know that the things they were doing did not honor God (see: 1:9-11; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10).

See: 2 Timothy 3:1-5

See: Righteous (Righteousness)

How were people “godless and profane” in the days of Paul?

[1:9]

A “godless” person did not want to honor God in any way. A profane person knew what God wanted them to do, but they continued to sin anyway because they wanted to sin more than they wanted to honor God.

See: Sin

What was “faithful instruction”?

[1:10]

Faithful instruction taught the things God wanted people to do to honor him with their lives. It taught them what they needed to know about God the Father and Jesus the Son and the Holy Spirit. Faithful instruction helped Christians to do more things that honor God.

See: Titus 1:9

See: God the Father; Holy Spirit

What was the “glorious gospel” about which Paul spoke?

[1:11]

Some scholars think the “glorious gospel” was when people told the story of the glory of the “blessed God.” That is, God is “blessed” because he is perfect. He lives in perfect joy. He is the one who gives all blessings.

See: Glory (Glorify); Gospel; Bless (Blessing); Rejoice (Joy, Joyful)

1:12-17

Why was Paul considered to be “faithful”?

[1:12]

Some scholars think Jesus did not choose Paul to be an apostle because he was already a “faithful”(πιστός/g4103) man. They think Jesus chose Paul because he knew Paul would be faithful in the future (see: Acts 9:1-16). Other scholars think Christ considered Paul to be faithful because of what God graciously did in Paul’s life. That is, his grace allowed Paul to repent from sinning and allowed Paul to do the things that honored and served God.

See: Apostle; Grace; Repent (Repentance)

What was a “blasphemer” and “persecutor”?

[1:13]

Paul wrote he used to be a “blasphemer” and a “persecutor.” A blasphemer was a person who insulted God by saying things that were not true about God. They spoke evil about Jesus. They even cursed him. Paul also wrote he used to be a “persecutor”(διώκτης/g1376). He harmed Christians (see: Acts 8:3; 22:4).

See: Repent (Repentance); Persecute (Persecution); Curse

How did Paul “act ignorantly in unbelief”?

[1:13]

Paul wrote he was ignorant in unbelief. Paul persecuted Christians. But he did not know this was wrong. He thought this was right. Paul believed in God. But, he did not believe that Jesus was the messiah. Paul thought he honored God when he persecuted Christians.

See: Messiah (Christ); Persecute (Persecution)

What was the “faith and love” about which Paul spoke?

[1:14]

See: Faith (Believe in); Love

How was what Paul taught “reliable and worthy of all acceptance”?

[1:15]

Paul knew what he taught was “reliable”(πιστός/g4103) and true. He knew all people needed to trust the things he taught. What he wrote was spoken by Jesus himself (see: Matthew 9:13; Luke 19:9-10).

Why did Paul write, “I am the worst” of sinners?

[1:15]

Paul wrote he was the worst of sinners. He persecuted Christians. He knew he sinned against God himself. Paul knew God forgave him, but this did not make him forget his sinning.

See: Persecute (Persecution); Sin

Why did Paul write, “demonstrate all patience”?

[1:16]

Jesus demonstrated with all patience by using Paul as an example. Paul was an example of how God has great patience for sinners. God wanted people to know that he forgives even the greatest sinner if the sinner repents (see: 2 Peter 3:9). Advice to translators: Someone who waits for something when they should wait, they are patient. They are only patient if they are peace with waiting.

See: Repent (Repentance; Forgive (Forgiveness, Pardon)

1:18-20

What were the “prophecies previously made” about Timothy?

[1:18]

Many scholars think Paul wrote about a time when the church leaders prayed for Timothy. They trusted him to always serve the church in the way God wanted him to serve (see: 4:14-16).

See: Prophecy (Prophecy) ; Church

Why did Paul say, “some have shipwrecked their faith”?

[1:19]

Paul used a metaphor. In the same way a ship can be damaged too badly to be used anymore, so can false teachers damage a Christian. That is, these Christians do not know the truth and do not trust God.

See: Church

What is “blasphemy”?

[1:20]

See: Blaspheme (Blasphemy)

1 Timothy 2

2:1-4

What was an “intercession”?

[2:1]

An intercession was a prayer. This was a prayer made to God for a specific person or was asking God to help because a specific thing that was happening to a person.

How did a person live a “peaceful and quiet” life?

[2:2]

Scholars think someone had a “peaceful” life when they were at peace. They were at peace with themselves or had peace inside of themselves. These scholars think someone had a “quiet” life when they were at peace with others. The government did not cause them problems.

What was godliness?

[2:2]

See: Godly (Godliness)

How did a person live with “dignity”?

[2:2]

A person lived with “dignity”(σεμνότης/g4587) when they lived in a way that others respected. That is, Christians and non-Christians thought the things they did were good for everyone.

Why did Paul write that he “desires all people to be saved”?

[2:4]

Many people in Ephesus thought that only the Jewish people were saved from sinning. Certain people taught only the most spiritual people could be saved from sinning. This is not true. Paul wanted Timothy to know God did not save only certain groups of people. God wants all people to be saved from sinning. However, not every person wants to be saved from sinning.

See: Spirit (Spiritual)

How did a person “come to the knowledge of the truth”?

[2:4]

The truth about which Paul wrote was the gospel. People who “came to the knowledge of the truth” were people who believed in the gospel.

