

English: Translation Notes, Unlocked Literal Bible for 1 Timothy
Formatted for Translators

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Notes: English ULB Translation Notes

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1 Timothy

Chapter 1

¹Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus according to the commandment of God our Savior and Christ Jesus our hope,

²to Timothy, a true son in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

³As I urged you to do when I was leaving for Macedonia, remain in Ephesus so that you can command certain people not to teach a different doctrine.⁴Neither should they pay attention to stories and endless genealogies. These promote arguments rather than the plan of God, which is by faith.

⁵Now the goal of the commandment is love from a pure heart, from a good conscience, and from a sincere faith.⁶Some people have gone astray from these things and have turned to worthless talk.⁷They want to be teachers of the law, but they do not understand what they are saying or what they so confidently affirm.⁸But we know that the law is good if one uses it lawfully.

⁹We know this: that law is not set in place for a righteous man, but for lawless and rebellious people, for ungodly people and sinners, and for those who are unholy and profane, for those who kill their fathers and mothers, for murderers,¹⁰for sexually immoral people, for those who practice homosexuality, for those who kidnap people for slaves, for liars, for false witnesses, and for whatever else is opposed to truthful teaching.¹¹This instruction is according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God with which I have been entrusted.

¹²I thank Christ Jesus our Lord. He strengthened me, for he considered me faithful, and he appointed me to service.¹³I was a blasphemer, a persecutor, and a violent man. But I received mercy because I acted ignorantly in unbelief.¹⁴And the grace of our Lord overflowed with the faith and the love that is in Christ Jesus.

¹⁵This message is reliable and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.¹⁶But for this reason I was given mercy, so that in me, the chief, Christ Jesus might demonstrate all patience. He did this as an example for those who would believe in him for eternal life.¹⁷Now to the king of the ages, the immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

¹⁸I am placing this command before you, Timothy, my child, in accordance with the prophecies previously made about you, that you might fight the good fight,¹⁹holding faith and a good conscience. By rejecting this, some have shipwrecked their faith.²⁰Such are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I delivered over to Satan so that they may be taught not to blaspheme.

1 Timothy 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Paul formally introduces this letter in verses 1-2. Writers often began letters in this way in the ancient Near East.

Special concepts in this chapter

Spiritual children

In this chapter, Paul calls Timothy a "son" and his "child." Paul disciplined Timothy as a Christian and a church leader. Paul may also have led him to believe in Christ. Therefore, Paul called Timothy his "son in the faith."

Genealogies

Genealogies are lists that record a person's ancestors or descendants. Jews used genealogies to choose the right man to become king. They did this because only a son of a king could normally become king. They also showed from what tribe and family they came. For example, priests came from the tribe of Levi and the family of Aaron. Most important people had records of their genealogies.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Play on words

The phrase "the law is good if one uses it lawfully" ([1 Timothy 1:8](#)) is a play on words. The English words "law" and "lawfully" come from the same root, and they translate words that come from the same root in the original language, so it would be well to translate the clause so as to preserve this word play.

Links:

[1 Timothy 1:1 Notes](#) [1 Timothy intro](#)

Chapter 1

1 Timothy 1:1

General Information:

In this book, unless otherwise noted, the word "our" refers to Paul and Timothy

Paul, an apostle

"I, Paul, wrote this letter. I am an apostle." Your language may have a particular way of introducing the author of a letter. Immediately after introducing the writer, you may want to indicate to whom the letter was written, as in the UDB.

according to the commandment of

"by the command of" or "by the authority of"

God our Savior

"God who saves us"

Christ Jesus our hope

Here "our hope" refers to the person in whom we have confidence. Alternate translation: "Christ Jesus, who is the one in whom we have confidence" or "Christ Jesus, whom we trust"

1 Timothy 1:2

true son in the faith

Paul speaks of his close relationship to Timothy as though they were father and son. This shows Paul's sincere love and approval of Timothy. It is also likely that Timothy was converted to Christ by Paul, and so this is why Paul considers him like his own child. Alternate translation: "who is truly like a son to me"

Grace, mercy, and peace

"May grace, mercy, and peace be yours," or "May you experience kindness, mercy, and peace"

God the Father and

"God, who is our Father, and." Here "Father" is an important title for God.

Christ Jesus our Lord

"Christ Jesus, who is our Lord"

1 Timothy 1:3

General Information:

The word "you" in this letter is singular and refers to Timothy.

Connecting Statement:

Paul encourages Timothy to reject the wrong use of the law and instead to use good teaching from God.

As I urged you

"As I pleaded with you" or "As I asked you very strongly" remain in Ephesus

"wait for me there in the city of Ephesus"

a different doctrine

The implied information can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "a different doctrine from what we teach"

1 Timothy 1:4

Neither should they pay attention

"And I also want you to command them not to pay attention"

to stories

These may have been stories about their ancestors.

endless genealogies

With the word "endless" Paul uses exaggeration to emphasize that the genealogies are very long.

genealogies

the written or verbal record of a person's parents and ancestors

These promote arguments

"These make people angrily disagree." The people debated about stories and genealogies about which no one could know the truth for certain.

rather than the plan of God, which is by faith

Possible meanings are 1) "rather than helping people to understand God's plan to save us, which we learn by faith" or 2) "rather than helping us to do God's work, which we do by faith."

1 Timothy 1:5

Now

This word is used here to mark a break in the main teaching. Here Paul explains the purpose of what he is commanding Timothy.

the commandment

Here this does not mean the Old Testament or the Ten Commandments but rather the instructions that Paul gives in 1 Timothy 1:3 and 1 Timothy 1:4.

is love

Possible meanings are 1) "is to love God" or 2) "is to love people."

from a pure heart

Here "pure" means the person does not have hidden motives to do wrong. Here "heart" refers to a person's mind and thoughts. Alternate translation: "from a mind that is honest"

good conscience

"a conscience that chooses right instead wrong"

sincere faith

"genuine faith" or "a faith without hypocrisy"

1 Timothy 1:6

have gone astray from these things

Paul speaks of people who no longer try to "love from a pure heart, from a good conscience, and from a sincere faith"

turned to worthless talk

"begun to have useless discussions"

1 Timothy 1:7

teachers of the law

Here "law" refers to the law of Moses.

but they do not understand

"even though they do not understand" or "and yet they do not understand"

what they so confidently affirm

"what they so confidently state is true"

1 Timothy 1:8

we know that the law is good

"we understand that the law is useful" or "we understand that the law is beneficial"

if one uses it lawfully

"if a person uses it correctly" or "if a person uses it the way God intended"

1 Timothy 1:9

We know this

"Because we realize this" or "We also know this"

that law is not set in place for a righteous man

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation:

