



BLUEPRINTS
OF A HEALTHY CHURCH

Going Deeper
A Study in 1 Timothy

Purpose of Going Deeper Studies

To glorify God by producing more maturing followers of Christ through the in-depth study of God's Word.

Every word of Scripture holds value and purpose. To observe all that Christ has commanded starts with knowing all that Christ commanded. Preaching every verse will keep a congregation in a single book for up to a year or more (which makes it easy to forget the other 65 books along the way). The meaning of words is found in sentences, sentences are best understood in paragraphs, and paragraphs in books. A Christian, must have a working knowledge of the Bible as a whole to correctly understand and apply the minutia.

Sunday morning sermons will at times dig into the details and at other times sermons will focus on major themes and doctrines so that we can handle the Word of God correctly. Going Deeper studies provide a pathway for the verse by verse study of Scripture through study books (like this one) written with the needs of Bible Center in mind. These studies are designed to bless the younger believer and to challenge the older believer until all attain the fullness of maturity in Christ (Col 1:28-19).

Introducing Our 1 Timothy Study



We are excited to offer this in-depth study of 1 Timothy to complement our sermon series. This Going Deeper study can be used in your personal devotional life or studied and discussed together in a group.

1 Timothy has passages that are encouraging as well as challenging. Paul instructs Timothy to structure this church so that it emphasizes the Gospel and fights against false teaching. Paul also acts as a spiritual father as he encourages and discipled this young pastor. As a church and as individuals, we have much to learn from this book.

Going Deeper Together,

Mike Graham

Mike Graham,
Pastor of Group Life

Introduction to 1 Timothy

A young pastor charged with setting a church in order

- Appointing church leaders and servants
- Standing for the truth and correcting false teachers
- Putting God's household in order
- Faithfully preaching and teaching the Gospel

Preparation for in-depth study: To properly interpret and apply the Bible, each of us must start with understanding the context (this is called exegesis). Without an understanding of the author, the recipient, the occasion, and the intent of the letter, it is nearly impossible to come to a correct interpretation (understanding) of the text. We are always asking, "What is the point?" of each verse, paragraph, and section to understand Paul's intention, line of thought, and what he expected Timothy to understand and to do. Verses first mean what they originally meant, and after determining the author's intent, we can draw principles to correctly apply 1 Timothy to today.

Simply read through 1 Timothy and take notes under each of the headings below to build an understanding of what is taking place in Paul's life, Timothy's life, and in the life of the church. I encourage you to take the time to do this self-study, but you can skip to my conclusions in the back if you prefer or need help. This is a good time to use the help of a study Bible, commentary, or *Nelson's Book of Charts and Maps*.

Historical Context Observations of 1 Timothy

Paul and his Situation:

Timothy and his Situation:

The Church and their Situation:

Brief Outline:

1 Timothy Outline

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The Blessed and only Sovereign

The King of Kings and Lord of lords

Alone Possesses Immortality

Dwells in unapproachable light 6:16

Whom no man has seen or can see

To Him be Honor an Eternal Dominion

5) Instructions to the Rich 6:17-19

Do not be conceited

Fix Hope on God – who supplies true riches

Do Good, Be Rich in Good Works, Generous

6) Final Charge – **Guard!**

Verse-by-Verse Study of 1 Timothy

- Before starting, it is always helpful to simply read through the book a couple times.
- The next step might be to color-code the book.

Color-coding your New Testament

Notes in Blue – Comments, Teaching/Counseling Notes, & Application (Herm color)

Blue Circle – Around the numbers of verses you want to remember

Underline in Green – What I learn about God

[Bracket in Green] – God’s Promises

Underline in Purple – Context, Historical Markers, People (Exeg color)

Purple Notes – Outline, Structure, Historical Flow

Underline in Red – Doctrines (Bible, Christ, Salvation, Sin, End Times...)

Notes in Red – Notes on Doctrines in the Margins

Underline in Black – Things we learn about the Church & its Ministry **Notes in Black** - Info on Ministry (Evangelism, Discipleship, Service...)

Pencil – Questions about the text

- Commentaries are listed in the bibliography. User friendly ones are noted.

I. Greetings 1-2

This is a standard greeting for Paul’s day. Frequently, Paul will give a hint to his intention and purpose of the letter in his greeting. Does Paul do anything in this greeting to prepare his readers for the content of the letter?

What is an apostle? When did Paul become one? Are there apostles today?

Paul starts by stating his authority. He is clear that this authority is given by God Himself and therefore, anything that contradicts Paul’s teaching is contradicting God! This letter is to Timothy, but we should consider it only semi-private as we assume that the church would have heard much of this letter. The false teachers needed to be reminded of Paul’s authority as an apostle.

“God our Savior, and Christ Jesus” – The Trinity is more complex than we can possibly understand. In this introduction, we are taught several things. Which member of the trinity is called “our Savior?”

We also know Jesus the Son is our Savior (2 Tim 1:10). Why would the Father be referenced as the “Savior” (1 Tim 1:1; 2:3; Titus 1:3; 2:10)?

“In these letters God and Christ Jesus are both designated ‘Savior.’ God is ‘Savior’ in the sense of being the architect and initiator of the salvation plan (1 Tim 1:1; 2:3; 4:10; Titus 1:3; 2:10, 13; 3:4). Christ is ‘Savior’ in that He is the means by which this salvation plan is implemented in history (2 Tim 1:10; Titus 3:6)” (Towner, 97).

“God our Savior, and of Christ Jesus, who is our hope” - Describe the nature and basis for hope in the life of a Christian:

Why do some Christians lose hope?

If we view hope as an expectation for changed circumstances or as a removal of present suffering, we will be disappointed. Paul was imprisoned, abandoned, and suffering. How does Paul experience enduring hope through these circumstances according to 2 Timothy 4:8?

2 Timothy 4:18 – Describe the importance of eternal perspective:

1 Timothy 1:12 - How does Jesus respond to Paul’s suffering?

Our hope is set in both eternity and in the present. We trust that Christ will finish the work He began in us – ushering us into His kingdom forever. At the same time, we trust that His presence is always with us. He walks with us through storms and valleys. The suffering is not necessarily removed, but we never walk in loneliness, feeling disconnected or rejected. Jesus walks with us intimately, powerfully, and actively through each moment = our hope!

1:2 – What do we learn about Timothy in this verse?

Why would it be important for the church to hear about Timothy’s close relationship to Paul?

Timothy would be encouraged by these words, and the church would be reminded of Timothy’s relationship to Paul – a testimony to Timothy’s authority as an extension of Paul’s authority.

“Paul begins on a note of authority. Paul is in charge. He became an apostle by direct command of both God and Christ, and the Ephesians are reminded that Timothy carries Paul’s authority” (Mounce, 5).

How is God described? Christ?

“Father” – we all have different experiences with our earthly fathers. For many, their fathers are their heroes. For others, they never knew their father. Some have experienced support, encouragement, and provision—while others feel abandonment, disappointment, and pain.

God resets our standard and renews this experience! If your experience includes pain, fear, or anger, our Heavenly Father gives us the opportunity to re-experience this father-child relationship. His words of love, commitment, and unending grace are for you! He cares about our decisions, our actions, our thoughts and about every emotion. He is never absent, late, uninterested, or distracted.

The weaknesses, sins, finite strength, and presence of parents will always impact their children—their view of themselves, relationships, and others. Growing deeper in our relationship with our Heavenly Father re-writes our storyline. Our perspective, our ability to trust, and our ability to love are developed, matured, and renewed as He displays His faithfulness throughout our life. We are re-parented, living in an environment of “grace, mercy and peace.”

Praise God our Father!

Jesus is our Lord. To understand the nature of Christ, is to understand that He is Lord. Even in our first moments of understanding the Gospel, we must be introduced to Jesus as Lord. We are then overwhelmed by the fact that our Lord is also the one who died on the cross to be our Savior.

What happens when we forget this piece of the Gospel?

II. Remain to **Instruct (command) 3-20**

1) Confront and **Instruct False Teachers 3-7** [Timothy’s Situation and Instruction]

According to these verses, why was Timothy asked to remain in Ephesus?

What was happening in that church?

What was Timothy expected to do?

What did Paul warn the Ephesian church in Acts 20:29-30?

Instruct (*paraggeiles*) False Teachers 3-4

Who are Teaching Strange Doctrines 3

There are active, false teachers in this church teaching false doctrines. What would happen if Timothy did not follow through?

Paul was not giving us a description of the false teachings, rather his emphasis was for Timothy to refute these false teachings. As readers, we are forced to use internal and external evidence to figure out the actual nature of these false teachings. In many cases, we can't know details with certainty.

It seems that these teachings pertained to:

- False teachings concerning the law – 1:7
- False teaching concerning the resurrection – 1:19-20
- Deceiving – 4:1-3
- Ascetic elements – 4:1-5
(prohibition of eating certain foods and marriage. Laws added to God's Word)
- Emphasis of speculation – 1:4
- A tendency towards greed – 6:5

Who are Distracting from God's Work 4

How are these false teachers distracting others from the Gospel and ministry?

How can we make sure that we are teaching correct and proper doctrine in the church?

What steps can you take in your life?

What can happen if a church becomes focused on a theological gray area (age of the earth, end times theories, are there aliens, will there ever be a redemptive plan for angels...) instead of the fundamentals of the faith (the Gospel)?

What does our church tend to focus on instead of the Gospel?

Results of True *Instruction* (*paraggelia*) 5

The theme of chapter is **Instruction**. These verses use the same root word in each use. Instruction is Timothy's call to action (1:3) and it is the content of his message (1:18).

1:4 - Timothy is called to ***Instruct***.

1:5 - Paul discusses the goal of this ***Instruction*** (*Command*, NIV).

1:18 - Paul entrusts Timothy with these ***Instructions***.

1:18 – By these ***instructions*** Timothy will be able to fight the good fight.

What do you suppose is the content of Timothy's instructions (1:18-19)?

The Gospel is our source for keeping the faith and a good conscience. The Gospel allows us to fight the good fight (2 Tim 4:7-8 & 2:8-10). The Gospel is the content of Timothy's instruction.

The goal of re-centering around the Gospel includes (describe what each of these mean):

- Love from a pure heart -
- A good conscience -
- A sincere faith -

Results of False Instruction 6

The results are severe! What happens to those who stray?

One way to check yourself and those around you is to pay attention to the content of your discussions. Are they 'fruitless?' Are our conversations drawing others to Christ and growing people in their love for Christ and others?

If not, it is very possible the Gospel has drifted from center in our hearts and minds, and we have become enamored with things that are not central or vital for love from a pure heart, a good conscience, and a sincere faith.

What has been your primary topic in the last several discussions you have had with others?

Wrongly Understanding and Teaching the Law 7

What are the desires of these false teachers?