See: Gospel

2:5-7

Why did Paul write, “there is one God”?

[2:5]

People thought there were many gods when Paul lived. However, in the Bible there is only “one God.” The Israelites knew there was only one God (see: Deuteronomy 6:4-5).

How is Jesus the “one mediator” between God and humans?

[2:5]

Jesus is the mediator between God and humans because he died for people’s sinning. A “mediator”(μεσίτης/g3316) was a person who helped people with a conflict to be at peace with one another. Because of man’s sinning, God and man were separated. Jesus’ death and resurrection allowed for man to not be separated from God. Jesus was both God and human. This made him the perfect mediator between God and humans.

See: Mediator; Resurrect (Resurrection); Sin; Atone(Atonement)

What did Paul mean that “Jesus...gave himself as a ransom for all”?

[2:6]

Jesus gave himself as a ransom to God to be able to free people from the punishment of sinning (see: Romans 5:12-21). A “ransom”(ἀντίλυτρον/g0487) was a price paid to free someone from slavery. All humans are slaves to sin. That is, they cannot choose not to do the things that do not honor God. God must punish all sin. The price that needed to be paid for sinning was death (see: Romans 6:23). Therefore, Jesus paid this price of sin for every human when he died on the cross.

Why did Paul write, “a testimony at the right time”?

[2:6]

The death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus served as a “testimony” that God’s word was true. That is, it proved that what Jesus said about himself was true. Paul said this testimony was given “at the right time.” That meant God made a specific time for the gospel to be made known (see: Galatians 4:4-7).

See: Resurrect (Resurrection); Gospel

What was a “herald”?

[2:7]

Often, a ruler used someone to speak for him. This person was a herald. The herod told things to the ruler’s people. Paul wrote that God made Paul speak for God. He told all people the gospel.

What was an “apostle”?

[2:7]

See: Apostle

Who were the “Gentiles”?

[2:7]

See: Gentile

Why did Paul write, “in faith and truth”?

[2:7]

Paul wrote “in faith and truth.” Scholars think Paul meant he taught the Gentiles about the faith and the truth. That is, he taught the Gentiles what they needed to know about Jesus and what was true.

2:8-10

What did it mean to “lift up holy hands without anger or arguing”?

[2:8]

Paul said, “lift up holy hands without anger or arguing.” Some scholars think Christians prayed standing with their arms and hands lifted up in front of them. The Jewish people also did this in the synagogues. These scholars think lifting “holy”(ἁγίος/g3741) hands meant Christians’ prayers were committed to God. They think this also meant that Christians were committed to doing the things that honor God. That is, this made their hands holy. Christians also prayed without “anger or arguing.” They did not want to have arguments and thoughts that did not honor God. They wanted to live a holy life. That is, they only wanted to do the things that honored God.

See: Synagogue

What was “proper clothing”?

[2:9]

Proper clothing meant that a woman wore clothes that were “modest”(αἰδώς/g0127). Paul did not want women to dress in a way that others would be looking at their clothes. For a women to wear modest clothes meant that she wore things that did not upset other people. Also she wore things that did not make men look at her in a sexual way. A woman using self-control in the things that she wore wanted to do the things that honored God instead of worrying about the things that other people thought about her. Advice to translators: When a man looks at a woman in a sexual way, he thinks about having sex with her and wants to have sex with her.

See: Self-Control

How did a woman clothe herself with “good works”?

[2:9, 2:10]

Paul used a metaphor. In the same way clothing is seen by other people, so good works are seen by other people also. Paul wanted women to worry about the things they did for God not about the things that they wore.

See: Metaphor

2:11-15

Why did Paul write for women to, “learn in silence”?

[2:11]

Some scholars think Paul did not allow women to speak when Christians gathered together to worship God. Other scholars think Paul taught women to be quiet while the Bible was being taught. This was so they could listen and learn what was being taught. These scholars think Paul used the word “silence”(ἡσυχία/g2271) in the same way that he used it when he spoke about praying for leaders. That is, so they might live a quiet and peaceful life (see: 2:2).

See: Worship

How did a woman learn “with all submission”?

[2:11]

Paul wanted women to submit to the teaching elders. These elders taught the truth of the Bible and corrected errors being taught.

See: Submit (Submission); Elder

Why was a woman not allowed to “teach or to exercise authority over a man”?

[2:12]

Some scholars think Paul did not allow women to teach men about what the Bible taught while Christians were gathered together. These scholars also think Paul did not allow women to teach men about the things they needed to do to honor God while Christians gathered together. Other scholars think Paul allowed women to teach when Christians gathered together only if they did not try “exercise authority”(αὐθεντέω/g0831) over the men in the gathering. That is, the women did not need to tell the men how to know the scriptures. They did not need to take control of the elders in a gathering.

See: Elder

Why did Paul write women “will be saved through bearing children”?

[2:15]

Some scholars think Paul wrote about a promise made in Genesis. This was the promise that the a descendant of the woman would defeat Satan (see: Genesis 3:15). This promise was a prophecy of Jesus. Other scholars think the words meant that women, in general, would not die during childbirth. Other scholars think Paul wrote that women preserve humans by having more children.

See: Satan (The Devil); Prophecy (Prophecy)

1 TIMOTHY 3

3:1-7

What did the word “desires” mean?