"that God did not set the law in place for the righteous man" a righteous man
Here "man" includes both male and female. Alternate translation: "a righteous person" or "a good person"
1 Timothy 1:10
sexually immoral people
This refers to anyone who sleeps with someone to whom they are not married.
homosexuality
"sexual activity with other members of the same sex." The Greek word specifies males, but it probably is intended here to include females as well.
those who kidnap people for slaves
"those who kidnap people to sell as slaves" or "those who take people to sell as slaves"
whatever else is opposed to truthful teaching
The Greek has "healthy" but that term is a figure for "truthful" here. It is a dead metaphor for true, trustworthy, and morally good. Alternate translation: "whatever other things people do that we teach is wrong"
1 Timothy 1:11
the glorious gospel of the blessed God
"the gospel about the glory that belongs to the blessed God" or "the gospel of the glorious and blessed God"
with which I have been entrusted
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "which God has given me and made me responsible for"
1 Timothy 1:12
he considered me faithful
"he considered me trustworthy" or "he regarded me as reliable"
he appointed me to service
"he assigned me to serve him" or "he appointed me as his servant"
1 Timothy 1:13
Connecting Statement:
Paul begins to tell how he acted in the past.
I was a blasphemer
"I was a person who spoke evil against Christ." Paul is referring to his character before he was a Christian.
a persecutor
"a person who persecuted those who believed in Christ"
a violent man
"a person who was cruel to other people" or "a person who believed I had the right to hurt others"
But I received mercy because I acted ignorantly in unbelief
"But because I did not believe in Jesus, and I did not know what I was doing, I received mercy from Jesus"
I received mercy
"Jesus showed me mercy" or "Jesus had mercy on me"
1 Timothy 1:14
the grace of our Lord overflowed
Paul speaks of God's grace as if it were a liquid that could fill a container and spill out of the top when the container is full. Alternate translation: "God showed me much grace" overflowed with the faith and the love that is in Christ Jesus
This is the result of God showing much grace to Paul.
Alternate translation: "overflowed, which caused me to trust in Christ Jesus and love him"

that is in Christ Jesus
This speaks about Jesus as if he were a container that holds a liquid. Here "in Christ Jesus" refers to having a relationship with Jesus. Alternate translation: "that Christ Jesus enables me to give to God because I am united to him"
1 Timothy 1:15
This message is reliable
"This statement is true"
worthy of all acceptance
"we should receive it without any doubt" or "deserves for us to accept it with full confidence"
sinners, of whom I am chief
"sinners, of whom I am the chief sinner" or "sinners, of whom I am the worst." Paul is saying that he has sinned more than any other sinner, not that he has been the leader of a group of sinners.
1 Timothy 1:16
I was given mercy
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God showed me mercy" or "I obtained mercy from God" the chief
"the chief sinner" or "the worst sinner." Paul is saying that he has sinned more than any other sinner, not that he has been the leader of a group of sinners. See how you translated this in 1 Timothy 1:15.
1 Timothy 1:17
Now ... Amen
The word "Now" is used here to mark a break in the main teaching. Here Paul praises God.
the king of the ages
"the eternal king" or "the chief ruler forever"
Now to the king of the ages, the immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever
The abstract nouns "honor" and "glory" can be stated as verbs. Alternate translation: "Now may people forever honor and glorify the king of the ages, who is immortal, invisible, and the only God"
1 Timothy 1:18
Connecting Statement:
Paul begins to encourage Timothy to trust God.
I am placing this command before you
Paul speaks of his instructions as if he could physically put them in front of Timothy. Alternate translation: "I am entrusting you with this command" or "This is what I am commanding you"
my child
Paul speaks of his close relationship to Timothy as though Paul is the father and Timothy is the child. It is also likely that Timothy was converted to Christ by Paul, and so this is why Paul considered him like his own child. Alternate translation: "who is truly like my child"
in accordance with the prophecies previously made about you
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "in agreement with what other believers prophesied about you"
fight the good fight
Paul speaks about Timothy working for the Lord as if he were a soldier fighting a battle. Alternate translation: "continue to work hard for the Lord"

Chapter 2

1 Timothy 1:19

a good conscience

"a conscience that chooses right instead wrong." See how you translated this in 1 Timothy 1:5.

some have shipwrecked their faith

Paul speaks of these people's faith as if it were a ship that could be wrecked at sea. He means that they have ruined their faith and no longer believe in Jesus. You should use this or a similar metaphor if it will be understood in the project language.

1 Timothy 1:20

Hymenaeus ... Alexander

These are names of men.

whom I delivered over to Satan

Paul has cast the men out of the community, so Satan now has power over them and can harm them.

they may be taught

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation:

"God may teach them"

Chapter 2

¹Therefore, first of all, I urge that humble requests, prayers, petitions, and thanksgivings be made for all people,²for kings and all who are in authority, in order that we may live a peaceful and quiet life in all godliness and dignity.³This is good and acceptable before God our Savior.⁴He desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

⁵For there is one God, and there is one mediator for God and man, the man Christ Jesus.⁶He gave himself as a ransom for all, as the testimony at the right time.⁷For this purpose I was appointed a herald and an apostle—I am telling the truth, I am not lying—and a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

⁸Therefore, I want men in every place to pray and to lift up holy hands without anger or arguing.⁹In the same way, the women are to dress with proper clothing, with modesty and self-control, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or expensive clothing,¹⁰but with what is proper for women who proclaim godliness through good works.

¹¹A woman should learn in silence and with all submission.¹²I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man, but to live in quietness.

¹³For Adam was formed first, then Eve.¹⁴Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor.

¹⁵However, she will be saved through bearing children, if they continue in faith and love and sanctification with self-control.

1 Timothy 2 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Peace

Paul encourages Christians to pray for everyone. They should pray for rulers so that Christians can live peacefully, in a godly and dignified way.

Women in the church

Scholars are divided over how to understand this passage in its historical and cultural context. Some scholars believe men and women are perfectly equal in all things. Other scholars believe God created men and women to serve in distinctly different roles in marriage and the church. Translators should be careful not to let how they understand this issue affect how they translate this passage.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"Prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings"

These terms overlap each other in what they mean. It is not necessary to view them as distinct categories.

Links:

[1 Timothy 2:1 Notes](#)

1 Timothy 2:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul encourages Timothy to pray for all people.

first of all

"most importantly" or "before anything else"

I urge that humble requests, prayers, petitions, and thanksgivings be made

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I urge all believers to make requests, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgiving to God"

I urge

"I plead" or "I ask"

1 Timothy 2:2

a peaceful and quiet life

Here "peaceful" and "quiet" mean the same thing. Paul wants all believers to be able to live calm lives without trouble from the authorities.

in all godliness and dignity

"that honors God and that other people will respect"

1 Timothy 2:3

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

1 Timothy 2:4

He desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation:

"God desires to save all people and for them to come to the knowledge of the truth"

to come to the knowledge of the truth

Paul speaks of learning the truth about God as if it were a place to which people could go. Alternate translation: "to know and accept what is true"

1 Timothy 2:5

one mediator for God and man

A mediator is a person who helps negotiate a peaceful settlement between two parties who disagree with each other. Here Jesus helps sinners enter into a peaceful relationship with God.

1 Timothy 2:6

gave himself

"died willingly"

as a ransom

"as a price of freedom" or "as a payment to obtain freedom"

as the testimony at the right time

It can be made explicit that this was the testimony that God wants to save all people. Alternate translation: "as the proof at the right time that God wants to save all people"

at the right time

This means that this was the time that God had chosen.

1 Timothy 2:7

For this purpose

"For this" or "For this reason"

I was appointed a herald and an apostle

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation:

"Christ appointed me to be a herald and an apostle" or

"Christ made me a preacher and an apostle"

a herald

"an official messenger." A herald is an official messenger who is sent to bring news.