Where are they going wrong?

Misuse of the Law usually goes in one of two directions: legalism or relativism. Both are similar in that they are strategies of self-salvation based upon human effort (Keller, 66).

Legalism - is the attempt to present 'good' works to God as a means or basis for love and acceptance. There can be additions to existing laws to show commitment. Legalism robs the cross of power and glory. We look to Jesus and say, "You are not enough." Grace is ignored and trampled and truth is considered to be lacking. (Galatians, 1 Timothy, Colossians...)

Relativism - is an attempt to live based upon self-declared rights and wrongs instead of Scripture. Relativism devalues the weight of pain and suffering Christ bore in our place on the cross for our sins. Grace is abused and truth gets run over. (1 Corinthians, James...)

Gospel – Life is lived as a response to the work and love of Christ. Grace motivates holy living and a humble compassionate life of sharing Christ and pointing others to His greatness, work, and love. (1 Thessalonians, 2 Timothy – Paul's mentoring words to Timothy)

Paul calls Timothy to bring people back to the Gospel! The Gospel is the message needed for both the legalist and the relativist. How can an individual or church know if it is living a life centered on the Gospel or is starting to lean too far towards legalism or relativism?

What is the right use of the Law for believers?

The Law functions in several ways (Lea, 70).

- Like a **Locked Door** (Rom 7:7, Ps 19:13) – restraining individuals from trespassing onto the wrong territory
- Like a **Mirror** (Rom 3:19-20; Gal 3:24) – to reveal sin and lead us to Christ
- Like a **Guide** (Rom 13:8-10) – to point out the works that please God

The false teachers used it as a **Launchpad** to turn out spell-binding tales about ancestors and thereby robbed the law of its convincing powers.

2) Rightly Understanding and Teaching the Law 8-11 [Discussion of the Ephesian Heresy]

The Nature of the Law is Good 8

What is the true nature of the Law? What do we learn from Psalm 19:7-11 about the Law?

Why is it good? What makes it good?

The Purpose of the Law is to Expose Sin 9-10

Who is the righteous person in this text?

Answer this question again in light of Romans 4:3-5 –

The righteous person is the one who believes; righteousness is not based upon one's actions. Based on this, why would Paul provide this list of the 'unrighteous?'

What then is the purpose of the Law (Galatians 3:24)?

The Gospel is based on grace through faith, not as a result of works. But, this grace motivates and instructs the Christian to holy living (Titus 2:11-13). It can be said that we are not saved by

works, but those who are saved will be compelled, over time by grace and truth, to become more and more like Christ (Ephesians 2:10, Philippians 1:6; 2:12-13).

This list is an example of 'unrighteous' lifestyles that are in opposition to lives lived by faith in response to the love and work of Christ. The Law will direct them to Christ. One who has received Christ cannot continue in a lifestyle that is contrary to God's desire and design outlined by His Word (for it includes 'whatever is contrary to sound doctrine/teaching').

Paul is Entrusted with the Gospel 11

"the proper use of the law is in accordance with the Gospel message" (Mounce, 42). The Law does not produce spiritual maturity (only outward conformity). The Gospel produces spiritual maturity by changing the heart and creating external and internal conformity to God.

Why does the Gospel produce inward change?

Why isn't outward behavior-change good enough?

"to the glorious Gospel" – it is translated to look like 'glorious' is a description. "Rather, 'glory' is the actual content of the Gospel, i.e. 'the Gospel which tells of the glory of God'" (Mounce, 43). How is God's glory displayed in the Gospel?

"of the blessed God" – 'Blessed' is an attribute (characteristic) of God Himself. "The term itself means 'blessed' or 'happy' and therefore, here, designates God as containing all happiness in Himself and bestowing it on men" (Knight, 91). It often refers to those that God blesses, but here it reflects on God Himself. This is a logical connection– how could God bless others if He Himself is not blessed?

Have you ever considered the fact that God is happy?

Actually, He is the happiest of all beings! All bounty of joy, satisfaction, pleasure, and happiness are found continually, eternally, and fully in Him. How does the Gospel proclaim and incorporate God's happiness?

God does not act out of lack, loneliness, or despair. He acts out of an abundance of lovingkindness, joy, and happiness towards His children. “God is supremely happy in the fellowship of the Trinity” (Piper, 9). How does this change your view of God, knowing that He will never act out of anger or vengeance towards His children?

Piper concludes, “And this is the Gospel: “The Gospel of the glory of the happy God.” It is good news that God is gloriously happy. No one would want to spend eternity with an unhappy God. If God is unhappy, then the goal of the Gospel is not a happy goal and that means it would be no Gospel at all” (23). Is this a new thought to you? What thoughts do you have in response to this quote?

“which He entrusted to me” – Paul knows his ministry and calling. This Gospel of the glory of the happy God has been entrusted to him to defend, teach, and pass on. As you look through 1 Timothy, where do you see Paul defending the Gospel?

Teaching it?

Passing it on?

1:18 – Here we see one of the main themes of the book. Paul is passing on his mission to others. How do you suppose Timothy felt reading this verse?

3) Paul, an Instrument, Product, and Illustration of the Gospel 12-17

[Our identity is based in the Gospel, not the Law [Faith, not Obedience]]

This section is not a digression from Paul's main point, but the work of the Gospel is the heart of his argument. Paul's testimony communicates several things to Timothy:

- It shows the power of the Gospel.
- It is an example for Timothy as he journeys forward into ministry.
- There is hope, even for the false teachers, anyone can be saved.
- It is an example juxtaposed to the set of choices made by Hymenaeus and Alexander (1:20).

How have you been able to use your testimony to help and encourage others? When was the last time you shared it?

Oftentimes, we are nervous to share our testimony because of rejection or a fear that we won't make sense. Many have found it helpful to have a simple 2-minute presentation of their testimony always ready to share.

A testimony consists of:

- who I was before Christ (usually pick one aspect or area of your life),
- how I learned about Christ and committed my life to Christ, and
- how my life has changed (often can be tied back into the area discussed in the first point).

I encourage you to take some time now to write out your testimony. The more you think about it and go over it, the easier it will be to share it and talk about it when opportunities arise. Perhaps you could practice sharing testimonies with one another in your group.

My Testimony:

Before Christ I...

I learned about Christ and placed my faith in Him through...

Because of Christ my life has changed...

A Minister of Grace 12

Paul, one of the deadliest persecutors of the church, has been appointed and called to serve Jesus. We were told that he is an apostle “by the command of God” (1:1). It is a powerful thing to know that you were called by God and put on mission!

Matthew 28:18-20 – There is only one command given in this passage. What is it?

It looks like ‘Go’ should be the command, but properly translated this participle should read, ‘as you are going.’ The actual command is ‘make disciples.’

Who did Jesus commission in this passage?

Does this include us / you?

Christians must recognize that we have all been called by God and put on mission. Life in many ways can be summarized as worship and mission (or a mission of spreading worship). What would have happened if Paul did not take his calling and ministry seriously?

What happens to our neighbors, co-workers, and our city if we do not take our calling and mission seriously?

An Object of Abundant Grace 13-14

At times, we forget our darkness from which God has saved us. Paul, many years after coming to Christ, is still amazed and overwhelmed with God's grace. Paul's (Saul's) outward actions were most likely far worse than any of ours before we knew Christ, yet were any of us less sinful?

What do these verses say about our sin?

Romans 3:10-12 –

Romans 3:23 –

Ephesians 2:1-2 –

Ephesians 2:3 –

Without Christ “inherent corruption extends to every part of man's nature, to all the faculties and powers of both soul and body; and that there is no spiritual good, that is, good in relation to God, in the sinner at all, but only perversion” (Berkof, 247).

Our sin is more than a lack of moral perfection, it is an attack on the Lawgiver Himself. This is why the Bible calls it rebellion. Without Christ, we are all utterly sinful and depraved. Even those saved as children were saved out of the darkest pit.

Every testimony is an example of amazing grace. **We are all objects of Abundant Mercy & Grace!**

An Example of Grace 15-16

What do we learn about Christ from these verses?

Paul references his past earlier, but here he seems to be reflecting on his present condition and says, 'I am' the worst (or the foremost). He does not reference his past, but his present! Paul calls others to imitate him (1 Cor 1:11), how can he have this view of his own sinfulness and still see himself as a model?

Does the Christian still struggle with sin?

Will the Christian continue this struggle throughout the entirety of his/her life?

Romans 7:14-20 describes the Christian experience of ongoing struggle. Romans 7 is the view from within the struggle. Romans 8 is a description from Christ's point of view.

How will a growing understanding of God's holiness effect one's understanding of their own sin?

As a younger believer, one often focuses on fixing their outward sins. Over time, many can appear almost flawless from the outside. Eventually, Jesus makes us dig deeper, exposing the reality that every intention, thought, and motivation is known by God and held to His standard of holiness. Often, a younger believer feels they are living a holy life, while a more mature believer is utterly amazed at how sinful they truly are – the rabbit hole runs deeper than expected. We are not even aware of the majority of the sins our hearts and minds commit each and every day.

Paul, an incredibly mature believer, would have had incredible awareness. How do you suppose this impacted his statement about himself in 1:16?

1 John 1:8 – This is a present-tense statement. Can anyone claim to be without sin at any moment?

1 John 1:9 – We are saved through repentance and faith, but we continue our Christian lives confessing sin and growing in our appreciation of Christ's redeeming work on the cross.

1 John 1:7 – Walking in the light does not mean perfection—it means a life of confession, repentance, faith, and joy in our salvation. Let’s ask again, how can Paul be a model (1 Cor 1:11) and the greatest of sinners at the same time?

Worship this Great and Gracious King 17

As Christians, we grow in our knowledge of God’s holiness and our own sinfulness over time. What will happen to our understanding of the cross, the work of Christ, and love of Christ through this process?

Paul’s response to the work of the Gospel is **praise and worship!** Do we have this same response? Do you think we can measure a Christian’s maturity based on his/her heart’s longing and desire to worship?

We worship God for who He is. His character, the work of His hand, and His presence are all demonstrated with clarity and power in the work of Christ. Paul erupts into praise as he thinks about the Gospel. He describes God as:

King eternal – How do we see God reigning as King today? How do we reconcile a world in rebellion with the present reality of God’s rule?

Matthew 28:18 – Who holds all authority?

Colossians 1:16-17 – Is there a galaxy or even a single atom that is out of His control?

Immortal – We age, decline, and decay. Does God experience these in any way?

Invisible – God is invisible, He “lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see” (1 Tim 6:16). If this is true, how do we explain the Old Testament sightings of God?

John 1:18 - How has God made Himself known? Would this have been a new role that Jesus, the Son of God played, or has this always been His role?