[3:1]

Paul used the word “desires”(ὁρέγω/g3713) in two different ways in this passage. First, someone desired to do certain things so that other people would know they wanted to serve God. He also used the word “desires”(ἐπιθυμέω/g1937) when talking about a man wanting to serve God by serving God’s church

What was an “overseer”?

[3:1]

Christians called leaders of the church “overseers”(ἐπίσκοπος/g1985). People use many different English words to translate this Greek word. The word “elder” and overseer mean the same thing (see: 5:17, 19; Titus 1:5-9). The leaders were men who guided the church. They taught Christians about God. They showed Christian how to live in a way that honors God.

See: Overseer; Elder

What did it mean to be “above reproach”?

[3:2]

A person who was “above reproach” was not accused of doing any wrong things. Christians and non- Christians respected them.

See: Blameless

Why did Paul write, “husband of one wife”?

[3:2]

The words “husband of one wife” can also be translated as “a one-woman man.” Some scholars think Paul wrote that an overseer must be a married man. Other scholars think Paul wrote that an overseer must have only one wife. Other scholars think Paul meant that an overseer must not commit adultery. That is, he will be faithful in his marriage. Advice to Translators: in English, a person cannot “do” adultery. They “commit” adultery.

See: Overseer; Elder; Adultery

What did the word “moderate” mean?

[3:2]

Paul wrote that an overseer must be a “moderate”(νηφάλιος/g3524) man. That is, he must be a man who controlled the things that he did and the things that he said.

See: Titus 2:2

How was a man “sensible”?

[3:2]

A sensible man was a man who thought about spiritual matters in life. That is, he thought about how to honor and obey God. It was a man who acted calmly and orderly in every situation.

See: Spirit (Spiritual)

How was a man “orderly”?

[3:2]

Someone was orderly when they did things he wanted to do and did not do the things he did not want to do. Other Christians respected an orderly person.

What did it mean to be “hospitable”?

[3:2]

Paul wrote that an overseer must also be hospitable. That is, he must be willing to have people in his home, whether they were travelling Christians or people going to a church meeting.

See: Hospitable (Hospitality)

How was an overseer supposed to “be able to teach”?

[3:2]

Paul wrote that an overseer must be “able to teach”(διδασκτικός/g1317) That is, someone must be able to teach others about the Bible. Also, they must be able to teach in a way that was easy for people to understand. Some scholars think Paul wrote about a person who was already teaching the Bible before becoming an overseer. The overseer had to be able to know when someone did not teach the Bible in the right way. He was then able to correct those teaching the wrong thing by speaking the truth.

See: Overseer; Elder

What was meant by the words, “addicted to wine”?

[3:3]

Most scholars think Paul wrote that an overseer must not be a man who often drank wine to become drunk (see: Titus 1:7). They do not think Paul told people not to drink wine. He wrote that an overseer should not drink too much.

See: Overseer; Elder; Wine (Winepress)

How was a man a “brawler”?

[3:3]

A “brawler” was someone who often caused arguments and fights. Some scholars think a “brawler” was a person who started physical fights. Other scholars think the fights were more often people arguing and yelling at other people.

What was a “lover of money”?

[3:3]

A “lover of money” was someone who was only interested in getting as much money as they could get. Paul said an overseer must not be a man who is a lover of money (see: Hebrews 13:5; 2 Timothy 3:1-2).

See: Overseer; Elder

Why did Paul write that he needed to, “manage his own household”?

[3:4]

Paul said that an overseer must “manage his own household.” Paul meant that an overseer must be a man that leads his family to do the things that honor God.

See: Overseer; Elder

Why did Paul write that an overseer must not be a “new convert”?

[3:6]

A new convert was a person who had only been a Christian for a short period of time. Paul did not want new Christians to lead other Christians because he did not want them to be filled with pride.

See: Pride

What did Paul mean with the words, “condemnation as the devil”?

[3:6]

Some scholars think Paul wrote about God judging Satan. It was God who judged the devil because he was prideful and deceived others. The people Paul talked about think that in a similar way. God judged overseers who were prideful and deceive others because they lead other Christians.

See: Satan (The Devil); Pride

How did a man have a “good reputation with those outside”?

[3:7]

Paul wrote that an overseer must have a “good reputation with those outside.” He wanted to write that non-Christians must think an overseer is honest and does the right types of things. He was a man who was respected, even by those that did not believe in Jesus.

3:8-13

What was a deacon?

[3:8]

Certain people in the church were “deacons”(διάκονος/g1249). They served and helped other Christians (see: 3:10, 13).

See: Philippians 1:1

See: Deacon

What did it mean to be “dignified”?

[3:8]

People respected a “dignified”(σεμνός/g4586) man. He was respected because of the things he did. This meant that he was wise, did not get angry easily, and did the things that honored God.

What was a “double-talker”?

[3:8]

A “double-talker” was a man who said something to one person and then said something different to another person. They also said things and then did things that were different than what they said. That is, they said good things but then did bad things. A “double-talker” knows the truth, but he says what is not true.

What was the “revealed truth of the faith”?

[3:9]

Paul wrote about the “revealed truth of the faith.” This was the truth about Jesus. The apostles told people about this truth so they could know it (see: Ephesians 3:1-13). They told Christians the things they needed to believe about Christ. They also told them how to do the things that honored God.