I am telling the truth, I am not lying

With these two comments Paul emphasizes that he is telling the truth when he says that he was appointed to be a herald, an apostle, and a teacher. Some translators may prefer to put these comments at the end of the verse.

in faith and truth

This probably refers to what Paul was to teach about. He may be using "faith" and "truth" to express one idea.

Alternate translation: "about the message of faith and truth" or "about the true faith"

1 Timothy 2:8

Connecting Statement:

Paul finishes his instructions on prayer and then gives some special instructions for women.

I want men in every place to pray and to lift up holy hands

Here "holy hands" is a metonym for a holy person.

Alternate translation: "I want holy men in every place to lift up their hands and pray"

men in every place

"the males in all places" or "the males everywhere." Here

the word "men" refers specifically to males.

lift up holy hands

It was a normal posture for people to raise their hands while praying.

1 Timothy 2:9

with modesty and self-control

Both of these words mean basically the same thing. Paul is emphasizing that women should wear clothes that are appropriate and do not attract improper attention from men.

not with braided hair

During Paul's time, many Roman women braided their hair to make themselves attractive. Braiding is only one way a woman can give undue attention to her hair. If braided hair is unknown, it can be stated in a more general way.

Alternate translation: "not having fancy hairstyles" or "not having elaborate hairstyles that attract attention"

pearls

These are beautiful and valuable white balls that people use as jewelry. They are formed inside the shell of a certain kind of small animal that lives in the ocean.

1 Timothy 2:10

General Information:

Possible meanings of this verse are 1) the words "through good works" tell how the women Paul is talking about "proclaim godliness" or 2) those words tell how women are to "dress," a metaphor that refers to what people are to see and think about when they look at the women to whom Paul is writing. Alternate translation: "but with good works, as is proper for women who proclaim godliness"

who proclaim godliness through good works

"who want to show that they honor God by doing good deeds"

1 Timothy 2:11

in silence

"in quietness"

and with all submission

"and submit to what is taught"

1 Timothy 2:12

I do not permit a woman

"I do not allow a woman"

1 Timothy 2:13

Adam was formed first

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation:

"Adam is the one God formed first" or "God created Adam first"

then Eve

The understood information can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "and then God formed Eve" or "and then God created Eve"

1 Timothy 2:14

Adam was not deceived

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation:

"And Adam was not the one whom the serpent deceived"

but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "but it was the woman who disobeyed God when the serpent deceived her"

1 Timothy 2:15

Chapter 3

she will be saved through bearing children

Here "she" refers to women in general. Possible meanings are 1) God will keep women physically safe as they give birth to children, or 2) God will save women from their sins through their role as child bearers.

she will be saved

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation:

"God will save her" or "God will save women"

if they continue

"if they remain" or "if they continue living." Here "they" refers to women.

in faith and love and sanctification

The abstract nouns here can be translated with verbal phrases. Alternate translation: "in trusting Jesus and loving others and living a holy life"

with self-control

Other possible meanings are 1) "with good judgment" or 2) "with modesty."

Chapter 3

¹This saying is trustworthy: If someone desires to be an overseer, he desires a good work.²Therefore the overseer must have a good reputation. He must be a husband of one wife. He must be moderate, sensible, orderly, and hospitable. He must be able to teach.³He must not be addicted to wine, not a brawler but instead gentle, peaceful. He must not be a lover of money.

⁴He should manage his own household well, and he should make sure his children obey and respect him in every way.⁵For if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for a church of God?

⁶He should not be a new convert, so that he does not swell with pride and fall into condemnation as the devil.⁷He must also have a good reputation with those outside, so that he does not fall into disgrace and the trap of the devil.

⁸In the same way, deacons should be dignified, not double-talkers. They should not drink too much wine or be greedy.

⁹They should keep the mystery of the faith with a clean conscience.¹⁰They should also be approved first, and then they should serve because they are blameless.

¹¹In the same way, their wives should be dignified, not slanderers, but sober and faithful in all things.¹²Deacons must be husbands of one wife. They must manage well their children and household.¹³For those who have served well acquire for themselves a good standing and great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.

¹⁴As I write these things to you, I hope to come to you soon.¹⁵But if I delay, I am writing so that you may know how to conduct yourself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth.

¹⁶We all agree that the mystery of godliness is great:

"He was revealed in the flesh,
was vindicated by the Spirit,
was seen by angels,
was proclaimed among nations,
was believed on in the world,
and was taken up in glory."

1 Timothy 3 General Notes

Structure and formatting

[1 Timothy 3:16](#) was probably a song, poem, or creed the early church used to list important doctrines that believers all shared.

Special concepts in this chapter

Overseers and deacons

The church has used different titles for church leaders. Some titles include elder, pastor, and bishop. The word "overseer" reflects the meaning of the original language in verses 1-2. Paul writes about "deacons" in verses 8 and 12 as another kind of church leader.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Character qualities

This chapter lists several qualities that a man must have if he is to be an overseer or deacon in the church.

Links:

[1 Timothy 3:1 Notes](#)

1 Timothy 3:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul gives some special instructions on how the overseers

of the church should act and be.

a good work

"an honorable task"

1 Timothy 3:2

husband of one wife

An overseer must have only one wife. It is unclear if this excludes men who have been previously widowed or divorced, or never married.

He must be moderate, sensible, orderly, and hospitable

"He must not do anything to excess, must be reasonable and behave well, and must be friendly to strangers"

1 Timothy 3:3

He must not be addicted to wine, not a brawler but instead gentle, peaceful

"He must neither drink too much alcohol nor like to fight and argue, but instead he must be gentle and peaceful"

a lover of money

"greedy for money"

1 Timothy 3:4

He should manage

"He should lead" or "He should take care of"

he should make sure his children obey and respect him in every way

Possible meanings are 1) the overseer's children should obey and show respect to their father or 2) the overseer's children should show respect to everyone or 3) the overseer should show respect to those in his household as he leads them.

1 Timothy 3:5

For if a man does not know how to manage

"For when a man cannot manage"

how will he care for a church of God?

Paul uses a question to teach Timothy. Alternate translation: "he cannot take care of a church of God." or "he will not be able to lead a church of God."

a church of God

Here "church" refers to a local group of God's people.

Alternate translation: "a group of God's people" or "the believers over whom he is in charge"

1 Timothy 3:6

He should not be a new convert

"He should not be a new believer" or "He must be a mature believer"

fall into condemnation as the devil

Paul speaks of a person being condemned for having done wrong as if he were falling into a hole. Alternate translation: "have God condemn him as he condemned the devil"

1 Timothy 3:7

those outside

"those outside of the church." Paul speaks of the church as though it were a place, and of unbelievers as though they were physically outside of it. Alternate translation: "those who are not Christians"

he does not fall into disgrace and the trap of the devil

Paul speaks of disgrace and the devil causing someone to sin as if they were a hole or a trap into which a person falls.

Here "fall into" means to experience. Alternate translation: "nothing causes him shame before the unbelievers and so that the devil does not cause him to sin"

1 Timothy 3:8

Connecting Statement:

Paul gives some special instructions on how the deacons of

the church and their wives should act and be.