How has God always made Himself known? Which Person of the Trinity was in the burning bush, was in the fiery furnace, and wrestled Jacob?

With consistency of purpose, nature, and role, Jesus has always mediated between the Father and man. When Jesus proclaims to be "I Am" He equates Himself to the YHWH (Lord) of the Old Testament. "It is safe to assume that every visible manifestation of God in bodily form in the Old Testament is to be identified with the Lord Jesus Christ" (Walvoord, 54).

The Only God – How does the world fight against this fact?

4) Timothy is Entrusted with this Instruction (the Gospel) 18-20 (*Inclusio with 3-7*)
What is entrusted to Timothy?

According to Prophecies Made 18a

Why would Paul remind Timothy of these prophecies made about him?

2 Timothy 1:6 – How do you suppose this relates?

By Them (*paraggelia*) Fight the Good Fight 18b (*hina clause - purpose*)

1:18 - What is the "them" that Timothy needs to fight the good fight?

The NIV can make this hard to rightly understand. The NIV adds the word 'following' in the phrase "by following them." Following – is an interpretive addition. The word-for-word translation is simply "by them." It is not the action of following the instructions, but rather the content of the instructions (the Gospel) that empowers Timothy and all believers.

“By them” – the content and reality of the work and power of Christ displayed in the Gospel – Timothy can fight the good fight. How does the reality and truth of the Gospel give us the ability to fight?

2 Timothy 4:7-8 – How did the Gospel help Paul fight the good fight?

Keeping the Faith and a Good Conscience 19 (*circumstantial participle expressing ‘how’*)

Verse 19 describes how to fight the good fight for the Gospel.

What is the difference between someone who keeps the faith and someone who shipwrecks their faith? How does one make sure they keep the faith (can you think of any verses to help answer this question)?

What does Paul mean by keeping a good conscience?

Hymenaeus and Alexander 20

Why would Paul mention them by name? Is there ever a time when we should mention someone by name in a negative way in our church?

Why would Paul ‘hand them over to Satan?’

Is there still hope for these guys? How could Paul’s testimony help Timothy and the church through this process?

III. Conduct in the Household of God (2:1-3:15)

The purpose of this next section is stated in 3:15, *“if I am delayed, you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God’s household.”*

1) Praying for All Men 2:1-7

This section concerning conduct begins with prayer. What a great reminder of its priority within the church. Who do you suppose is called to pray?

What / who are we called to pray for in these verses?

Do we only pray for leaders with whom we agree?

What do you suppose it was like for Paul and the early church to pray for Nero (a Roman leader who killed and burned Christians to death)? Who is hard for you to pray for in your life?

What is the connection between living peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness (2:2) to God's desire for all men to be saved (2:3-4)?

2 Peter 3:9 & 1 Tim 2:4 – Based on God's desire stated in these verses, why does God allow so many to reject Him?

We are made in God's image; even in our fallen nature, we reflect Him in many ways (Gen 9:6). We are cognitive, relational, and emotional. Based upon the above verses (2 Pet 3:9 & 1 Tim 2:4) and the reality that we reflect His image, how do you suppose God feels when someone dies without Christ?

Many of us have had loved ones pass on not knowing Christ. Their death and separation from the Lord brings incredible sadness. How does it make you feel to know that it breaks God's heart even more than yours?

2:5-6 – How is this truth under attack in our society?

What happens if we don't hold to these truths?

Why are these truths so unpopular?

2:7 – Paul knows his calling and lives out the ministry he has been given. What ministry has been given to all believers?

Are there any particular ministries that you believe God has given to you (based on your spiritual gifts, skills, and desire)?

Paul considered it a fight to live out his ministry. What obstacles will you (do you) face to live out your ministry?

How does the Gospel empower you and strengthen you for faithfulness in the ministry?

2) Instructions to Men and Women 2:8-15

Instructions to Men 2:8

2:8 – It is interesting that this call is particularly given to men. The circumstances of this letter included false teachers (several identified as male) causing distractions and shipwrecking their own faith and possibly the faith of others. How would a call for men to be unified in prayer help this church?

Instructions to Women about Dress 2:9-10

2:9-10 – The city of Ephesus created a clear set of unique struggles and temptations for this church. This city was one of the four great metropolises of the Roman world (Rome, Alexandria, and Antioch). Ephesus was a commercial center for trade, thanks to ports and land routes of commerce. Excavations have discovered a 24,000-person theater, auditoriums, libraries, brothels, and lavish buildings (baths, gymnasia, and plazas) (Lea, 78).

The Ephesian Temple of Artemis was the largest structure in the Hellenistic world and the first of such monumental proportions to be built entirely of marble (Yamauchi, 103). Much of the city and society revolved around this temple. The temple also functioned as a bank and sanctuary. It had a strong cult following. Artemis had a connection to fertility and worship

practices included dress and a level of sexuality that was more free and expressive than previously known.

This church represented people saved out of this culture with no previous experience in a Christian church – including Christian practices, worship, or expectations. What false understandings of religion and worship could have been passed on to these young believers from their culture?

Do you think it is inappropriate for a woman to wear a modest dress that happens to be “expensive” in a church today? Would “expensive” have different definitions depending upon which part of town the church was located?

What do pearls communicate within our culture? Would it be offensive to see a woman with a pearl necklace today? Would this communicate that she is a part of a fertility cult here in Charleston?

How does a changing culture effect the way we understand and live out these particular verses today?

What do you suppose is the principle that Paul is expressing behind his suggestion to avoid braided hair, gold, pearls, or expensive clothes?

How can we still live out this principle today?

Interpretive Nugget – Then / Always / Now

Exegesis (Then) - We must understand the author’s intention of the verse when it was given to the original audience in its particular context. Is this a response to a particular situation in their day? Is this an instruction independent of what is happening in their day?

- 1 Tim 2:9-10 - Do not reflect the highly sexually charged culture you live in when you meet together as a church to worship. You must look and act differently than those involved with the local Artemis temple worship.

Hermeneutics (Always) – What is the eternal principle Paul is teaching behind this particular time-sensitive instruction.

- Dress in a way that reflects modesty in light of the standards of our cultural norms emphasizing character over dress.

Hermeneutics (Now) – How do we live out this principle today?

- Sexually charged videos, memes, movies, or shows do not help us choose our Sunday morning wardrobe. Our dress should reflect modesty, not our sexually charged culture. This may look differently from church to church, generation to generation, and from location to location. Our focus is the way we live, not the way we dress.

What might be an example of someone dressing to promote their sexuality over modesty in our church? How might the wardrobe choice be viewed differently from a grandparent’s point of view versus a teenager’s point of view?

“The reason for Paul’s prohibition of elaborate hair styles, ornate jewelry, and extremely expensive clothing becomes clear when one reads in the contemporary literature of the inordinate time, expense, and effort that elaborately braided hair and jewels demanded, not just as ostentatious display, but also as the mode of dress of courtesans and harlots” (Knight, 135).

Instructions to Women about Ministry 2:11-15

These next several pages address a very hard passage. To do so with integrity and thoroughness was necessary to resource and quote many commentaries and points of view. Some will love this section, others will not enjoy going through the details of this argument.

You have the freedom to jump over this section or work your way through it.

2:11-15 – Perhaps one of the most difficult passages in the New Testament to interpret and apply. It is hard to tell which (or all) parts reflect a cultural standard and which (or all) reflect an eternal standard? There are multiple suggested interpretations and there are solid Christians, who love Jesus, that graciously disagree over several of these issues. Let’s look at two of the

primary points of view – *the first perspective leans towards an eternal and universal rule and the second perspective leans towards a point in time contextual command that may change based upon personal context.*

In this passage, Paul calls the women in the Ephesian church to:

- Learn in “quietness and full submission”
- He does not permit a woman to teach or have authority over a man
- She must be silent (better translated “have a quiet demeanor”)

1st point of view – universal rule

2:11 - *“A woman should learn in full quietness and full submission”*

- “Women should not be put in positions of ultimate leadership over the church and serve as elders or pastor-teachers” (Kostenberger, 112).

2:12 - *“I do not want a woman to teach”*

- Some suggest that the addition of the personal “I” reduces the authoritative nature of this statement to an opinion of Paul’s. Other uses of this verb and Paul’s use of the first-person singular present active indicative tense (Rom 12:1, 1 Cor 2:4, 2 Cor 5:20...) shows the authoritative nature of this verb and tense. Paul’s is speaking with God’s authority, not a personal preference (Knight, 140).
- Women are to teach women (Tit 2:3-5), their children and sons (2 Tim 1:5, 3:14, 15; Acts 16:1), and Paul also approves of the team effort of Priscilla and Aquila in teaching the Gospel to Apollos (Acts 18:25-26) (Knight, 140).
- This restriction seems to only be within the context of the assembled people of God.

“or have authority over a man”

- “Paul means that a woman may not exercise authority in the church over men and this includes teaching” (Mounce, 120).
- The context given to us by Paul emphasizes that men are the ones spreading the heresy (1:20, 2 Tim 2:17; 3:6), and explicitly pictures women as being influenced by the heresy, though they may also be responsible for spreading it in non-authoritative ways (Mounce, 120). Mounce’s point lands a hammer on the idea that Paul is merely responding to a feminist movement trying to gain traction within the church as emphasized in the 2nd view.

“she must be silent”

- Both views agree that silence does not mean absolute silence, but rather corresponds to the ‘quiet,’ peaceful life mentioned in v. 2 and parallels 1 Pet 3:4 which commends a ‘gentle and quite spirit’ (Kostenberger, 113)

2nd point of view – contextual command

A book called *Roman Wives*, by Winter, highlights a unique situation happening within Roman culture at this time. Women of wealth in the Roman Empire were breaking out of their traditional roles and exerting authority and power in many arenas of society. They were doing it in a brash and sometimes unprepared (speaking without knowledge) way. This movement included a flaunting of wealth and sexuality through dress and promiscuity. It was a strong growing, sexually charged, feminist movement, which may have been influencing women within the Ephesian church. Possible references in 1 Timothy include:

- Call to modest dress 2:9-10
- Call to repent of greed 6:3-10
- Recognition of women inappropriately spreading rumors from house to house 5:13
- And this point of view would include Paul’s instruction to quietness and submission as well.
- The use of this context is designed to build the case that Paul is speaking to a particular situation and not to a universal truth.

2:11 - *“A woman should learn in full quietness and full submission”*

- All of us should treat our teachers with respect.
- “Osborne says that the normative principle from 1 Tim 2:8-15 is the idea of submissiveness by women. He asserts that at the time of Paul’s writing a woman who taught a group of men would be ‘lording’ it over them. He feels that Western society today does not accord the same position of authority to the teacher as in the NT era” (Lea, 105). Therefore, a woman serving in a teaching position would not violate this demand.