See: Faith (Believe in); Apostle

How could someone be “blameless”?

[3:10]

See: 1 Timothy 3:2

Who were the women about whom Paul wrote?

[3:11]

In the Greek language, the word for “women”(γυνή/g1135) can also mean wives. Because of this, some scholars think Paul wrote about the wives of the deacons. That is, they too must live in a way that honors God. Other scholars think Paul wrote about women who served as deaconesses.

See: Deacon

What did it mean to be “dignified”?

[3:11]

People respected a “dignified”(σεμνός/g4586) woman. People respected her because of the good things that she did. This meant that she was wise, did not get angry easily, and did the things that honored God.

What was a “slanderer”?

[3:11]

Someone who talked about other people in a hurtful way was a “slanderer.” A slanderer did not care whether or not the things they spoke were true.

3:14-16

What was the “household of God”?

[3:15]

The “household of God” was a metaphor. Paul was talking about a group of Christians. Paul was not writing about a building (see: Galatians 6:10; Ephesians 2:19; Hebrews 3:6).

See: Metaphor

How was the church the “pillar of support of the truth”?

[3:15]

Paul wrote about the church being a “pillar of support of the truth.” This was a metaphor. In the same way a foundation and pillars supported a building, so Christians support the gospel. Paul wrote in other letters that the apostles were like a foundation. Some of the apostles were even called “pillars” in the church (see: Galatians 2:9; Ephesians 2:19-20).

See: Church; Metaphor; Gospel; Apostle

What was the “revealed truth of godliness”?

[3:16]

Paul wrote about the “revealed truth of godliness.” This is this gospel. God revealed this to His people. It was the truth about how people can be at peace with God and doing the things that honored God.

See: Gospel

Why did Paul say God “appeared in the flesh”?

[3:16]

Paul wrote that God “appeared in the flesh.” Paul meant that God came to earth as a human being (see: John 1:1-4, 14-15; 14:8-13). He did this in Jesus.

How was Christ “justified by the Spirit”?

[3:16]

The Holy Spirit made it clear that Jesus was the Son of God. Jesus also said this (see: Romans 1:3-5).

See: Holy Spirit; Son of God

How was Jesus “taken up in glory”?

[3:16]

After Jesus suffered on the cross, was crucified, buried, and then made alive again, he returned to heaven (see: Acts 1:9-11).

See: Crucify (Crucifixion); Resurrect (Resurrection); Heaven; Glory (Glorify)

1 TIMOTHY 4

4:1-5

Why did Paul write, “the Spirit clearly says”?

[4:1]

Paul wrote, “the Spirit clearly says.” Some scholars think God gave Paul a prophecy about the future. Other scholars think Paul warned Timothy (see: Acts 20:29-30). Other scholars think Paul wrote about Jesus. This was about the last days (see: Mark 13:5-6, 21-22).

See: 2 Thessalonians 2:1-3

See: Holy Spirit; Prophecy (Prophesy); Last Days

What did “in later times” mean?

[4:1]

The words “in later times” are similar to the words “in the last days” (see: 2 Timothy 3:1).

1. Some scholars think Paul was writing about sometime after Paul wrote the letter to Timothy.
2. Other scholars Paul wanted to say that Jesus is about to return to the earth.
3. Other scholars think Paul wanted to say that the church has been in the last days since Jesus was born.
4. And it will stay in the last days until Jesus returns (see: Acts 2:16-17).

See: 2 Timothy 3:1-9

See: Last Days; Church

What did it mean “to leave the faith”?

[4:1]

Paul wrote about leaving the faith. Some people who said they were Christians no longer believed in Jesus. They now followed the teachings of demons (see: 2 Corinthians 11:13-15). Someone who “left”(ἀφίστημι/0868) rebelled against God or rejected God. It was a frequent Jewish and Christian teaching that in the last days many people would reject God.

See: Matthew 24:4-6, 10-12; 2 Peter 2:1-22; 1 John 2:18-19

See: Church; Last Days

Why did Paul write “their own consciences will be branded”?

[4:2]

Paul wrote about false teachers. They taught the wrong things. When Paul wrote about this, he said that it was as if their consciences were burned. This was a metaphor. He wanted to say that they could not tell if they were teaching the right things or the wrong things. Some scholars think Satan “branded”(καυστηριάζω/g2743) these teachers. That is, he marked them as his slaves. Other scholars think that Satan “burned” their consciences, leaving them unable to know what God wanted them to do (see: 1:19).

See: Metaphor; Conscience; Serve (Servant, Slave)

What did these false teachers teach?

[4:3]

False teachers taught that people needed to be unmarried to be at peace with God. These teachers also taught that Christians needed to stop eating certain foods. Paul taught someone could be at peace with God if they are married and no matter what they eat. Some scholars think the false teachers taught that the everything on the earth is evil. Therefore, they did not want to touch certain things in the world (see: Colossians 2:16-23). Other scholars think the false teachers taught that Christians were already resurrected and living in a place of peace (see: 2 Timothy 2:18). Therefore, they thought should live as Adam and Eve did, without sex and eating no meat. However, Paul taught that everything God created was good. Nothing God created should be rejected if people thanked God for it.

See: Romans 14:1-15:7

See: Resurrect (Resurrection)

4:6-10

Why did Paul write, “place these things before the brothers”?