In the same way, deacons

"Deacons, like overseers,"

should be dignified, not double-talkers

Paul speaks about some people as if they were "double-talkers" who could say two things at once. He is talking about people who say one thing but mean something else. Alternate translation: "should act properly and mean what they say"

1 Timothy 3:9

They should keep the mystery of the faith with a clean conscience

"They must continue to believe, with a clean conscience, the true message God has revealed to us." This refers to a truth that had existed for some time but that God was showing to them at that moment. Paul speaks of true teaching about God as if it were an object that a person could keep with himself.

the mystery of the faith

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the truth of the faith that God revealed"

faith with a clean conscience

Paul speaks of a person's knowledge that he has done no wrong as if that knowledge or conscience were clean.

Alternate translation: "faith, knowing they have tried their hardest to do what is right"

1 Timothy 3:10

They should also be approved first

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation:

"Other believers should approve of them first" or "They should prove themselves first"

be approved

This means other believers should evaluate those who want to be a deacon and determine if they are fit to serve in the church.

1 Timothy 3:11

In the same way, their wives

Possible meanings of "their wives" are 1) the wives of deacons or 2) female deacons or 3) women in general.

be dignified

"act properly" or "be worthy of respect"

should be dignified, not slanderers, but sober and faithful

"should be dignified; they should not speak evil about other people, and they should not do anything to excess; rather, they should be faithful"

sober

"moderate." See how you translated "moderate" in 1 Timothy 3:2.

1 Timothy 3:12

husbands of one wife

A man must have only one wife. It is unclear if this excludes men who have been previously widowed, divorced, or never married. See how you translated this in 1 Timothy 3:2.

manage well their children and household

"properly take care of and lead their children and others who live in their homes"

1 Timothy 3:13

For those

"For those deacons" or "For these church leaders"

Chapter 4

acquire for themselves

"receive for themselves" or "gain for themselves"

a good standing

The implied meaning may be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "a good reputation among other believers"

great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus

Possible meanings are 1) they will trust in Jesus with even more confidence or 2) they will speak confidently to other people about their faith in Jesus.

1 Timothy 3:14

Connecting Statement:

Paul tells Timothy the reason he wrote to him and then describes Christ's godliness.

I hope to come to you soon

Paul expected that his desire to visit them soon would happen. Alternate translation: "I expect to come to you soon"

1 Timothy 3:15

But if I delay

"But in case I cannot go there soon" or "But if something prevents me for being there soon"

so that you may know how to conduct yourself in the household of God

Paul speaks of the group of believers as if they were a family. Possible meanings are 1) Paul is referring only to Timothy's behavior in the church. Or 2) Paul is referring to believers in general. Alternate translation: "so that you all may know how to conduct yourselves as members of God's family"

household of God, which is the church of the living God

This phrase gives us information about "the household of God" rather than making a distinction between a household of God which is the church and one that is not the church. This can be stated as a new sentence. Alternate translation: "household of God. Those who belong to the family of God are the community of believers in the living God"

which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth
Paul speaks of the believers bearing witness to the truth about Christ as if they were a pillar and a base supporting a building. This can be stated as a new sentence. Alternate translation: "which is the church of the living God. And, by keeping and teaching God's truth, these members of the

church support the truth just as a pillar and base support a building"

the living God

Here this expression may be speaking of God as the one who gives life to all, as in the UDB.

1 Timothy 3:16

We all agree

"No one can deny"

that the mystery of godliness is great

"that the truth that God has revealed is great"

He was revealed ... up in glory

This is most likely a song or poem that Paul is quoting. If your language has a way of indicating that this is poetry you could use it here. If not, you could translate this as regular prose rather than poetry.

He was revealed

Some modern translations read, "God was revealed" or

"God appeared." If Paul is quoting a song or poem, the word

"he" refers to Jesus Christ. If he is not quoting, the word

"he" could refer to either God or Jesus Christ.

in the flesh

Paul uses "flesh" here to mean a human being. Alternate translation: "as a true human being"

was vindicated by the Spirit

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the Holy Spirit confirmed that he was who he said he was"

was seen by angels

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the angels saw him"

was proclaimed among nations

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation:

"people in many nations told others about him"

was believed on in the world

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation:

"people in many parts of the world believed in him"

was taken up in glory

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation:

"God the Father took him up to heaven in glory"

in glory

This means he received power from God the Father and he is worthy of honor.

Chapter 4

¹Now the Spirit clearly says that in later times some people will leave the faith and pay attention to deceitful spirits and the teachings of demons²by the hypocrisy of liars, their own consciences having been seared.

³They will forbid people to marry and require them to abstain from foods that God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth.⁴For every creation of God is good, and nothing received with thanksgiving is to be rejected.⁵For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.

⁶If you place these things before the brothers, you will be a good servant of Jesus Christ. For you are being nourished by the words of faith and by the good teaching that you have followed.⁷But reject profane stories loved by old women. Instead, train yourself in godliness.⁸For bodily training is a little useful, but godliness is useful for all things. It holds promise for this life now and the life to come.

⁹This message is trustworthy and worthy of full acceptance.¹⁰For it is for this that we labor and struggle. For we hope in the living God, who is the Savior of all people, but especially of believers.

¹¹Instruct the people and teach these things.¹²Let no one despise your youth, but be an example for the believers in speech, conduct, love, faithfulness, and purity.¹³Until I come, attend to the reading, to the exhortation, and to the teaching.

¹⁴Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you through prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the elders.¹⁵Care for these things. Be in them, so that your progress may be evident to all people.¹⁶Give careful attention to yourself and to the teaching. Continue in these things. For by doing so, you will save yourself and those who listen to you.

1 Timothy 4 General Notes

Structure and formatting

1 Timothy 4:1 is a prophecy. (See: prophet)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Later times

This is another way of referring to the last days. (See: lastday)

Links:

[1 Timothy 4:1 Notes](#)

1 Timothy 4:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul tells Timothy what the Spirit says will happen and encourages him in what he should teach.

Now

This word is used here to mark a break in the main teaching. Here Paul starts to tell a new part of the teaching. in later times

These words could refer to 1) a time after Paul dies or 2) a later time in Paul's own life.

leave the faith

Paul speaks of people ceasing to trust in Christ as if they were physically leaving a place or an object. Alternate translation: "stop trusting in Jesus"

and pay attention

"and give attention" or "because they are paying attention"

deceitful spirits and the teachings of demons

"spirits who trick people and the things that demons teach"

1 Timothy 4:2

by the hypocrisy of liars

This can be stated as a separate sentence if verse 1 is ended with a period. Alternate translation: "They will learn these things by the hypocrisy of liars" or "They will learn these things from hypocritical liars"

their own consciences having been seared

Possible meanings are 1) Paul is speaking of people who can no longer tell that they are doing wrong as if their minds were ruined. He speaks of their minds being ruined as if their minds were skin that someone had burned with a hot iron. Or 2) Paul is speaking of these people as if Satan had put a mark on them with a hot iron to indicate that they belong to him.

seared

touched with a hot object until it burns brown or black

1 Timothy 4:3

They will

"These people will"

forbid people to marry

It is implied that they will forbid believers to marry.