2:12 - *“I do not want a woman to teach”*

- “The personal language ‘I do not want’ seems to express either a new command that does not relay on tradition (cf. 1 Cor 14:34) or an ad hoc solution to a newly encountered situation” (Towner, 217). Meaning, Paul is speaking not universally as much as to a particular issue at a particular time.

- Women are called to teach women, so there is no moral imperative against women teaching in general.
- Contextually, it seems that she should not teach because of her lack of knowledge, not necessarily because of her gender.

“or have authority over a man”

- Teaching does not necessitate authority.
- Even in this book, Timothy speaks on behalf of Paul’s authority.
- Priscilla plays a major role in teaching Apollos the Gospel (Acts 18:26 – notice her name is listed first before Aquila). She is praised as a co-laborer of Paul (Romans 16:3), not as a woman stepping out of her role.
- Ephesians 5:21 – Each of us are called to submission to one another regardless of gender. Distinction is made in the marriage relationship only (Eph 5:22-33).
- The verb translated ‘to have authority’ can also be rendered ‘to assume authority’ or ‘to domineer, to usurp authority, or to abuse authority.’ This speaks to the Roman wives who are trying to dominate (Towner, 221). It also moves the point from having authority to a command to not inappropriately seize authority.

“she must be silent”

- Contextually, we see women going from house to house (possible refers to church to church, like Paul in Ephesus in Acts 20:20) gossiping and talking about improper things (1 Tim 5:13). The outcome is the same as the false teachers; ‘following Satan’ (1 Tim 1:20 / 5:15).
- Paul’s intention is to stop these women from spreading this false teaching. The easiest way is to silence them until they learn. This is a temporary situation until they learn proper doctrine, not an eternal standard.
- “First, in the immediate literary context, ‘in quietness’ describes the posture and attitude of appropriate deference to the teacher. It does not exclude wives from participation in certain speaking activities such as praying, prophesying, or speaking in tongues” (Towner, 214).

Relation of 2:13-15 to 2:11-12

2:13 – *“For”* – The way one uses this word dramatically changes their point of view on the nature and purpose of verses 2:13-15.

1st view – universal rule

- Background research of the historical context does not override the literary context grounded in God’s creation order. The background info is subject to error and slant, the literary context and connection to creation is clear.
- “The references to the divine order of creation and its violation at the fall in vv. 13-14 ground vv. 11-12 in universal rather than merely cultural norms” (Kostenberger, 114).
- The most frequent use of ‘for’ is to express cause or reason.” “All of this evidence is overwhelming in support of reading ‘for’ of 1 Tim 2:13 as introducing a reason for Paul’s previous statement. (Mounce, 131-2).

2nd view - contextual command

- Towner argues that “for” is not functioning as a ground (the reason for the argument), but rather, as an explanation in the form of illustration simply linking the OT story to church’s present dilemma. This removes the universal power away from the argument and places verses 13-15 into a position of examples instead of universal principles (225).
- Mounce explains the more feminist leaning, “there is a rather infrequent use of this word in which the clause introduced by ‘for’ gives not a reason for preceding statement (illative use) but an illustration or example. If this is the use of ‘for’ here, then Paul has not grounded his demand in the order of creation but has appealed to Gen 2 as an illustration of what happens when women teach men” (Mounce, 131).

1st view – universal rule

2:13-15 – *“For Adam was formed first, then Eve.”*

- It is not clearly stated that the order of creation is the primary point, but it does set up the roles given in Gen 2. Adam is the subject of the verb in both verse 13 and 14 clarifying that he was formed first and he was not the one who was deceived.
- Eve then was formed after Adam and was the one deceived.
- This OT reference had to have some reflection on the present situation of the Ephesians as well as provide direction for God’s intent and eternal purpose.

“And Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner.”

- The first sin is a result of a complete role reversal of God’s created order of authority.

From: God – man – woman – animal To: animal – woman – man – God

(Kostenberger, 117)

- Rooting this command in the creation order, also contradicts the argument that female submission is a result of the fall (Kostenberger, 118).

“But women will be saved through childbearing – if they continue in faith, love and holiness with propriety.”

- “Paul points out that Eve brought herself into transgression by abandoning her role and taking on that of the man. But by fulfilling her role, difficult as it may be as a result of sin (Gen 3:16), she gives birth to the Messiah, and thereby ‘she’ (ultimately fulfilled in Mary) brings salvation into the world” (Knight, 146).
- The passage is difficult, but the focus is that we remain in the roles ordained to us by God.
- “Saved” here can also be rendered “preserved” moving the focus from spiritual salvation (which is by Christ alone) to how believers are to continue to function to remain in God’s desired order.

2nd view - contextual

2:13-15 – *“For Adam was formed first, then Eve.”*

- Paul is responding to the role reversal that is taking place because of the ‘new Roman woman’ movement.
- There is a potential mutiny that is taking place within the church from these women seeking not to learn, but to lead. This action goes against God’s call to a quiet and peaceful life (2:3) and His expectations for those in authority (3:2).

“And Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner.”

- This illustrates the consequences of anyone who seizes authority, but is not prepared to lead.
- The response is to learn, receive training, and then lead appropriately (male or female).

“But women will be saved through childbearing – if they continue in faith, love and holiness with propriety.”

- Paul encourages childbearing because the false teachers are prohibiting marriage (4:3) (Towner, 219).
- If this is not a response to a historical situation. Are we prepared to say that women’s salvation is based upon having children? Do we give a different level of authority to

verses 13-14 because we like them and sweep 15 under the rug because of its interpretive difficulty?

Areas of Agreement

- The passage does not rule out private instruction of men by women together with their husbands.
- The passage is speaking to the general assembly of the congregation.
- The passage is speaking to teaching and authority in the general assembly. It does not necessarily include praying, announcing, sharing, or singing.
- Women are called to teach other women, children, and even their sons.
- A woman's voice is not limited in small group and social settings.
- There are not clear restrictions given in this passage for women outside of the general assembly.
- Women are a key part of ministry and the growth of the church.
- All of us are called to live 'quite lives in all godliness and holiness' (2:2).
- Outside of the general assembly and the marriage relationship we are all called to submit to one another (Eph 5:21).

How has this discussion changed or solidified your understanding and interpretation of this passage?

Matthew 28:18-20 – Are women called to be a part of the Great Commission as much as men?

How do we see teaching taking place (Matthew 28:19 – “teaching them to observe all that I have commanded”) for women in the process of making disciples?

How can a church follow Scripture and at the same time honor women?

A husband is called to love his wife as Christ loved the church. Men lead by sacrificially serving. Speaking to the dudes: In what ways do we, as men, lead selfishly or with “our wants and needs” as the priority over our wives’?

Women: What are some Biblical ways that men can show you more respect and honor?

How can we (men) do a better job at putting your needs above our own?

We must recognize how important our interpretive conclusions can be. The way we run our church, teach, and care for one another is based on these interpretations. What is the result of us interpreting this passage too narrowly and restrictively?

What is the result of us interpreting this passage too broadly and freely?

3) Overseers 3:1-7

Overseers are also referred to as pastors, elders, and bishops - these words are virtually interchangeable (1 Tim 5:17, 1 Peter 5:1,2).

It is important to note that churches were led by a team of elders. "There is not one passage which describes a church being governed by one pastor" (Strauch, 38). 1 Tim 5:17, James 5:15, Acts 20:17, 28, Phil 1:1, Acts 14:34, Titus 1:5, and 1 Peter 5:1 all speak of elders leading a church. Why would God have designed church leadership this way?

Based on what is happening in this church, what will be the benefit of appointing elders?

"The description of the local church as the pillar and foundation of the truth reveals the church's mission: to safeguard and proclaim the Gospel of Christ. Every local church is to be a Gospel lighthouse, missionary agency, and Gospel school" (Strauch, 185).

3:1 - Why do you suppose being an overseer is considered a "noble (excellent, good, or worthwhile) work?"

"Elders cannot teach and defend the Gospel if their lives discredit the Gospel" (Strauch, 185).

What would happen if a church did not maintain the biblical qualifications listed for their leaders?

3:2-7 – “*above reproach*” – perhaps the broadest of all the expectations. In many ways, a number of the other descriptions can land under this umbrella expectation. Why would it be important for the watching world to see the church’s leaders as above reproach?

Philippians 2:15 – what is the expectation of all Christians?

“*the husband of but one wife*” – literally translated ‘a one-woman-man.’ This is a present expectation for every church leader candidate. Does this verse directly reference divorce?

What would happen if we added “for life” to this expectation? How would we alter the intention and command of Scripture?

Divorce is not directly referenced in this passage. It is not a lifetime expectation. It is a requirement for the person in the moment. If an individual has a divorce in their past, it does not automatically disqualify them (Matthew 5 expectations are addressed in the appendix). If someone has been divorced, what other expectations may disqualify them?

Each situation and circumstance must be handled separately and many questions must be asked. Bible Center will have a discussion with every candidate with a divorce in their past to discuss how and why it happened and to determine if repentance, restitution, and attempts at reconciliation have been made.

Some have suggested that it easier to simply not open this can of worms. What happens if we make decisions based on convenience or preference (just keeping the can closed) instead of on biblical standards?

A divorce may not disqualify an individual, but a person may not be above reproach in the community or may not have a good reputation because of the way the divorce was handled or because of the present post-divorce situation and relationship.

Some have said that we must put our 'best' people in our church offices (meaning those who have divorced are not considered our 'best' people). We can never create expectations that add to Christ's expectations. Jesus choose Saul (Paul), a murderer of Christians. He uses objects of mercy to show His grace! Who was the 'best' person in Luke 7:36-50; the woman who was worshiping and anointing Jesus' feet with oil and her hair, or the spiritual elite sitting around the table?

1 Corinthians 1:26-29 – Christ has chosen the weak, foolish, and despised to call His own. Each Christian must be aware of their own sin and lack of worthiness if not for the invading grace of a loving Savior. How does a Christian live with both a deep humility and a profound sense of being loved and cherished by God at the same time?

How does the Gospel teach us how to handle sin? What happens if we allow church tradition to shape our decisions instead of the Gospel?

We consider a redeemed and repentant saint, who has made genuine attempts at restitution and reconciliation, and presently stands above reproach in their relationships with a good reputation within the community, as a candidate for church office.

"temperate and self-controlled" / balanced judgment / freedom from debilitating excesses or rash behavior / stable / sensible / self-restrained / clear-headed

- Describe a couple of examples of not being temperate and self-controlled:
- 2 Timothy 1:7 – What kind of Spirit has God given us?
- Can a Christian known for their quick temper be a candidate for a leadership position?

“respectable,” / proper behavior / orderliness

“hospitable” – What do we learn in the verses below?

- Romans 12:13 –
- 1 Peter 4:9 –
- Hebrews 13:2 -

“able to teach” – This qualification is given only to the elders, not the deacons.