[4:6]

Paul told Timothy to “place these things before”(ὑποτίθημι/g5294) the people of the church. That is Timothy was to teach the church. Some scholars think “these things” meant everything that Paul wrote and said to Timothy (see: 2 Timothy 2:1-2).

See: Church

Why did Paul write to be “nourished by the words of faith”?

[4:6]

Paul used the word “nourished”(ἐντρέφω/g1789). This was a metaphor. He wanted Timothy to know the things God said. He wanted him to learn them by studying them. This would train Timothy. Studying the Bible taught Paul to do the things that honored God and how to teach others to do the same.

See: Metaphor

What were “worldly stories loved by old women”?

[4:7]

Some scholars think Paul used the words “worldly stories” (βέβηλος/g0952) to write about stories that did not need to be told. These stories did not honor God. And they did not teach other people to honor God either.

Advice to Translators: Stories “loved by old women”(γρᾶώδης/g1126) in 4:7 was a common insult when Paul was alive. However, today it could insult women and the elderly. The translator should find a way of writing this idea without needlessly insulting other people.

See: World

Why did Paul write that “bodily training is a little useful”?

[4:8]

Paul wanted to write that someone training their body benefited them, but only useful while living on earth. However, training to do things that honor God benefited people would last forever.

Advice to translators: Someone who trains does something many times in the same way for a reason. It benefits them. That is, it helps them to be better in some way.

How is God the Savior of all people, but especially of Christians?

[4:10]

Scholars think many different things about what Paul wrote to Timothy about God. people, for example, gentiles.

1. Some scholars think Paul meant that God does not save every individual. He saves all kinds of
1. Some scholars think Paul was not writing of eternal salvation. But, God gives daily blessings to all people in the world. They think Paul wrote about God’s common grace to all people. This was a temporary grace. However, for those who believe in Jesus, God is their Savior. This is eternal grace.
2. Other scholars think God offers to save everyone, but only saves those who have believe in Jesus.

4:11-16

Why did Paul write Timothy, “let no one despise your youth”?

[4:12]

In ancient times, people respected people older person. They did not think younger people did many things, therefore they did not know as much as older people. Timothy was about 30 years old when Paul wrote this letter. However, because Timothy spent many years with Paul, he did many different things and learned how to teach others about God and the gospel. Because of this, Paul gave Timothy permission to teach and wanted other Christians to do the types of things that Timothy did.

See: Gospel

How was Timothy to “attend to the reading, to the exhortation, and to the teaching”?

[4:13]

Paul wanted Timothy “attend to the reading, to the exhortation, and to the teaching.” Paul meant that Timothy was to read the scriptures to those who believed in Jesus when they gathered together. He encouraged Christians by reading the Bible. Paul also wrote Timothy to carefully “teach” the truth to the church. That is, he wanted him to teach so the church would know the Bible well.

How did God prepare Timothy to serve him?

[4:14]

God gave Timothy a spiritual “gift”(χάρισμα/g5486). That is, he gave him a special ability to serve God. Timothy served God using the gift God gave him. However, he also worked to get better as serving God using gift. The group of “elders”(πρεσβυτέριον/g4244) earlier laid their hands on him. God gave a prophecy about how he wanted Timothy to serve him.

See: 1:18;; 2 Timothy 1:6

See: Gifts of the Holy Spirit; Elder; Laying on of Hands ; Prophecy (Prophecy)

Why did Paul write, “you will save yourself and those who listen to you”?

[4:16]

Paul wrote, “you will save yourself and those who listen to you.” Some scholars think Paul wrote Timothy that as he continued to be a faithful teacher he would see more people believe in Jesus. Also, he himself would know a closer, know Jesus better. Fewer scholars think Paul wrote about God saving Christians and resurrecting their bodies.

See: 1 Corinthians 15:35-54

See: Resurrect (Resurrection)

1 TIMOTHY 5

5:1-2

How was Timothy to treat older people?

[5:1, 5:2]

Paul told Timothy to respect older men and women in the same way he would respect a father or mother. Paul wrote Timothy not to “scold” an older man. That is, Timothy was not to speak harshly or disrespect an older man.

See: Leviticus 19:32

How was Timothy to treat younger people?

[5:1, 5:2]

Paul told Timothy to treat younger people in the same way he treated his own brothers and sister. Particularly, Paul told Timothy to encourage younger women with all “purity.” That is, Timothy was to honor and to protect younger women. Also, Timothy was to treat younger women with moral purity. That is, he was not to commit sexual immorality, by thinking or doing the wrong things.

Advice to Translator: in English, a person cannot do sexual immorality, they “commit” sexual immorality.

See: Sexual Immorality

5:3-16

What was a “real widow”?

[5:3]

Any woman whose husband died was a “widow.” However, Paul was writing about a widow who did not have anyone to care for her and not a widow whose family was able to help her (see: 5:16). The church was to help only widows who had no one and nothing to help them.

See: Deuteronomy 10:18, 14:29, 24:17-22; Isaiah 1:17; James 1:27

See: Church

Advice to Translators: Since every woman who has lost a husband is a widow, the translator needs to make a way to say that this is a “widow who is in need of someone to care for her.”

Why did Paul write that families need to care for a widowed mother or grandmother?