Alternate translation: "forbid believers to marry"

require them to abstain from foods

It is implied that they will forbid only certain foods.

Alternate translation: "they will not allow people to eat

certain foods"

1 Timothy 4:4

For every creation of God is good

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation:

"everything that God has created is good"

nothing received with thanksgiving is to be rejected

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "we should not refuse anything for which we give thanks to God" or "everything that we eat with thanksgiving is acceptable"

1 Timothy 4:5

it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer

Here "word of God" and "prayer" are used together to

express one idea. The prayer is in agreement with the truth that God has revealed. Alternate translation: "it is dedicated for God's use by praying in agreement with his word"

it is sanctified

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "we sanctify it" or "we have set it apart"

word of God

Here "word" refers to God's message or what he has revealed.

1 Timothy 4:6

If you place these things before the brothers

Paul speaks of his instructions as if they were objects that could be physically presented to the believers. Here, to place before means to instruct or to remind. Alternate translation: "If you help the believers remember these things"

these things

This refers to the teaching that started in 1 Timothy 3:16.

the brothers

This refers to all believers whether male or female.

you are being nourished by the words of faith and by the good teaching that you have followed

Paul speaks of God's word and its teaching as if it could physically feed Timothy and make him strong. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the words of faith and the good teaching that you have followed are causing you to trust more strongly in Christ"

words of faith

"words that cause people to believe"

1 Timothy 4:7

profane stories loved by old women
 "ungodly stories and old wives' tales." "Profane" here refers to stories that purposely dishonor God. Translate "stories" as you did in 1 Timothy 1:4.
 loved by old women
 This is probably an expression that means "silly" or "absurd." Paul is not purposely insulting women in his reference to "old women." Instead, he and his audience knew that men die younger than women, so there are more women than men whose minds have become feeble due to old age.
 train yourself in godliness
 "train yourself to honor God" or "train yourself to act in ways that please God"
 1 Timothy 4:8
 bodily training
 "physical exercise"
 holds promise for this life
 "is beneficial to this life"
 1 Timothy 4:9
 worthy of full acceptance
 "worthy of your complete belief" or "worthy of your full trust"
 1 Timothy 4:10
 For it is for this
 "This is the reason"
 labor and struggle
 The word "labor" here refers to working very hard, and "struggle" is a metaphor for dealing with difficulties and dangers.
 For we hope in the living God ... believers
 Paul and his fellow workers confidently expect that God will do all that he has promised to do. Alternate translation: "For we confidently expect that the living God... believers, will do what he promised to do" or "For we fully trust in the living God ... believers"
 the living God
 Possible meanings are 1) "the God who is alive," as opposed to idols, who are not alive, or 2) "God, who acts," as opposed to idols that do nothing, or 3) "God, who gives life to all living beings."
 but especially of believers
 The ellipsis can be filled in. Alternate translation: "but he is especially the Savior of those people who believe"
 1 Timothy 4:11
 Instruct the people and teach these things
 "Command and teach these things" or "Instruct and teach these things I just mentioned"
 1 Timothy 4:12
 Let no one despise your youth
 "Do not let anyone consider you less important because you

are young"
 in speech, conduct, love, faithfulness, and purity
 Paul wanted Timothy to be an example in these things.
 Alternate translation: "by speaking and doing what is right, by loving others, and by being faithful and pure"
 1 Timothy 4:13
 attend to the reading, to the exhortation, and to the teaching
 The words "reading," "exhortation," and "teaching" can be translated with verbal phrases. The implied information can also be supplied in translation Alternate translation: "continue reading the scripture to the people, exhorting the people, and teaching the people"
 1 Timothy 4:14
 Do not neglect the gift that is in you
 Paul speaks of Timothy as if he were a container that could hold God's gifts. This can be stated in positive form.
 Alternate translation: "Do not neglect your spiritual gift"
 Do not neglect
 This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "Be sure to use"
 which was given to you through prophecy
 This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "which you received when leaders of the church spoke God's word"
 laying on of the hands of the elders
 This was a ceremony in which the church leaders put their hands on Timothy and prayed that God would enable him to do the work he had commanded him to do.
 1 Timothy 4:15
 Care for these things. Be in them
 Paul speaks of God's gifts to Timothy as if he could physically be in them. Alternate translation: "Do all these things and live according to them"
 so that your progress may be evident to all people
 Paul speaks of Timothy's increasing ability to serve God as if it were a physical object that others could look at.
 Alternate translation: "so other people will know that you are serving God better and better"
 1 Timothy 4:16
 Give careful attention to yourself and to the teaching
 "Conduct yourself carefully and give attention to the teaching" or "Control your own behavior and give attention to the teaching"
 Continue in these things
 "Continue to do these things"
 you will save yourself and those who listen to you
 Possible meanings are 1) Timothy will save himself and those who hear him from God's judgment or 2) Timothy will save himself and those who hear him from the influence of false teachers.

Chapter 5

¹Do not rebuke an older man. Instead, exhort him as if he were a father. Exhort younger men as brothers,²older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters, in all purity.

³Honor widows, the real widows.⁴But if a widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show honor in their own household. Let them repay their parents, because this is pleasing to God.

⁵But she who is a real widow, who is left all alone, has set her hope in God and continues in offering earnest appeals and prayers night and day,⁶but the woman who lives for pleasure is dead even while she lives.

⁷Instruct them in these things as well, so that they may be blameless.⁸But if someone does not provide for his own relatives, especially for those of his own household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

⁹Let a woman be enrolled as a widow who is not younger than sixty years old, a wife of one husband.¹⁰She must have a reputation for doing good deeds, whether it is that she has cared for children, or has been hospitable to strangers, or has washed the feet of God's holy people, or has relieved the afflicted, or has been devoted to every good work.

¹¹But as for younger widows, refuse to enroll them in the list. For when they give in to bodily desires against Christ, they want to marry.¹²In this way they incur condemnation because they set aside their first commitment.¹³At the same time, they also learn to be lazy and they go around from house to house. They not only become lazy, but they also talk nonsense and are busybodies, saying things they should not say.

¹⁴I therefore want younger widows to marry, to bear children, to manage the household, and to give no opportunity for the enemy to slander us.¹⁵For some have already turned aside after Satan.¹⁶If any believing woman has widows, let her help them, so that the church will not be burdened, so that it might help the real widows.

¹⁷Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor with the word and in teaching.¹⁸For the scripture says, "You must not put a muzzle on an ox while it threshes the grain" and "The laborer is worthy of his wages."

¹⁹Do not receive an accusation against an elder unless there are two or three witnesses.²⁰Correct sinners before all so that the rest may be afraid.

²¹I solemnly command you, before God and Christ Jesus and the chosen angels, to keep these commands without partiality, and to do nothing out of favoritism.²²Place hands hastily on no one. Do not share in the sins of another person. You should keep yourself pure.

²³You should no longer drink water. Instead, you should take a little wine for the stomach and your frequent sicknesses.

²⁴The sins of some people are openly known, and they go before them into judgment. But some sins follow later.²⁵In the same way, some good works are openly known, but even the others cannot be hidden.

1 Timothy 5 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Honor and respect

Paul encourages younger Christians to honor and respect older Christians. Cultures honor and respect older people in different ways.