- How do we measure if someone is able to teach?
- Would this only include preaching? What are additional environments where teaching occurs?
- How would you describe a bad teacher?

“not given to drunkenness”

- Does this say that an elder is to never have a drink?
- An elder cannot be overly occupied with alcohol. They can't put themselves in a position where they lose self-control, their temper, or their reputation with outsiders.

“not violent but gentle” / not pugnacious / able to handle highly emotional interpersonal conflicts and disagreements / forbearing / kind / equitable / gracious

“not quarrelsome” / uncontentious / peaceable / showing consideration for all

- How should an elder handle conflict between members within the church?
- How do they handle disagreements they may have with others?

- How can a leader create peace out of turmoil?

“not a lover of money”

- Greed is a major topic in chapter 6. Greed may have some roots in the false teaching spreading in the church. Paul balances this issue with 1 Tim 5:18 teaching that the hard-working elder should be paid for his work, but he should not be consumed with wealth or the accumulation of things.
- Proverbs 30:8 – How does this verse summarize the attitude Paul is describing?
- Philippians 4:13 – What is the context of this verse? What is the point Paul is trying to make? How does it fit into this conversation?

“must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect (if anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God’s church?)”

- Do we expect perfection from pastors’ kids? How do we judge if a potential elder meets this expectation?
- How do you think it feels to be a pastor’s kid (affectionately known as PKs) who often live under scrutiny and judgment throughout their childhood?
- How can we do a better job loving, supporting, and helping pastors’ families?

“not a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil”

- Paul intentionally does not give us a certain number of years and months to determine the right amount of time someone should be a Christian before being considered. His focus is spiritual maturity (which takes time). What happens if a church has no way of assessing maturity?

- How might a church go about creating a process of spiritual development for its people and future leaders?
- What is your church's process?

"must have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap."

- Could a business owner with a reputation of cheating his customers be an elder?
- A good reputation is a broad description and expectation. One of the reasons we slowly choose elders is so that we have time to get to know them, their character, and we get to know their reputation around the community.
- One should not be quick to see a demon behind every bush. There are times when we can blame our sin, choices, and struggles on others, circumstances, or the enemy. Christians need to first check their own hearts. But, the devil is mentioned twice here in these expectations. Why do you suppose the devil is mentioned several times here?

4) Deacons 3:8-13

As you look through this section. How are deacons different than elders?

How are they similar?

How does 1 Tim 5:17 contribute to the discussion?

Are there any details given here about the work deacons are called to perform? Counting money? Communion? Sitting on a board?

The word itself means 'servant.' Elders are called to teach and rule; deacons are called to serve. What happens when we do not distinguish these roles as Scripture distinguishes them?

What if a church had a ton of elders with very few deacons, what would happen to this church?

Deacons are considered 'lead servants.' Everyone is called to serve, but only some meet these character qualifications and consistently demonstrate the servant's heart of Christ (Phil 2:4-10).

- Many are simply labeled deacons after already functioning like a deacon with or without an official title.
- Different needs within the church call for different people with unique skill sets (children's ministries, care, widows...).
- Deacons and elders are not designed to function like American politics. They are not two branches of government intended to balance one another. This is a foreign idea to Scripture and has often been added through tradition.
- Deacons often function as 'shock absorbers' taking over the brunt of the work creating a clear path and environment for the teaching and hearing of God's Word and prayer.
- They are equally as valuable to the church as the elders. Difference in role does not create a difference in value.

⁸"In the same way, deacons^[a] are to be worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain."

'In the same way' introduces a new office, but shows a continuance of the same theme – church offices. How are these qualifications similar to those for overseers?

⁹"They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience."

Verse 8 references character. This verse sets expectations of knowledge and an internal adherence. What would be the 'deep truths' Paul is speaking of here?

When would someone not have a 'clear conscience?'

¹⁰ *"They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons."*

How could they be tested? How might this be similar to the overseer expectation of not being a new convert?

¹¹ *"In the same way, the women¹¹ are to be worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything."*

Let's first look at these expectations. They seem to speak directly against some of the struggles happening in Ephesus as well as corresponding to some of the expectations given to the men.

- This instruction corresponds to Paul's call to modesty (1 Tim 2:9-10).
- It also gives the expectation that they can't go from house to house gossiping as some were doing (1 Tim 5:13).
- And they are to share in the expectations given to men showing temperance (1 Tim 3:2).
- 'Trustworthy' or 'faithful in all things' holds a large general call to an upright life and character which is at least similar to the 'good reputation' expectation given to men in 1 Tim 3:7.

Some translate this "wives" and others "women." The Greek word can be translated either way, context determines the correct translation. The broader sense of the word (women) should be used unless context demands a narrower translation (wives). How do we make that determination here?

"*gune*" – can mean both 'wife' and 'woman,' it is not clear whether Paul is referring to the wives of deacons or to women workers, 'deaconesses'... Whatever the specific interpretation of

this verse may be, it is not related to the issue of women in leadership since the deacon does not provide authoritative leadership” (Mounce, 202).

Often tradition, denomination, and preference play a big part in translating this verse and interpreting its meaning. As much as possible, we need to see it from Paul and Timothy’s point of view in order to understand the Lord’s intention for the passage both then and now.

Deacon’s Wives - Some view this as speaking to wives of the deacons.

- Verse 11 can be seen as an explanation and expectation given to the husband who is called in the following verse to ‘manage his children and household well (vs 12).’
 - Some would argue wives are called to be sacrificially loved and led (Eph 5:25-32), not managed.
- Argument from silence – Paul would have used the word ‘deaconess’ if that was his intention.
 - The first use of the female form of the Greek word for deacon (*deakonos*) does not occur until the fourth century in canon 19 of the Council of Nicea (Mounce, 202).
- Women are not to hold positions of authority over a man according to 1 Tim 2:11-12. Therefore, this cannot be a reference to female deacons.
 - Deacons do not have a role of authority, but of service. There is no conflict with 1 Tim 2:11-12.

“Both interpretations have their strong points, and both are possible. However, the unnatural change of topics, twice in two verses without a clear transition, seems awkward. It is preferable to maintain the connection between v 11 and v 12 by translating *gune* as ‘wife’” (Mounce, 204).

Deaconesses – some view this to be distinct expectations for female deacons.

- The parallel use of ‘likewise’ in verse 8 (transitioning to deacons) and verse 11 shows that there is a transition in category – deacon to deaconess.
 - Some suggest this is parenthetical and therefore designed only to modify (Warfield).
- The expectation of being ‘trustworthy’ or ‘faithful in all things’ is an expectation that equates to expectations of the male deacons. It would be beyond the typical scope for a

wife to attain such a standard as a basic expectation. Thus, this favors the idea of females functioning as deacons in these verses.

- Biblical Reference - Rom 16:1 – references Phoebe as a deacon. The masculine form of the word *diakonos* is used showing that this is a reference to an actual church office.
 - Some argue that this is a reference to her simply as a servant in the church, not an official position.
- Biblical Implication - Rom 16:7 – Junias is referred to as an apostle. If a woman can serve in this capacity, it is to be more than expected for her to serve in the role of a deacon.
- Argument from silence – there are no expectations given for the wives of overseers. Why would Paul emphasize the wives of deacons over wives of elders? “It seems strange that there are no similar instructions within the section on overseers. One would think that the character of their wives was at least as important as that of the wives of deacons” (Liefeld, 134).
 - This is an ad hoc list and should not be treated like a formal list with expectations of balance. Perhaps only the wives of the deacons that were struggling.
- Historical argument – the office of deaconess is found very early in church history, showing the early church’s interpretation of this verse.
 - This does not necessarily tell us anything about this verse.
- “If ‘wives of deacons’ were meant, it would have been more common to indicate this either a possessive pronoun or the definite article” (Towner, 266).

Kostenberger summarizes his view and the arguments that persuaded him. “On the whole, ‘women deacons’ is preferable, for the following reasons:

1. the absence of qualifications for overseers’ wives
2. the adverb ‘too’ / ‘likewise’ indicating an office similar to that of male deacon’s
3. the parallel sentence structure and characteristics in v. 8 and v 11
4. the absence of a qualifier for *gunakas* such as ‘their’” (132).

Conclusion – there is not a definitive answer to the proper translation and usage of this word.

- Clear passages should be used to interpret unclear passages. Yet, these are limited. Phoebe listed as a deaconess is pretty clear. Paul is not using Rom 16:1 as instructive, it merely describes what is happening. But we also know that Paul would not brush aside the misuse of a church office if he recognized a dangerous situation for the church. (another argument out of silence).
- How did the church in our earliest records interpret and apply the verse? This will help us understand what the verse 'meant' so that we know what it presently 'means.' There were female deacons in the early church (a culture that did often did not honor, respect, or promote women), suggesting that the church went against the dominant culture promoting women into this church office based upon their understanding of Paul's instruction.

What a hard subject! What are some of your concluding thoughts?

How can a church negotiate such a difficult topic?

Which arguments stuck out to you as the strongest and most convincing?

¹² *"A deacon must be faithful to his wife and must manage his children and his household well."*

It has been said, the character of a Christians can be better seen on Saturday mornings with their families than on Sunday mornings within the church. In what ways is our culture waging war against our families?

How can churches do a better job at helping and supporting their elders and deacons so that their family life does not suffer while filling these offices?

Who is an elder or deacon you know that you can better love, support, and pray for? What is your next practical step?

¹³ *“Those who have served well gain an excellent standing and great assurance in their faith in Christ Jesus.”*

Desiring to be an elder is a “noble task,” faithful deacons also “gain an excellent standing and great assurance in their faith.” Both offices are desirable and a blessing for those who qualify and are appointed. Can you think of any reasons where a qualified individual would choose not to serve in an office?

5) Instruction in case of delay 3:14-16

These verses teach the purpose for the instructions given in chapters 2 and 3.

The Nature of the Church 3:15

Whose church is this? How does this change the way we treat and view our brothers and sisters?

One day, there will be a wedding feast of the Lamb and the Bride (Christ and the church – Rev 19:6-9). Every time you mistreat a person in the church, you are mistreating the one-day bride of Christ. How would you respond if someone was mistreating your fiancé? Do you really want to poke the Creator of the universe’s fiancé in the eye?

How is the church defined in this verse?

Why would this be important based upon the context of what is happening in Ephesus?

The Nature of Christ 3:16

There are three couplets in this ancient hymn. “The first of the three couplets present Christ’s work as accomplished; the second shows it being made known; and the third depicts it as acknowledged” (Kostenberger, 137).

These verses serve as a high point of this section. It is an exaltation of Christ. The pillar of the church is Christ. The truth of the church’s message is in the person and work of Christ. To drift from Christ is to drift from the foundation of the church.