[5:4]

Paul wrote that children and grandchildren need to “honor” the widows in their family. Also, they needed to she had food and a place to live. If Christians cared for widows in their family, this was “pleasing to God”.

Advice to translators: A woman whose husband died was “widowed.”

Why did Paul write, “puts her certain hope in God”?

[5:5]

Paul wrote that a widow “puts her certain hope in God.” Some scholars think Paul wrote about a widow who placed her trust in God’s promises. She trusted God, not only for the promise to live with him in heaven forever, but also that God would help her during her life. Other scholars think Paul described a widow as someone who completely depended on God for her needs. For these reasons, a real widow prayed constantly for God to give her what she needed.

See: 1 Timothy 4:10; Isaiah 40:31; Romans 5:5

Why did Paul write, “dead, even though she is still alive”?

[5:6]

Paul wrote about certain widows as women who lived simply for their own “pleasure.” That is, they had a lot of money and did what they thought would make them happy. He said they were “dead, even though they were still alive.” That is, though they had life physically, they did not have spiritual life. That is, they did not worship God or depend on Him for their needs.

See: Ephesians 2:3; James 5:5;

See: Die (Death); Spirit (Spiritual); Born Again (New Life, Regeneration)

Why did Paul write, “denied the faith”?

[5:8]

Paul wrote that people “denied the faith.” Scholars think Paul wrote to “deny” the faith to write about people that said they believed in Jesus but they did not do the things that honor God.

See: Faith (Believe in)

What did the word, “enrolled” mean?

[5:9]

The word “enrolled”(καταλέγω/g2639) was used to talk about making someone a part of a group. Scholars think two different things about why widows were enrolled in the church.

1. Some scholars think the church made a list of widows (and perhaps also some women who never married). These women did special things for the church.
2. Other scholars think that the list was simply the widows the church supported. These women did not do anything special for the church.

See: Church

Why did Paul write “wife of one husband”?

[5:9]

Paul wrote “wife of one husband.” This can also be written “a husband of one wife” (see: 3:2), “a woman of one man” or “of one husband.” Some scholars think Paul wrote about a woman who married only once. Other scholars think Paul wrote about women who remained faithful to their husbands during their marriage.

How did a widow wash the feet of the saints?

[5:10]

In the ancient world, people washed the feet of people who came to their home. This honored the people who came to their home. Usually, slaves or women did this (see: Genesis 18:4; 1 Samuel 25:41; John 13:4- 12). Some scholars think Paul wrote about a woman who washed other Christian’s feet. Other scholars think this was a metaphor. They think it was a woman who served other Christians in a humble way.

See: Metaphor

Why did Paul write not to enroll younger widows on the list?

[5:11]

Paul wrote not to put the names of younger widows on the lists. Some scholars think Paul did not want to help younger widows for a long time. However, they think Paul did want to help younger widows in some way. Fewer scholars think Paul wrote not to give younger widows any help from the church.

Why did Paul write for widows to “revoke their first commitment”?

[5:12]

Paul wrote for widows to “revoke their first commitment.” To “revoke” was used to talk about someone not doing the things they said they would do. “Commitment”(πίστις/g4102) can also be translated as “faith.” Scholars do not agree on why Paul wrote these words.

1. Some scholars think that a widow dishonored her dead husband if she wanted to marry another man.
2. Some scholars think that she had made a “commitment” to the church to remain single so she could serve the church more, but then later did not do this.
3. Some scholars think that she had taken a “vow” of to not have sex again or get married again. Then, she could serve the church greatly.
4. Some scholars think that she no longer served Jesus because she married a man who did not believe in Jesus. In ancient times, a man could decide what god or gods his family worshipped.

See: Church; Vow

What was a “busybody”?

[5:13]

A “busybody” was a person who wanted to know things about other people. These were things they did not need to know about these other people (see: 2 Thessalonians 3:11). This was a sin. It hurt the church.

See: 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12

See: Sin; Church

Why did Paul write, “some have already turned aside to Satan”?

[5:15]

Someone “turned aside”(ἐκτρέπω/g1624) by no longer doing the things that honored God. Satan always tried to get Christians to do the things he wanted them to do (see: 4:1; 2 Timothy 2:26).

1. Some scholars think Paul wrote about widows who lived in a way that dishonors God or married someone who did not believe in Jesus.
2. Others scholars think some widows were doing things with magic.
3. Other scholars think some widows began to do the things demons wanted them to do (see: 4:1)

See: Genesis 3:1, 13; Acts 5:3; 2 Corinthians 11:14-15

See: Satan (The Devil); Demon

5:17-25

What was an elder?

[5:17]

See: 3:1-7

See: Elder

Why did Paul write, “you shall not muzzle an ox”?

[5:18]

Paul said the same things as Deuteronomy 25:4. On a farm, an ox walked around in a circle to crush grain. It was allowed to eat some of that grain. Paul wrote that an ox is fed with the grain on which he works. Therefore, it is also right to give the elders of the church things so they can live because they serve other Christians in a special way (see: 1 Corinthians 9:7-11).

See: Church; Grain (Grain Offering); Elder

Where did someone write, “The laborer is worthy of his wages”?

[5:18]

See: Matthew 10:10; Luke 10:7

Why did Paul write about “two or three witnesses”?