Widows

In the ancient Near East, it was important to care for widows, because they could not provide for themselves.

Links:

[1 Timothy 5:1 Notes](#)

1 Timothy 5:1

General Information:

Paul was giving these commands to one person, Timothy. Languages that have different forms of "you" or different forms for commands would use the singular form here.

Connecting Statement:

Paul continues to tell Timothy how to treat the men, women, widows, and younger women in the church.

Do not rebuke an older man

"Do not speak harshly to an older man"

Instead, exhort him

"Instead, encourage him"

as if he were a father ... as brothers

Paul uses these similes to tell Timothy that he should treat fellow believers with sincere love and respect.

1 Timothy 5:2

older women ... younger women

You can state clearly the understood information. Alternate translation: "exhort older women ... exhort younger

women" or "encourage older women ... encourage younger women"

in all purity

"with pure thoughts and actions" or "in a holy way"

1 Timothy 5:3

Honor widows

"Respect and provide for widows"

the real widows

"widows with no one to provide for them"

1 Timothy 5:4

let them first learn

"first of all they should learn" or "let them make it a priority to learn"

in their own household

"to their own family" or "to those living in their homes"

Let them repay their parents

"Let them do good to their parents in return for the good things their parents have given them"

1 Timothy 5:5

But she who is a real widow, who is left all alone
 "But one who is truly a widow, who has no family"
 has set her hope in God
 The widow confidently expected that God would do what he promised to do. Alternate translation: "confidently expects that God will do what he promised to do" or "fully trusts in God"
 continues in offering earnest appeals and prayers
 "continues to make requests and prayers"
 offering earnest appeals and prayers
 These two phrases mean basically the same thing. Paul uses them together to emphasize how much these widows pray.
 night and day
 The words "night" and "day" are used together to mean "at all times." Alternate translation: "all the time"
 1 Timothy 5:6
 is dead
 Paul speaks about people who do not seek to please God as if they were dead. Alternate translation: "is like a dead person; she does not respond to God"
 she lives
 This refers to physical life.
 1 Timothy 5:7
 Instruct them in these things
 "Teach them these things, too" or "Command them to do these things, too"
 so that they may be blameless
 "so that no one can find fault with them." Possible meanings of "they" are 1) "these widows and their families" or 2) "the believers." It might be best to leave the subject as "they."
 1 Timothy 5:8
 does not provide for his own relatives, especially for those of his own household
 "does not help with his relatives' needs, especially for those family members living in his home"
 he has denied the faith
 "he has acted contrary to the truth we believe"
 is worse than an unbeliever
 "is worse than those who do not believe in Jesus." Paul means this person is worse than an unbeliever because even unbelievers take care of their relatives. Therefore, a believer should certainly take care of his relatives.
 1 Timothy 5:9
 be enrolled as a widow
 There seems to have been a list, written or not, of widows. The church members met these women's needs for shelter, clothing, and food, and these women were expected to devote their lives to serving the Christian community.
 who is not younger than sixty
 As Paul will explain in 5:11-16, widows who were younger than 60 years old might get married again. Therefore the Christian community was to care only for widows who were older than 60.
 a wife of one husband
 Possible meanings are 1) she was always faithful to her husband or 2) she had not divorced her husband and then married another man.
 1 Timothy 5:10

She must have a reputation for doing good deeds
 This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation:
 "People must be able to tell others about her good deeds"
 has been hospitable to strangers
 "has welcomed strangers into her home"
 has washed the feet of God's holy people
 Washing the dirty feet of people who have been walking in the dirt and mud is one way of meeting other people's needs and making life more enjoyable for them. This probably means she did humble work in general. Alternate translation: "has done common work to help other believers"
 God's holy people
 Some versions translate this word as "the believers" or "saints." The essential idea is to refer to Christian believers.
 has relieved the afflicted
 Here "the afflicted" is a nominal adjective that can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "has helped those who are suffering"
 has been devoted to every good work
 "has given herself to doing all kinds of good deeds"
 1 Timothy 5:11
 But as for younger widows, refuse to enroll them in the list
 "But do not include younger widows in the list." The list was of widows aged 60 years and older whom the Christian community would help.
 For when they give in to bodily desires against Christ, they want to marry
 "For when they prefer to fulfill their sensual desires and get married, they go against their promise to serve Christ as widows"
 1 Timothy 5:12
 set aside their first commitment
 "do not keep their prior commitment" or "do not do what they promised before to do"
 commitment
 The commitment of the widows was their agreement to serve the Christian community for the rest of their lives if the community would supply the widows' needs.
 1 Timothy 5:13
 learn to be lazy
 "get into the habit of doing nothing"
 talk nonsense and are busybodies, saying things they should not say
 These three phrases are probably three ways of speaking of the same activity. These people should not be looking into other people's private lives and telling about them to others who are no better off after hearing.
 nonsense
 words that do not help those who hear them
 busybodies
 people who look into other people's private lives for their own good and not for the good of the other people
 1 Timothy 5:14
 to manage the household
 "to take care of everyone in her house"
 the enemy
 These words could refer to 1) Satan or 2) unbelievers who are hostile to Christians.
 to slander us

Here "us" refers to the entire Christian community, including Timothy.

1 Timothy 5:15

turned aside after Satan

Paul speaks of living in faithfulness to Christ as if it were a path to be followed. This means the women stopped obeying Jesus and started obeying Satan. Alternate translation: "left the path of Christ to follow Satan" or "decided to obey Satan instead of Christ"

1 Timothy 5:16

any believing woman

"any Christian woman" or "any woman who believes in Christ"

has widows

"has widows among her relatives"

so that the church will not be burdened

Paul speaks of the community having to help more people than they are able as if they were carrying too much weight on their backs. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that the church will not have more work to do than they can" or "so that the Christian community will not have to help widows whose families could provide for them"

real widows

"those women who have no one to provide for them"

1 Timothy 5:17

Connecting Statement:

Paul again talks of how elders (overseers) should be treated and then gives Timothy some personal instructions.

Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "All believers should think of the elders who are good leaders as worthy"

double honor

Possible meanings are 1) "respect and payment" or 2) "more respect than others receive"

those who labor with the word and in teaching

Paul speaks about the word as if it is an object that a person can work with. Alternate translation: "those who work hard preaching and those who teach God's word"

1 Timothy 5:18

For the scripture says

This is personification that means that this is what someone has written in the scriptures. Alternate translation: "For we read in the scriptures that"

You must not put a muzzle on an ox while it threshes the grain

Paul is using this quotation as a metaphor meaning that church leaders deserve to receive payment from the Christian community for their work.

muzzle

place a sleeve over an animal's snout and mouth to prevent it from eating

threshes the grain

An ox "threshes the grain" when it walks on or pulls a heavy object over the cut grain to separate the grain from the stalks. The ox was allowed to eat some of the grain as it worked.

is worthy of

"deserves"

1 Timothy 5:19

Do not receive an accusation

Paul speaks of accusations as if they were objects that could be physically accepted by people. Alternate translation: "Do not accept as true any accusation that someone speaks"

two or three

"at least two" or "two or more"

1 Timothy 5:20

sinner

This refers to anyone doing anything that disobeys or displeases God, even things that other people do not know about.

before all

"where everyone can see"

so that the rest may be afraid

"so that others will be afraid to sin"

1 Timothy 5:21

the chosen angels

This means the angels whom God and Jesus have chosen to serve them in a special way.

to keep these commands without partiality, and to do nothing out of favoritism

The words "partiality" and "favoritism" mean basically the same thing. Paul is emphasizing that Timothy must judge honestly and be fair to everyone. Alternate translation: "to keep these rules without being partial or showing favor to anyone"

these commands

The phrase "these commands" could refer to 1) the rules Paul just told Timothy or 2) the rules Paul is about to tell Timothy.