How can we keep Christ central in our church?

What does it look like to keep Christ as the centerpiece on Sunday mornings, in our groups, and in our ministries?

“The word ‘mystery’ describes God’s revelation of His sovereign work throughout history. In this context Paul may be thinking of Christ as the center of mystery (Col. 1:25-27)” (Liefeld, 140).

6) Persevere in Sound Doctrine as some Fall Away 4:1-16

Paul spent some time addressing the next steps within this church in case he is delayed in coming (3:14-15). Here is a large transition within the book focusing on a church trying to function within a difficult culture and the presence of false teachers.

1. Apostasy in Later Times 4:1-5

Often, we associate the ‘later times’ or ‘last days’ as referencing sometime in the future. Here is an example of the New Testament church recognizing they are already in the ‘last days.’ Some are presently falling away (1:20; 5:15; 6:10) and there are false teachers with seared consciences (1:20) teaching and spreading deceit. The day has already come!

“Christians saw themselves as living in the last days. These final days began with Jesus’ ministry and will conclude with His return” (Lea, 128). Paul had an inaugurated eschatology – meaning he saw the last days as having already begun. How does knowing this change your thoughts on these verses?

Falling Away from the Faith 4:1

Matthew 24:10-13 – How are they experiencing some of these last days issues presently within this church?

Paying Attention to Demonic Teachings 4:1

How is the enemy involved in the development and growth of false doctrine?

Why would the enemy put time and energy into this attempt?

What does his involvement tell us about the nature and intention of these false doctrines (even if some of them seem relatively harmless)?

Colossians 1:13 – Even if someone is not participating in the teaching or spreading of false doctrines, how would we describe the influence of the enemy over the unbelieving world?

Hypocrites with Seared Consciences Promote False Teachings 4:2

We are told that there is demonic activity in the creation and spreading of false teaching, but what kind of person is involved?

2 Timothy 4:3-4 – How will many respond to false teachers?

1 Timothy 4:3 – What are the false teachers promoting?

How could these lead people away from the faith?

Abstinence is often viewed as ‘more spiritual’ than participation in God’s good gifts. Why would this be the slant and opinion of many?

Often, we respond to our own ongoing guilt and shame by attempting to punish, reprove, and chastise ourselves instead of fully relying upon the suffering and death of Christ in our place. We hope to add to Christ’s atoning work, through self-denial and self-imposed restrictions seeking to appease God’s anger and match His holiness. What misunderstanding of the cross is being demonstrated in this line of thought?

What message does this person need to hear?

Forbidding marriage – what is the long-term result of this false teaching? How does it detract from the Christian’s witness to the world?

The Shakers forbid marriage and almost died out as a result. Marriage, children, and growing families (though not necessary or commanded) spread the faith as children learn from their parents and receive Christ.

Abstaining from Particular Foods - God has created a wonderful world to be enjoyed. To prohibit this enjoyment is to hold God’s children back from His gifts and grace. How would a parent respond to someone who robs their children of the gifts they have given?

How can abstinence kill gratitude? How is gratitude connected to glorifying God?

God’s Intention for Food - 1 Timothy 4:4 – How are we supposed to view God’s creation?

Our Response - How are we supposed to view food? How does 1 Corinthians 10:31 contribute to this understanding?

2. Be a Good Servant of Christ 4:6-16

“What should be our strategy when we live in a world inundated with false teaching? First, we must expose the errors we oppose. Second, we must also develop personal holiness to assure continuation in integrity. The combination of exposing error and practicing truth is a powerful antidote to heresy. Paul proposed this strategy for Timothy” (Lea, 133).

Step one is pointing out false teaching. Where have you seen possible false teachings seeping into the American church?

Where have you seen it influence you? Do you promote forms of restriction, abstinence, or expectation that attempts to add to the work of the cross?

Be Nourished in the Word 4:6 – “brought up in” is better translated “constantly nourished on.” It communicates a continuous ongoing action (present passive participle). This word gives us the picture of a child dependent upon milk nourishment for growth.

Describe someone you know who is constantly nourished by God’s Word:

How can we grow in this area as a church? As individuals?

Where do we often look for nourishment outside of God’s Word?

What is your next step?

Have Nothing to do with Fables 4:7 – The NIV translation of “fit only for old women” can seem slightly derogatory. “Fables / myths” is the noun with the adjectives “godless” and “old wives” acting as modifiers. Paul is referring to “godless old wives” tales / myth / fables. This is not a knock on our female senior saints; it is a phrase used at the time (and often still in our time) to describe the “fable” (topic, subject, argument) as being not worthy of God or discussion among the saints.

This issue continues into 2 Timothy. What types of conversations seem to be taking place in Ephesus according to 2 Timothy 2:16?

We are prone to major on the minors. What happens when we focus on speculations according to 2 Timothy 2:23?

How do we distinguish between ‘worldly and empty chatter’ / ‘foolish and ignorant speculations’ and valuable God-honor conversations?

Please evaluate each topic as useful and God-honoring or empty and speculative:

- The person of Christ
- The age of the earth
- The Nephilim of Genesis ch 6?
- Seeing the world from God's perspective, Ps 73:17
- Gog and Magog in Rev 20:8?
- Grief and hardship
- God the Creator of all things
- God will make all thing new
- How will God make all things new?
- Europe's role in the end times
- My struggles with sin

This is a very difficult question to ask and answer. A few guiding principles would include:

- Major on the majors of Scripture.
- Speak with clarity where the Bible is clear,
- speak with humility and open hands where the Bible is unclear.
- If the Lord is not the center piece of the conversation and Jesus is not the ultimate answer, you may be drifting away from a worthwhile topic.
- If the topic puts me on a mission other than the Great Commission, it has become a distraction and should be minimized.
- Is the topic causing frustration, disunity, anger?
- Is the topic or subject matter promoting love, mission, and the glory of Christ?

Are there any other examples of fruitless speculations that you feel receive too much attention?

Instead of participating in these conversations, what is Timothy called to do?

“Discipline” is an imperative / command given to Timothy. All believers need to hear this word of encouragement. What would it look like for you to be more disciplined?

What would this discipline look like according to 1 Timothy 4:13-16?

To what is Timothy supposed to “give himself wholly” (NASB “be absorbed in them”)?

A theme begins to form as Paul calls Timothy to “constantly be nourished on the words of faith and of the sound doctrine” (NASB, 4:6) and to “Take pains with these things [the public reading of Scripture, exhortation and teaching]; be absorbed in them” (NASB 4:15). What happens when the Word of God drifts from center?

How can we keep ourselves absorbed in God’s Word?

How can we call others to do the same?

Godliness has Value in Everything 4:8 – It is of some worth to note that God says physical discipline does have some value. What value do you think it has?

How can physical discipline benefit spiritual discipline?

How is physical discipline connected to God’s desire and design for our life and ministry?

Far superior to physical discipline is discipline towards godliness. Why?

Is there any area of life that doesn't benefit from godliness?

What area of your life could benefit more from godliness?

It Holds a Promise for Present Life and the One to Come 4:8 – What promise does it hold for this life?

How is our present godliness a promise for the life to come (be sure to use the context of this verse first to answer the question)?

If someone professes Christ, yet their life never reflects Christ, are they saved?

Can one man truly know the heart of another?

What happens if we measure godliness by outward behavior instead of inward transformation?

Spiritual transformation (increase in love, worship, humility...) is often a clear sign that someone has truly placed their faith in Christ. Outward adherence to a set of rules may or may not demonstrate a changed heart. A proclamation of faith is between a person and God. God knows their heart and God knows if they are saved. Salvation is not based on works, but is demonstrated in a changed life over time.

A transformed life is a clear indicator of a heart that has been saved and is being transformed by Christ – **a promise held for this life and the life to come.**

How can we give someone an assurance of salvation, yet understand that only God knows their heart and the genuineness of their decision?

Then moment someone believes, it is not based on perfect or flawless belief. It is a kernel that God will grow and mature over time. The moment Christ is received (John 1:12) one becomes a child of God forever. We will see works over time (Mark 1:17, Phil 1:6, the whole book of James), but we can never make the moment of salvation more complicated than Jesus does – “repent and believe the good news” (Mark 1:15). Belief is articulated in Romans 10:9-10, “if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses resulting in salvation.”

A Trustworthy Statement 4:9-10 – verse 9 likely refers to verse 8. Verse 10 grounds (provides the reasoning for) verses 6-9 or at least 8-9.

What role does hope play in the life and ministry of the Christian?

What do you suppose happens if that hope wanes?

Why do you think Paul uses the description “living” to describe God here in this verse?

What else do we about God in this verse?

How is He the Savior of all men, when all men are not saved?

1 John 2:2 – Jesus’ death makes salvation available to all men, Jesus gives an invitation to all men (Mark 1:15), He even desires all men to believe (1 Tim 2:4), but will all receive the invitation?

Prescribe and Teach 4:11 – What is Timothy called to command and teach?

Do not let Others Look Down on your Youth 4:12 – What are some of the challenges a young pastor may face?

Where does a young pastor need to find his confidence? How does Paul build his confidence in 4:14?

2 Timothy 1:7 – Why would Paul have written this to Timothy?

Be an Example 4:12 – How will being an example impact his ministry?

In Speech, Conduct, Love, Faith, and Purity 4:12 – Every area of a pastor's life is often under scrutiny. What would happen if a pastor did not demonstrate godliness in his speech?

How can a congregation help a young pastor?

How can they love him well as he grows and matures?

Devote yourself to Public Reading of the Word 4:13 – Timothy's foundation for growth is being nourished and absorbed in God's Word (4:6; 15). How is he to impart the Word to others?

How can we do a better job at being devoted to the public reading of the Word?

There are times when the Word can simply be read. Other times it should be preached or exhorted and other times taught. What is the difference between teaching and preaching?

Preaching and teaching are like fraternal twins. Very, very similar with slight differences. A good preacher will know how to teach and a solid teacher will at times exhort God's Word. Preaching includes heralding, encouraging, and proclaiming God's Word. He is like a horseman riding into town proclaiming a coming battle. A teacher is explaining, connecting thoughts, and looking at the situation from many angles. The teacher is putting the puzzle together for the congregation and the preacher is exalting the beauty of the completed picture on the puzzle. With logic on

fire the preacher drives home one clear objective while the teacher may slow down to give explanation, connections, and applications.

Can you identify some of the church's preachers and teachers? How would explain the differences between their styles?

Which are you? How can you grow in your preaching / teaching style?

Do Not Neglect your Gift 4:14 – Timothy seems to have a struggle with fear and timidity. How does this verse encourage and instruct him?

Be Diligent Given Fully to these Matters 4:15 – NASB: "Take pains with these things; be absorbed in them, so that your progress will be evident to all." What are "these things?"