[5:19]

Paul said the same thing as Deuteronomy 19:15. This verse spoke about evil things such as murder. In order to punish a person, at least two or three people needed to see the person who did the evil thing. In the same way, saying that an elder sinned is a serious thing. It must be seen by people who have seen the sin.

See: Matthew 18:16; 2 Corinthians 13:1

See: Elder; Sin

Who were the “chosen angels”?

[5:21]

Paul wrote about the “chosen angels.” Some scholars think the “chosen angels” were those angels God made to care for the church. They think Paul wrote about God, Jesus, and the angels so they would know that the command Paul gave Timothy was serious. Other scholars think Paul wrote about certain angels who are near God in heaven.

See: Revelation 4-5

See: Angel; Elect (Election); Church; Heaven

What did Paul write to Timothy to “keep these commands without partiality”?

[5:21]

Paul wrote Timothy not to give “partiality” when judging something. That is, when he judged something for the elders. Paul wrote Timothy to treat every elder in the same way. In the same way, Timothy was not to favor a certain elder for any reason.

Advice to translators: Timothy helped the elders to know what to do when they did not know what to do. This is how he judged something.

See: Galatians 2:6; James 2:1-13

See: Elder

Why did Paul warn Timothy not to lay hands on anyone too “hastily”?

[5:22] When the church made someone a new leader, the current elders laid their hands on them and prayed with them. Paul wanted Timothy to know for sure whether or not someone needed to be a leader before he made them into one. He did not need to make people into leaders too quickly.

See: 4:14; 2 Timothy 1:6

See: Elder; Laying on of Hands

Why did Paul write “share in the sins of another person”?

[5:22]

Paul wanted Timothy to know that Timothy would be guilty if he made someone a leader in the church too quickly. That is, if he made someone a leader that did not need to be one. Perhaps Paul wrote about a leader who continues to sin.

See: Sin

Why did Paul write Timothy to “take a little wine”?

[5:23]

Paul told Timothy to “take a little wine.” Paul was not writing Timothy to stop drink water. Instead, he wrote him not to drink only water. Paul wrote Timothy to “take a little wine” as well as to drink water. Some scholars think Paul wrote this to Timothy because Timothy had an illnesses. Some people thought this could make someone feel better when they were ill. Other scholars think Paul wrote this to Timothy to because sometimes the water was not good to drink where Timothy was.

What were sins that went before a person “into judgment”?

[5:24]

Paul wrote about sins that went before a person “into judgment.” Some of the people they thought could be church leaders had sinned in a certain way. They sinned in a way where everyone knew they sinned. Because everyone knew about their sins, Timothy and the other leaders judged that they could not serve in this way. However, Paul wrote that there were people who sinned secretly. These sins were sometimes found out at a later time. Therefore, Timothy had to be careful when he chose new leaders for the church.

See: Psalm 90:8; Jeremiah 16:17

See: Sin; Church

1 TIMOTHY 6

6:1-2

What was a slave?

[6:1]

A “slave”(δοῦλος/g1401) was a person owned by another person. The slave worked for the owner. A slave was not paid for the work they did. However, a “slave” was taken care of by his owner. The owner gave them food to eat, clothes to wear, and a place to live.

See: Ephesians 6:5-8; Colossians 3:22-25;

See: Serve (Servant, Slave)

What did it mean to be “under the yoke”?

[6:1]

A yoke (ζυγός/g2218) was a piece of wood that was placed around the necks of two large animals to join them together. This allowed them to pull heavy loads. To be “under the yoke” was a metaphor. That is, it was used to talk about how slaves were owned by a master and made to do work.

See: Metaphor

Why did Paul write, “worthy of all honor”?

[6:1]

Paul wanted Christian slaves to respect their master by obeying him.

How might the “name of God” be blasphemed?

[6:1]

The word “blaspheme” was used to say that someone said something bad about God or another person in some way. Some scholars think Paul wrote about God being spoken against when he wrote Christians not to do things to blaspheme. That is, If slaves were disobedient, it gave reason for non-Christians to speak bad things about God and the things Christians taught.

See: Romans 2:24; Titus 2:9-10

See: Blaspheme (Blasphemy)

6:3-10

What was teaching that did “not agree” with Paul’s message?

[6:3]

Throughout the book of 1st Timothy, Paul wrote Timothy about how the church was to work together. Paul wanted Timothy to know that anything someone taught that did “not agree” (ἐτεροδιδασκαλέω/g2085) with the things Paul wrote in this letter was false teaching.

See: Galatians 1:6-9

See: Church

What were “controversies and arguments about words”?

[6:4]

Paul wrote again what he had already written about false teachers. They taught about things that did not matter much. They also taught wrong things about the Old Testament (see: 1:4, 6-7; 4:7). These things caused arguments about things which were not things about which they needed to worry. Paul warned Timothy that false teachers harmed the church.

See: Proverbs 20:3; Titus 3:9

See: Church

What was a “depraved” person?

[6:5]

Some scholars think a “depraved” person was someone who did not know the truth or they no longer believed the things that were true. Other scholars think a “depraved” person does not know the difference between right and wrong.

Why did Paul write the word “contentment”?

[6:6]

“Contentment” was used to talk about a person who had enough of the things he needed to live. He had no need for help from other people. Also, it was used to talk about a person who did not want anything more in their life. In Paul’s letters, Christians were content because they knew God provided their needs.