1 Timothy 5:22

Place hands

The placing of hands was a ceremony in which one or more church leaders would place their hands on people and pray that God would enable those people to serve the church in a way that would please God. Timothy was to wait until the person had shown good character for a long time before officially setting that person apart to serve the Christian community.

Do not share in the sins of another person

Paul speaks of someone's sin as if it were an object that could be shared with others. Alternate translation: "do not join in another person's sin" or "do not participate when another person sins"

Do not share in the sins of another person

Possible meanings are 1) if Timothy chose someone who was guilty of sin to be a church worker, God would hold Timothy responsible for that person's sin or 2) Timothy should not commit sins he saw others committing.

1 Timothy 5:23

You should no longer drink water

It is implied that Timothy should not drink only water. Paul is telling Timothy to use wine as medicine. The water in that area often caused sickness.

for the stomach and your frequent sicknesses

"because of your stomach and your frequent sicknesses" or "to help your stomach and to stop your frequent illnesses"

1 Timothy 5:24

The sins of some people are openly known

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation:

"The sins of some people are very obvious"

they go before them into judgment

"their sins go before those people into judgment." Paul speaks of sins as if they were moving. Possible meanings

are 1) Their sins are so obvious that everyone will know they are guilty even before anyone testifies against them or

2) Their sins are evident, and God judges them now.

But some sins follow later

"But some sins follow people later." Paul speaks of sins as if they were moving. Possible meanings are 1) Timothy and the Christian community will not know about certain sins

until later or 2) God will not judge some sins until the final judgment.

1 Timothy 5:25

some good works are openly known

"some good works are obvious"

good works

The works are considered "good" because they fit with God's character, purposes, and will.

but even the others cannot be hidden

Paul speaks of good works as if they were objects that someone cannot hide. This can be stated in active form.

Alternate translation: "but people will later find out about even the good deeds that are not obvious"

Chapter 6

¹Let all who are under the yoke as slaves regard their own masters as worthy of all honor. They should do this so that the name of God and the teaching might not be blasphemed. ²The slaves who have believing masters should not show them disrespect because they are brothers. Instead, they should serve them all the more. For those who receive the benefit are believers and beloved. Teach and declare these things.

³If anyone teaches false doctrine and does not agree with the truthful words of our Lord Jesus Christ and with godly teaching, ⁴he is proud and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy interest in controversies and arguments about words that result in envy, strife, insults, evil suspicions, ⁵and constant conflict between people who have morally corrupt minds. They have lost the truth and they think that godliness is a way to get more money. ¹

⁶Now godliness with contentment is great gain, ⁷for we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it.

⁸Instead, let us be satisfied with food and clothing.

⁹Now those who desire to become wealthy fall into temptation, into a trap. They fall into many foolish and harmful desires, and into whatever else sinks people into ruin and destruction. ¹⁰For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people who desire it have been misled away from the faith and have pierced themselves with much grief.

¹¹But you, man of God, flee from these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faithfulness, love, endurance, and gentleness. ¹²Fight the good fight of faith. Take hold of the everlasting life to which you were called, and about which you gave the good confession before many witnesses.

¹³I give these orders to you before God, who gives life to all things, and before Christ Jesus, who testified before Pontius Pilate and made the good confession, ¹⁴to keep the command without spot or blame until the appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ.

¹⁵God will reveal Christ's appearing at the right time—God, the blessed and only Sovereign, the King who reigns and the Lord who rules. ¹⁶Only he has immortality and dwells in inapproachable light. No man sees him or is able to view him. To him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen.

¹⁷Instruct the rich in this world not to be proud and not to hope in riches, which are uncertain. Instead, they should hope in God. He offers to us all the true riches to enjoy. ¹⁸Tell them to do good, to be rich in good works, and to be generous and willing to share. ¹⁹In that way they will store up for themselves a good foundation for what is to come, so that they will take hold of real life.

²⁰Timothy, protect what was given to you. Avoid the profane and empty talk and the conflicting ideas of what is falsely called knowledge. ²¹Some men proclaim these things and so they have gone astray from the faith. May grace be with you.

¹Some old copies add the exhortation, Stay away from such things. But the best ancient copies do not.

1 Timothy 6 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Slavery

Paul does not write in this chapter about whether slavery is good or bad. Paul teaches about honoring, respecting, and diligently serving masters. Paul teaches all believers to be godly and content in every situation.

Links:

[1 Timothy 6:1 Notes](#)

1 Timothy 6:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul gives some specific instructions to slaves and masters and then continues with instructions on living in a godly way.

Let all who are under the yoke as slaves

Paul speaks of people working as slaves as if they are oxen carrying a yoke. Alternate translation: "Let all who are working as slaves"

Let all who are

It is implied that Paul is speaking about believers. Alternate translation: "Let all who are believers"

the name of God and the teaching might not be blasphemed

This can be stated in active and positive form. Alternate translation: "the unbelievers might always speak respectfully about the name of God and the teaching"

the name of God

Here "name" refers to God's nature or character. Alternate translation: "the character of God" or "God"

the teaching

"the faith" or "the gospel"

1 Timothy 6:2

The slaves who have believing masters should not show them disrespect because they are brothers

Possible meanings are 1) it is because the believing masters are brothers that their slaves should not show them disrespect or 2) slaves should not think that because their masters are believers they can therefore show them disrespect.

they are brothers

Here "brothers" means "fellow believers."

those who receive the benefit

You may need to add the words omitted by the ellipsis.

Alternate translation: "the masters whom the slaves help with their good work"

and beloved

This can be stated in active form. Possible meanings are 1) "and the slaves should love them" or 2) "whom God loves"

1 Timothy 6:3

the truthful words of our Lord Jesus Christ

The word "truthful" is a figure of speech from the Greek word for "healthy."

truthful words

The word translated as "truthful" comes from the term "healthy" here, and it is a dead metaphor for true, trustworthy, and morally good. See how you translated the word "healthy" in [1 Timothy 1:10]

1 Timothy 6:4

he is proud ... He has an unhealthy interest

Here "he" refers to anyone in general that teaches what is not correct. To make this clear, you can translate "he" as "they."

understands nothing

"understands nothing about God's truth"

He has an unhealthy interest in controversies and arguments

Paul speaks of people who feel compelled to engage in useless arguments as if they were ill. Such people greatly desire to argue, and they do not really want to find a way to agree. Alternate translation: "All he wants to do is argue" or

"He craves arguments"

controversies and arguments about words that result in envy

"controversies and arguments about words, and these controversies and arguments result in envy"

about words

"about the meanings of words"

strife

arguments, fights

insults

bad things that people falsely say about each other

evil suspicions

evil beliefs that innocent people have done something wrong or are planning on doing something wrong