How can Timothy become absorbed in them? How can we?

What happens when the leaders and members of the church are not absorbed in God's Word?

What happens when we are absorbed?

Showing Progress to All 4:15 - Progress! The Word of God never returns void without accomplishing its purpose (Is 55:11). What role does it play in our lives according to 2 Timothy 3:16-17?

Watch Yourself and Doctrine Closely 4:16 – How do other churches, pastors, and books help with this?

How else can a church make sure it is watching its doctrine closely?

How should it prepare, vet, and choose teachers?

Why is both Timothy's life and doctrine important in this process? What if we only focused on his life but not his doctrine? Or focused on his doctrine and not his life?

How do we see these values displayed in the qualifications for overseers / elders?

Persevere in Them 4:16 - Are there any documents that should exist within a church to clarify doctrine and hold members and teachers accountable?

What should be included in this document? Why would we make sure the resurrection is in the document, but would not put in a section on the nature and work of angels?

Saving both Yourself and your Hearers 4:16 – How are the hearers saved?

7) Discussions with the Body 5:1-2

There are times when the pastors of a church may be younger than many of the members. What would be the benefits and the struggles of this situation?

How can the younger members properly honor and respect the older members?

What is the extra instruction given when instructing the younger women?

8) Widows 5:3-16

Older Widows 5:3-10 - What happens when a church ignores this command?

Family Responsibilities 5:4; 8 – Why must this be a priority? How does this help and protect the church?

Desired Character Qualities of Godliness 5:5-7; 9-10 - Why would Paul have these qualifications?

What would be the purpose of the moral qualifications?

Why would there be an age expectation? In those days, 60 would very much be comparable to our retirement age of 67+ today. Would this have a bearing on our interpretations / expectations?

There seems to be an actual list that is kept. What would be the value of this list?

Do we have such a list? Do we uphold these same expectations?

10 – There is an expectation that they themselves play a part in ministering to others. What is the value and purpose of this expectation?

Paul certainly does not have a simple hand-out mentality. What do we learn about love and assistance from this section?

Younger Widows 5:11-16 – What expectations are given to younger widows?

Are there any that surprise you?

What can happen when they become idle?

Based on this section, how do we best love and counsel younger widows?

9) Concerning Elders 5:17-25

This is an intriguing section. In chapter 6, there will be an exhortation against the love of money and a call to contentment. This does not mean that pastors and teachers should not get paid for their work and honored for their faithfulness.

“rule well” – may not be true of every elder. How would one judge if an elder is ruling well?

Leading needs to be seen in conjunction with preaching and teaching in verse 18. Teaching and preaching are a major portion of the *“ruling well.”* How do we judge if someone is a good teacher and preacher?

Is it how much they make us laugh? Is it how easy they are to listen to? Is it their ability to tell a story?

Is there anything else earlier in this book that would help you answer this question?

2 Timothy 2:15 – how does this verse contribute to the conversation?

Verse 18 is clearly teaching the need to pay the pastor his worth. Does *“double honor”* in verse 17 relate to pay or something else?

How might this relate to 6:6-10?

It very possibly relates to pay. If pastors have to spend their time working other jobs and stressing about finances, they will have limited time to devote to study and prayer. Have you ever met a *“muzzled”* pastor?

Personally, I served as one of the lead pastors in a young church while working full-time to support my family and pay the bills. It was the opinion of some of the members that I should

quit my job, simply trust the Lord, and give all my time to the church. This sounds very spiritual, but whose responsibility was it to take care of the pastor so that he could quit his job?

Here is some Jesus math: Spiritual = Scriptural. What did the congregation need to understand in the above described situation?

Elders are often under attack. Why would the enemy and some within the church focus in on attacking a pastor or teacher?

Unfortunately, so many pastors have fallen across the country, no one is surprised anymore to hear of a pastor falling morally. But, what is the process that we are given when an accusation is made?

Why must we hold to this procedure?

What can happen to the church if we don't?

20 – Those who continue in sin are to be called out in front of everyone? Why would Paul do this?

How did he already do this in 1:20?

21 – When might an individual or a church be swayed by partiality in issues of sin and church discipline?

What happens if we do not take this seriously?

What happens if a church is inconsistent in how they treat people (new members versus long-time members, men vs women, rich vs poor, young vs old...)?

22 – Have we seen this expectation earlier? How can we create a process to prevent this from happening?

How should this process include teaching / knowledge?

How should it include character?

23 – Fruit juice would not have fixed an upset stomach, there was probably actual alcohol being suggested (which has been shown to possibly aid with digestion). Paul was not a doctor or MD, why would this verse be in Scripture?

24-25 – Verse 23 can be seen as parenthetical, here Paul returns to his train of thought. This is a difficult construction which is basically teaching that only over time do we see someone's true character. Eventually, wickedness or maturity rise to the surface. How does this inform our process of choosing church officers?

10) Concerning Slaves 6:1-2

Slavery here is more comparable to modern day employment than the slavery of last century. What is the expectation of employees?

How does this reflect on God's name?

Have you ever seen a Christian try to take advantage of a situation where their boss is a Christian? What would this situation communicate to the other employees?

What should be our point of view if our boss is a believer?

VI. Final Charges to Timothy

1) The Danger of False Teaching and Greed 6:2-10

False teaching continues to be the theme and the major concern of Paul. Summarize what we have learned about the possible false teachings up to this point:

Godliness is not 6:3-6 – There seems to be a confusion around the true nature of godliness. Most likely, the false teachers are using this concept to push forward their agenda. How does Paul clarify the true nature of godliness in this section? How is it connected to the Words of Jesus?

What seems to be their perception of godliness?

Conceited & Foolish 6:4 – Paul describes the false teachers with strong words. What do you suppose might be their motivation for promoting these false teachings? What benefit might they be receiving?

It is likely that these false teachers are receiving some level of reputation and attention from their followers. Paul strikes at their false pride by describing their true nature as conceited and foolish. Why would he use such strong words?

Concerned with Controversy and Quarrels 6:4 – Again Paul must address this desire to stray from basic doctrine into useless conversations and speculations. What are the results from these kinds of conversations?

Envy, Strife, Abusive Language, Evil Suspicions 6:4 – What kind of conversations and topics might lead us in this direction today?

Friction between the Foolish 6:5 – If the result of a conversation leads to friction and disunity, what may be the nature of the conversation?

How can we keep our conversations centered on Christ (Col 3:1-2)?

A Means of Financial Gain 6:5 – What do we learn about their motivations and desires?

Godliness is 6:6-8 – What is a correct understanding of godliness?

A Means for Contentment 6:6 – What is the great gain of godliness?

How is contentment more powerful than wealth?

Matthew 6:31-34 – What does Jesus teach us in this section?

How does “seek first the kingdom of God” help us understand God’s desired content for our conversations? How do you know when a conversation, argument, or point of contention has drifted from this principle?

What is likely true of someone who shows great contentment in their life? How are you doing in this area of your own spiritual growth?

A Right Understanding of Needs and Provision 6:7-8 – Why is it so hard to be content with only food and covering?

Why does our society seem consumed with ‘excess?’

God has offered joy, peace, and contentment regardless of our circumstances. Many Christians have turned from these gifts to pursue comfort and convenience. What lies are they believing?

What is the difference between comfort and convenience versus joy, peace, and contentment?

Lovers of Money 6:9-10 – In verse 17 Paul will give instructions to the rich. Here he is focused on those who “want to get rich.” How does this desire lead to one’s ruin and destruction?

Tempted by Harmful Desire for Riches 6:9 – What is wrong with wanting to get rich?

How might these resulting desires be harmful?

Matthew 6:19-21 – What do we learn about treasures from Jesus in these verses?

Love of Money is the Root of this Evil 6:10 – Money itself is not considered sinful. In many cases, it is a blessing and can be used for many good things. What might tempt someone to start falling in love with the pursuit of money?

Have you ever felt this temptation and pull?

How do we counsel a believer who seems to have turned their eyes and lives to the pursuit of money over their pursuit of Christ?

Draws People Away from the Faith 6:10 – In the pursuit of wealth, the desire to find the world’s version of peace and joy, many end up in grief. Why would this be so?

Depression, sadness, and suicide rates are just as high in the upper class as they are in lower class families. How can this be?

Can you think of any celebrities who attained every worldly achievement and yet died in despair because of drugs, suicide, or by other means?

These examples paint a very clear picture to our society that wealth, stardom, and worldly success do not satisfy, yet the pursuit continues! Why do people not connect these dots?

2) Flee / Pursue 6:11

Why is it necessary to live out both imperatives – “to flee” and “to pursue?”

How do we flee the temptation to pursue wealth and the love of money?

What happens when we flee but have nothing that we pursue?

Often in our attempts at holiness, we make efforts to quit a particular pattern of behavior or thoughts, but we continue to struggle and circle back to the temptation. How can we break this cycle?

It is near impossible to fight against a vacuum. How do we fill the vacuum and remove its power? What must we pursue?

How might this wisdom improve our parenting?

3) Fight the Good Fight 6:12

What happens to a believer that doesn't realize that they are in a fight?

What ways has Paul outlined in this letter for Timothy to “fight the good fight of faith?”

This fight includes an effort made for one’s own faith, how might it include a fight for the faith of others?

How do we prepare for this fight?

What does it look like to fight? What might happen to a passive Christian over time?

Who right now in your life, might need you to step in and help them fight?

Why would Paul remind Timothy of his public profession of faith?

4) Keep the Commandment 6:13-16

How does Paul emphasize what he is about to say?

Mark 15:2 - What was Jesus’ confession?

How is this an example of fighting the good fight?

What was the consequence of Jesus’ confession?

Are we willing to make the same confession about Christ regardless of consequences?

Matthew 28:18-20 - What is the commission that has been given to all Christians?

What happens if Christians forget their mission?

What is the content of “the commandment” that Timothy must keep?

Keep the Commandment Until Christ Returns 6:14 - Paul has been entrusted with the “glorious Gospel” (1:11) and was saved and changed through this Gospel (1:12-16), and it is this “instruction” that he now entrusts to Timothy (1:18). The Gospel of Christ is the content of the “command” / “instruction” that Timothy has been called to guard (6:20), keep (6:14, 4:16), preach (6:2), teach (6:2), and contend for at all costs (4:12).

All around Timothy, people are trying to alter, change, and rewrite the Gospel. It is Timothy’s role to help make sure that the Gospel is kept without stain or reproach. How can we make that same commitment to protecting the Gospel?

Determined by the Father at the Proper Time 6:15 - Jesus will return! Who will determine the timing? How will He decide when?

Several descriptions are given of God the Father. What do we learn from each? How would you describe each description to someone else?