See: Matthew 6:25-26; Philippians 4:11-13

See: Greed (Covet)

How were godliness and contentment “great gain”?

[6:6]

Paul wrote that godliness and contentment were “great gain” because doing the things that honored God were good for a person both now and forever.

See: Godly (Godliness)

Why did Paul write “the world”?

[6:7]

In the same way that newborn babies have nothing in this world, people cannot take anything from this world with them when they die.

See: Job 1:21; Matthew 6:33-34

See: World

What was “the love of money”?

A person with “love of money” only wanted to have much money and things they could buy with it.

How was the love of money “a root of all kinds of evil”?

[6:10]

Paul used the metaphor of a “root.” That is, the love of money causes much evil in the same way a root causes a plant to grow.

See: Ecclesiastes 5:10; Luke 16:13-15

See: Metaphor

How did people who loved money “pierce themselves with much grief”?

[6:10]

When a person pierced or stabbed themselves with a knife or other sharp thing, it caused pain. Paul used that idea to say that people who have a love for money often times cause themselves to have pain, such as the loss of friendships.

6:11-21

What was a “man of God”?

[6:11]

Some scholars think Paul wrote about Timothy as a man of God because Timothy was a Christian. Also, Timothy wanted to do the things that honored God. Other scholars think Paul wrote “man of God” to write that Timothy was similar to a prophet. In the Old Testament, the words “man of God” were often used to write about Moses, Samuel and Elijah.

See: 2 Timothy 3:17; Deuteronomy 33:1; 1 Kings 17:18

See: Prophet

Why did Paul write Timothy to “flee these things”?

[6:11]

Paul told Timothy to “flee” certain things. He wrote this to tell Timothy not do the things that trap people who do these things because they love money. However, Paul wrote Timothy to “pursue” other things. He told him to do the things that make him to live in a way that honors God.

See: 2 Timothy 2:22

What was the “good fight of faith”?

[6:12]

Paul wanted Timothy to know that a Christian will be persecuted by people who do not believe in Jesus.

See: Persecute (Persecution)

What was the “good confession” made by Timothy?

[6:12, 6:13]

Some scholars think the “good confession” about which Paul wrote was when Timothy told others that he believed in Jesus. Other scholars think Timothy made the “good confession” when he began preaching the gospel (see: 2 Timothy 1:14).

See: Romans 10:9-10

See: Confess (Confession); Preach (Preacher); Gospel

Why did Paul write Timothy to “keep the commandment without spot or blame”?

[6:14]

Paul wrote Timothy to obey God’s commandment “without spot.” That is, he needed to obey God perfectly. To be “without blame” meant Timothy was to do things in such a way that no one could accuse him of doing the wrong things.

See: 4:11-16; 2 Peter 3:14

Why did Paul write “reveal Christ’s appearing”?

[6:14]

Paul wrote “reveal Christ’s appearing” to write that God decided when Christ will return. God will cause it to happen (see: Acts 1:6-7). “Appearing”(ἐπιφάνεια/g2015) was one of the words used to talk about when Jesus came to earth the first time (see: 2 Timothy 1:10). The same Greek word for “appearing” is also used for the second time Jesus will come in the future (see: 2 Thessalonians 2:8; 2 Timothy 4:1, 8; Titus 2:13).

See: Matthew 16:27; 24:30; Colossians 3:4

See: Reveal (Revelation); Jesus' Return to Earth; Glory (Glorify)

What was “immortality”?

[6:16]

God has “immortality.” That is, only God has always lived and will live forever and never dies (see: 1:17). God promised Christians that they will live forever with God also (1 Corinthians 15:53-54).

See: Immortal (Immortality)

What was “unapproachable light”?

[6:16]

God’s presence is so bright that people cannot be physically close to him. This was the light of God’s glory at Mount Sinai (see: Exodus 24:16-17).

See: Psalm 104:1-2

See: Light and Darkness (Metaphor); Presence of God; Glory (Glorify)

See Map: Mount Sinai

How was someone “rich in good works”?

[6:18]

When Paul wrote to Timothy about people being “rich in good works,” he wanted people to do many good things.

See: Acts 9:36; Titus 3:8;

What was a “good foundation”?

[6:19]

Paul wrote about a “good foundation.” This was a metaphor. In the same way cement and large rocks made a foundation to build a solid house, so the things taught in the Bible is the foundation for a Christian to live.

See: Matthew 6:19-21

See: Metaphor

Why did Paul write to Timothy to “protect” what was given to him?

[6:20]

Paul told Timothy the truth, and Timothy needed to “protect”(φυλάσσω/g5442) it. Also, Timothy needed to teach Christians the truth in the same way that Paul taught Timothy. Some scholars think that this was all the things Christians taught. Other scholars think that it was only the things Paul wrote Timothy in this letter.

See: 1:11, 18; 2 Timothy 1:14

Why did Paul write some men “missed the faith”?

[6:21]

Some scholars think Paul wrote the words “miss”(ἄστοχέω/g0795) the faith to write about people who did not fully understand the message about believing in Jesus. Therefore, they began to teach false things about what was faith. Fewer scholars think Paul used the words to “miss” the faith to write about people who no longer believed the message of faith.

See: 1:6, 19; 2 Timothy 2:18