1 Timothy 6:5

morally corrupt minds

"wicked minds"

They have lost the truth

Here the word "They" refers to anyone who teaches anything that does not agree with the teaching of Jesus. The phrase "have lost the truth" represents ignoring it or forgetting it. Alternate translation: "They have ignored the truth" or "They have forgotten the truth"

1 Timothy 6:6

Now

This marks a break in the teaching. Here Paul begins to contrast the kind of riches the wicked people seek through godliness (1 Timothy 6:5) and the true kind of gain people receive through godliness. Alternate translation: "Of course"

godliness with contentment is great gain

The words "godliness" and "contentment" are abstract nouns. Alternate translation: "it is great gain for people to do what is godly and to be content with what they have"

is great gain

"provides great benefits" or "does many good things for us"

1 Timothy 6:7

we brought nothing into the world

"we brought nothing into the world when we were born"

we can take nothing out of it

"we can take nothing out of the world when we die"

1 Timothy 6:8

let us

"we should"

1 Timothy 6:9

Now

This word marks a break in the teaching. Here Paul returns to the topic about those who think being godly will make them wealthy (1 Timothy 6:5).

to become wealthy fall into temptation, into a trap

Paul speaks about those who let the temptation of money cause them to sin as if they were animals that fall into holes that hunters use as traps. Alternate translation: "to become wealthy will encounter more temptation than they can resist, and they will be like an animal in a trap"

They fall into many foolish and harmful desires, and into whatever else sinks

Paul continues the trap metaphor and speaks of people who give in to their foolish and harmful desires and do evil as if they were animals who fall into a trap. Alternate

translation: "They desire many foolish and harmful things and then do things that sink"

harmful desires

These are probably desires to do things that will harm those who do them as much as or more than they will harm other people.

into whatever else sinks people into ruin and destruction

Paul speaks about people who suffer because of their sins as if sin were a person who had put them under water or in mud. Alternate translation: "into other kinds of evil that ruin and destroy people"

1 Timothy 6:10

For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil

Paul speaks of the love of money as if it were the root of a plant whose fruit is all kinds of evil. Alternate translation: "This happens because loving money is a cause of all kinds of evil"

who desire it

"who desire money"

have been misled away from the faith

Paul speaks of wrong desires as if they were evil guides who intentionally guide people down the wrong path. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "have let their desires lead them away from the truth" or "have stopped believing the truth"

have pierced themselves with much grief

Paul speaks about grief as if it were swords that people have used to stab themselves. Alternate translation: "have caused themselves to be very sorrowful"

1 Timothy 6:11

But you

Here "you" is singular and refers to Timothy.

man of God

"servant of God" or "person who belongs to God"

flee from these things

Paul speaks of these temptations and sins as if they were things that a person could physically run away from. Alternate translation: "completely avoid these things"

these things

Possible meanings of "these things" are 1) the "love of money" or 2) the different teachings, pride, arguments, and the love of money.

Pursue righteousness

"Run after righteousness" or "Chase righteousness." Paul speaks of righteousness and other good qualities as if they were things that a person could run after. This metaphor is the opposite of "flee from." It means to try your best to obtain something. Alternate translation: "Seek to gain" or "Do your best to act in"

1 Timothy 6:12

Fight the good fight of faith

Here Paul speaks about a person continuing in faith as if he were an athlete fighting to win a contest or a warrior fighting a battle. Alternate translation: "Try your hardest to obey Christ's teachings with as much energy as an athlete uses in a contest"

Take hold of the everlasting life

This continues the metaphor. Paul speaks about a person receiving eternal life as if he were a victorious athlete or

warrior taking their prize. Alternate translation: "Take eternal life as your reward as a victorious athlete takes his prize"

to which you were called

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "to which God has called you"

you gave the good confession

"you confessed what is good" or "you confessed the truth"

before many witnesses

Paul expresses the idea of location in order to signal the idea of the people to whom Timothy was speaking.

Alternate translation: "to many witnesses"

1 Timothy 6:13

Connecting Statement:

Paul talks of Christ's coming, gives specific instructions to the rich, and lastly closes with a special message to Timothy.

I give these orders to you

"This is what I command you"

before God, who gives life to all things

"in the presence of God, who causes all things to live." It is implied that Paul is asking God to be his witness. Alternate translation: "with God, who causes all things to live, as my witness"

and before Christ Jesus, who testified before Pontius Pilate

"in the presence of Christ Jesus, who spoke ... Pilate." It is implied that Paul is asking Jesus to be his witness. Alternate translation: "with Christ Jesus, who spoke ... Pilate, as my witness"

1 Timothy 6:14

without spot or blame

The phrase "without spot" is a metaphor for being without moral fault. Possible meanings are 1) Jesus will not find fault with Timothy or blame him for doing wrong or 2) other people will not find fault with Timothy or blame him for doing wrong.

until the appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ

"until our Lord Jesus Christ comes again"

1 Timothy 6:15

God will reveal Christ's appearing

It is implied that God will reveal Jesus. Alternate translation: "God will reveal Jesus"

the blessed and only Sovereign

"the One worthy of praise who rules over the world"

1 Timothy 6:16

Only he has immortality

"Only he has the power to live forever"

dwells in inapproachable light

"dwells in a light so bright that no one can approach him"

1 Timothy 6:17

Instruct the rich in this world

Here "rich" is a nominal adjective. It can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "Solemnly charge those who are rich in this world"

not to hope in riches, which are uncertain

Paul tells rich people not to confidently expect that their wealth will always provide what they need. Alternate translation: "not to confidently expect that they will always have what they need, because it is uncertain how long they

may have their many possession"

they should hope in God

Paul tells rich people that they should confidently expect God to do what he has promised to do. Alternate translation: "they should confidently expect that God will do what he has promised to do" or "they should fully trust in God"

all the true riches

"all the things that will make us truly happy." The reference here may include physical objects, but it more likely refers to states like love, joy, and peace that people try to obtain by means of physical objects.

1 Timothy 6:18

be rich in good works

Paul speaks of spiritual blessings as if they were earthly wealth. Alternate translation: "serve and help others in many ways"

1 Timothy 6:19

they will store up for themselves a good foundation for what is to come
Here Paul speaks about the blessings that God gives in heaven as if they were riches that a person is storing away for later use. Also, the certainty of these blessings that people will never lose is spoken of as if it were the foundation of a building. Alternate translation: "it will be as though they were storing up for themselves many things

that God will give them"

take hold of real life

This recalls the sports metaphor of 1 Timothy 6:12, where the prize is something that the winner can actually hold in his hands. Here the "prize" is "real" life.

1 Timothy 6:20

protect what was given to you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation:

"faithfully proclaim the true message that Jesus has given to you"

Avoid the profane and empty talk

"Do not pay attention to the ungodly and useless talk"

of what is falsely called knowledge

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "of what some people falsely call knowledge"

1 Timothy 6:21

they have gone astray from the faith

Paul speaks of those who stop obeying Christ as if they were children or animals who have gone away from where they belong and are safe. Alternate translation: "they have stopped believing the truth"

May grace be with you

"May God give grace to all of you." The "you" is plural and refers to the whole Christian community.