- The Blessed and only Sovereign -
- The King of Kings and Lord of lords -
- Alone Possesses Immortality -
- Dwells in unapproachable light 6:16 -
- Whom no man has seen or can see -

- To Him be Honor and Eternal Dominion -

5) Instructions to the Rich 6:17-19

Some are pursuing wealth as a false understanding of godliness. Some are already rich.

Nowhere is their financial status considered to be a sin, but unique temptations exist. What are some of these unique temptations?

How can wealth misplace our hope and joy?

How do we know if we are relying on riches instead of God for security and joy?

How are the wealthy to use their means?

What is the eternal benefit of generosity?

Let's be honest for a second. In comparison to the average person throughout the history of the world, anyone with a home, warmth, three meals a day, clean water, and a means of provision are in many ways considered wealthy. Most Americans need to read 6:17-19 and apply it to themselves. Where are the areas in your life where you are depending on your resources or stuff for enjoyment rather than God?

Everything we have is from God. They are gifts to be enjoyed. How do we know when a transition is happening in our hearts of enjoying the gifts more than the Giver?

6) Final Charge – Guard! 6:20-21

How do these two verses summarize the entire letter?

What will be some of Timothy's first steps after reading this letter?

How will appointing church leaders be connected to dealing with the false teaching?

What have been some of your main take-a-ways from 1 Timothy?

Historical Context

Observations from 1 Timothy

Paul and his Situation

1 Timothy was written about 63 A.D. Paul was likely writing from Philippi as he expected a possible delay in his coming. Soon after leaving Timothy in Ephesus, Paul left Titus to finish up some work in the church in Crete. Paul was imprisoned while writing 2 Timothy in 67A.D. Paul had a father-like relationship with Timothy. Paul was also the one who launched the church in Ephesus and had a strong relationship with their leaders and passionately warned them about the coming false teachers (Acts 20:17-38).

Timothy and his Situation

Timothy is a young pastor who had traveled with Paul on several of his missionary journeys (Acts 16:1-3). He is given the weighty responsibility of appointing overseers and deacons in this church. He is charged with a 'seek and destroy' mission against the false teachers and their doctrines.

As a young man, he is instructed to flee immorality and to pursue righteousness. He is also given encouragement and is reminded of God's call on his life. His youth is not to be looked down upon, but used as an opportunity to be a model to all. The message and content of the Gospel is to be protected, guarded, preached, and taught above all else. Timothy's courage is to be found in Christ and not in his own self-perception.

The Church and their Situation

Location and Cultural Context: The church was located in the city of Ephesus. The city of Ephesus created a clear set of unique struggles and temptations for this church. This city was one of the four great metropolises of the Roman world (Rome, Alexandria, and Antioch). Ephesus was a commercial center for trade thanks to ports and land routes of commerce. Excavations have discovered a 24,000-person theater, auditoriums, libraries, brothels, and lavish buildings (baths, gymnasias, and plazas) (Lea, 78).

The Ephesian Temple of Artemis was the largest structure in the Hellenistic world and the first of such monumental proportions to be built entirely of marble (Yamauchi, 103). Much of the city and society revolved around this temple. The temple also functioned as a bank and sanctuary. It had a strong cult following. Artemis had a connection to fertility and worship practices included dress and sexuality that was more free and expressive than previously known.

This church represented people saved out of this culture with no previous experience in a Christian church – including Christian practices, worship, or expectations.

Birth of the church: Paul played the primary role in establishing this church amidst tremendous persecution (Acts 19). Clearly the city hated anything that took away from their pagan religious practices and the economic benefits of the temple of Artemis. In Paul’s time in Ephesus he must have grown quite close to them (Acts 20:17-38). He warned them that “after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them” (Acts 20:29-30).

False Teachers and their Teachings: As Paul had predicted some of their own have risen up as false teachers. It seems that these teachings pertained to:

- False teachings concerning the law – 1:7
- False teaching concerning resurrection – 1:19-20
- Deceiving – 4:1-3
- Ascetic elements – 4:1-5
(prohibition of eating certain foods and marriage. Laws added to God’s Word)
- Emphasis of speculation – 1:4
- A tendency towards greed – 6:5

Possible additional insights from 2 Timothy

Historical Context

Observations from 2 Timothy

Author & Date: Paul introduces himself as the author at the beginning of the letter. 2 Timothy is along with 1 Timothy and Titus are considered the Pastoral Letters. These letters were written by Paul to individuals who are ministering as young church leaders. Paul wrote 2 Timothy in 67 A.D. Paul has been released from his imprisonment referred to in Acts 28, he then continued his ministry until imprisoned again (this time in Rome) before the writing of this letter. This imprisonment is much more severe than the one referred to in Philippians 1:12-18. The prison is cold and dark and Paul is basically alone.

Occasion: Paul realizes that his life is drawing to a close (2 Timothy 4:6), and his life will soon be taken from him. Tradition holds that Paul actually is martyred in 67 A.D. He is now passing on part of his ministry to Timothy, who is probably serving in Ephesus.

Recipient: Timothy

- Son of Eunice
- 2 Timothy 2:5 Has a sincere faith
- 1 1:2, 2 1:16 Seem to be around a lot of people who have fallen from the faith
- This may be why Paul continually reminds Timothy to be strong in grace and in the power of the Spirit.
- 1 4:12 Timothy is young, but is called to be an example in the faith
- 1 5:23 He seems to get sick often
- 1 Thessalonians 3:6 Visited the Thessalonians
- Acts 16:1-3 Paul met Timothy in Derbe (his hometown), circumcised him and traveled
- Acts 16:6 Traveled throughout Phrygia & Galatia
- Acts 17:10 & 19:22 Macedonia
- 1 Cor 16:10 Timothy is carrying on the work of the Lord
- Tim was with Paul when he wrote Corinthians, Philippians, Colossians, & Thessalonians
- Hebrews 13:23 He may have been held captive

Political Factors: Persecution at the hand of Nero

All of Christianity is under attack by persecution from the Roman Empire. Nero has decided to persecute Christians at a level more intense than has ever been seen before. When Paul refers to suffering and persecution, he is referring to the possibility of being imprisoned and possibly losing your life for your faith in Christ.

Paul & Tim's relationship described in 2 Timothy

- 1:2 Paul calls Tim his 'son' an affectionate term
- 1:2 Paul wishes the best to Tim (grace, mercy, and peace)
- 1:3 He gives thanks to the Lord for being entrusted with Timothy
- 1:4 He longs to spend time with Timothy and misses him
- 1:4 Timothy has cried before Paul
- 1:4 Seeing Timothy would bring Paul great joy
- 1:6 Paul has an appreciation for Timothy's spiritual heritage
- 1:6 Paul understands and encourages Tim to use his spiritual gifts
- 1:6 Paul knows Tim and reminds him to rekindle his gift
- 1:7 Paul boldly speaks truth to Timothy and encourages him
- 1:8 Paul is a model of discipleship to Timothy by being obedient to Christ
- 1:13 Paul spent a lot of time teaching Timothy sound doctrine
- 1:15 Timothy is aware of Paul's hardships

Major Themes:

- Ecclesiastical Qualifications & Structure
- Running the Race Strong & Perseverance
- Guarding the Word
- Dealing Head on with False Teachers

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Divorce and Church Offices

1 Timothy 3 standards include being – “a one-woman man,” “above reproach,” and having “a good reputation with those outside.”

One-woman man – It should be noted that the word divorce does not occur in 1 Timothy 3. Culturally, we do need to ask the question, “How does divorce relate to our 1 Timothy 3 standards?” First, it must be noted that 1 Timothy 3 does not state ‘for life’ and therefore, time limits or additional culture-based clarifications should not be added to God’s Word. Secondly, this is a present tense expectation along with all of the other expectations.

Divorce

Adultery and abandonment (Romans 7:2, Matthew 5:32, 1 Corinthians 7:15) are biblical grounds for divorce. Otherwise, we should remain married and help struggling couples with counsel, the Christian community, and encouragement to pursue forgiveness, peace, and reconciliation.

Matthew 5

Purpose of Matthew 5 - Jesus clearly communicates His standards for divorce in Matthew 5. In Matthew 5, Jesus not only reiterates portions of the law, He teaches the true nature and expectations of the law – external and internal obedience are equal in God’s sight. Matthew 5 functions similarly to Romans 3:23, teaching us that “all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.” The law and Matthew 5, points us to Christ (Galatians 3:24) and our need for forgiveness.

Connection between Matthew 5 and 1 Timothy 3 Standards - Some would suggest that a divorce leaves a permanent scarlet letter forever banning someone from meeting the standards for church office. According to Matthew 5, no one meets the standards of 1 Timothy 3. If we take Matthew 5 as a direct reference to 1 Timothy 3 standards, we must be consistent with all of Matthew 5.

God hates divorce, but He never stops loving the divorced person. It must be remembered; no sin is beyond the redeeming work of the cross.

One-woman man, above reproach, and has a good reputation with outsiders –

Divorce (and many other situations) may impact more than just one of these standards. With all standards in mind, we must handle each case individually.

Divorce cases that outwardly meet 1 Timothy 3 standards

- Married to someone who has been divorced
- Divorce based upon biblical grounds
- Divorced as an unbeliever, ignorant of God’s expectations

Divorce cases that *may* meet 1 Timothy 3 standards. The church must show consistency, leading with grace, asking questions to assess maturity and one's present relation to 1 Timothy standards. Maturity, repentance, restitution, and reconciliation must be considered. Divorce is being highlighted here, but *any situation* (*infidelity, pornography, divisiveness...*) can go through this process.

Spiritual Maturity - Assess the spiritual maturity level of the individual when the divorce occurred.

- How was the decision to divorce made?
 - Result of ignorance?
 - Poor teaching and shepherding?
 - A basic choice to sin and go against God's will?
 - Involvement of the church through the process?
- How have they shown spiritual growth since the divorce?
- Do they now live in a **one-woman man** relationship? For how long?

Repentance – Psalm 51 repentance should be seen in the life of this believer.

- Has repentance been demonstrated towards God?
- Has repentance been demonstrated towards all who were involved?

Restitution – They must treat the ex-spouse and family in a way that is **above reproach** and maintains a **good reputation** within the community.

- Was the ex-spouse and family treated fairly and graciously?
- Have they received just compensation and shown generosity?
- Does the ex-spouse or family continue to receive whatever is necessary to help meet the needs caused by the divorce?

Reconciliation – They must make all efforts to have relationships that are presently **above reproach** with a **good reputation** in the community.

- Is reconciliation between both parties possible?
- Has reconciliation been considered or pursued?
- If not possible, has forgiveness been sought, has there been a peaceable outcome reached?

We consider a redeemed and repentant saint, who has made genuine attempts at restitution and reconciliation, and presently stands above reproach in their relationships with a good reputation within the community, as a candidate for church office.