

Lesson One...1 Timothy 1:1-11

Read 1 Timothy twice, all the way through. This will take a few minutes, but it is very important to have the context of the entire letter in your mind as you study.

1. From 1 Timothy 1:1-3, what do you learn about the author? The recipient?

2. Paul helps us get to know Timothy from clues found in his letters. What do you learn about Timothy from the following?
 - a. 1 Timothy 4:12 & 2 Timothy 2:22
 - b. 1 Timothy 5:23
 - c. 2 Timothy 1:5

3. Read at least three of the following text to build a “profile” of Timothy’s broader life and ministry.
 - a. Acts 16:1-3
 - b. Acts 17:10-14
 - c. 1 Corinthians 16:10-11
 - d. 2 Corinthians 1:1

4. We have taken quite some time to get to know Timothy! As you consider what you have learned, what do you understand about the importance of “community” for Paul & Timothy’s ministry?

Personal: How does your understanding translate to your own life? To your small group?

5. Returning to 1 Timothy 1:-2, how does Paul refer to himself?

Who commissioned Paul?

What does this commission establish?

6. What three things does Paul long for on behalf of Timothy?

Compare this greeting to that found in Paul’s other letters.

	Romans	2 Corinthians	Ephesians	1 Thessalonians
How does Paul describe himself/his credentials?				
Who is writing with Paul?				
Who is Paul writing to?				
How does he describe them?				
What does he hope/pray for them?				

Is there a theme? What is it?

Personal: Is there a “theme” in your prayers for the people that you love?

7. Return to 1 Timothy 1 and read verses 3-11. Where was Timothy when this letter was written to him?

How do you know that this letter was, apparently, the second time Paul had to *urge* Timothy to stay there? (*note especially verse 3*)

What can you infer from that? (*Recall what you learned about Timothy, question 2*)

8. For what purpose did Paul urge Timothy to stay?

Acts 20:18-35 is an account of a meeting between Paul and the Ephesian elders. What do you learn from his warning to them in verses 29-31 that sheds light on why Timothy was still needed there?

9. From 1 Timothy 1:3-7, list the characteristics of a false teacher. How would Timothy know who they were? (*There are at least six listed here.*)

10. This danger of false teachers resonates throughout this letter. What more do you learn from...

- a. 1 Timothy 4:1-4
- b. 1 Timothy 6:3-5
- c. 1 Timothy 6:9, 10
- d. 1 Timothy 6:20, 21

11. In verse 3, Paul uses the verb *heterodidaskaleo* from the root word *heteros*. This word primarily translates “different”. He is referring to doctrine that is not new or false or erroneous, but doctrine that is *different* from the teaching of the apostles. How is the teaching of the apostles designated in each of the following texts?

- a. 1 Timothy 2:4 To come to the knowledge of _____

b. 1 Timothy 6:3 If anyone teaches a different doctrine and does not agree with _____ of our Lord Jesus Christ and _____ that accords with godliness

c. 2 Timothy 1:13 Follow _____ of _____

Notice that Paul uses the word “the” in reference to teaching, doctrine & truth. What does that tell you?

“In nearly every one of these expressions the noun is preceded by the definite article, indicating that already a body of doctrine existed which was an agreed standard by which all teaching could be tested and judged. It was the teaching of Christ and of his apostles.”¹

Although the New Testament Scripture was not compiled and accessible to the early church, they had the ministry and teaching of Christ and the Apostles in their midst. Their teaching was **the** measure by which sound doctrine should be weighed.

Thought: How does the concept of *one* truth resonate with the culture today?

12. Consider the danger of false teachers to the church today. Do you see it? How does it manifest?

What safeguards **the** truth?

- a. 1 Timothy 4:6-8
- b. 1 Timothy 4:12, 13
- c. 1 Timothy 4:16
- d. 2 Timothy 1:13
- e. 2 Timothy 2:15

13. Paul’s specific concern in 1 Timothy 1 is the unlawful use of the law. How do the following Scripture texts instruct you with regard to the lawful use of the law?

- a. Psalm 19:7-12
- b. Galatians 3:21-26

¹ John Stott, The Message of 1 Timothy & Titus, p. 43

c. 1 John 2:3-6

d. Romans 7:7-12

Scripture, as well as church history, gives very particular instruction relative to the use of the law. Two extremes exist: antinomianism (no need for the law at all) and legalism (the law has the ability to save). The evangelical church today must not find itself in the “camp” of either extreme. For more reading on the proper use of the law, see “The Threefold Use of the Law” by R.C. Sproul in your Resource Section.

14. An important detail about this issue of false teachers is hidden in the text of 1 Timothy 1. According to verse 7, what is the motivation of the false teacher?

How does such a motive compare to Paul’s “aim”, verse 5?

15. Where does Paul’s love “*issue from*”?

What does it mean to have a “pure heart”, particularly as it relates to leadership and/or teaching?

How does 1 Peter 3:21 help you to understand the need for a “good conscience”?

Read Romans 12:9 and 2 Corinthians 6:6 to define Paul’s charge for “love that issues from a..sincere faith”.

Final Thoughts

How does the theology of “one truth” resonate with you really?

Are you confidently committed to *the* faith, *the* truth, *the* teaching?

What philosophies or doctrines threaten your confidence?

As you think about the various areas of your life where you have influence, what is your motivation? Consider questions like: What am I afraid of? What do I hope for? What really discourages me?

Summarize what you have learned from 1 Timothy 1 about *the church*.

Take a few minutes to write 1 Timothy 1:5 on an index card or post-it note. Over the course of the next few weeks, memorize this verse as a means to submit your own motivation in ministry and in life before the Lord. ALSO, use this verse a framework to pray for those who are in leadership in your church.

Lesson Two...1 Timothy 1:12-20

Read 1 Timothy all the way through. Now read 1 Timothy 1.

1. How does Paul begin his story, 1 Timothy 1:12?

For what three things does Paul thank God?

How does this verse affirm Paul's commissioning, verse 1?

Personal: Before going any further, take a few minutes to meditate on this verse. If you are a Christian, you have been "judged faithful" and you are "appointed to his service". Write a prayer of gratitude.

2. These verses read like a testimony. How many times do you see the word "mercy" repeated in verses 12-16?

How many times do you find "Christ Jesus" or "Jesus Christ"?

What can you infer from the repeated references to "mercy" and "Christ"?

3. What three words does Paul use to describe himself before Christ intervened in his life?

Look up each of those words in a dictionary.

Blasphemer

Persecutor

Insolent opponent

This self-description is significant, given the fact that Paul had risen to an elite position within the Jewish culture prior to his conversion. He was well-respected and held great power in the community because of his religious convictions (Romans 11:1; 2 Corinthians 11:22). The Holy Spirit, however, kindly revealed to Paul his true disposition before God.

How do the following verses give support to Paul's claims about his past?

- a. Acts 26:9-11
- b. Galatians 1:13
- c. Acts 9:4-6

Personal: Are you keenly aware of your true disposition before God outside of Christ?

- 4. What amazing phrase follows this confession? BUT _____
- 5. The word for "mercy" is only used six times in these two letters; twice right here in this text. Use the Resource Section to find the meaning of the Greek word for "mercy" used in these verses. Write the word and its meaning.

How does the Greek translation deepen your theology? What do you know is true about God, given this text?

- 6. To mercy, Paul now adds "grace". How is "grace" defined by our culture? How do we use the word typically in conversation?

The word "grace" is used 155 times in the New Testament, over 100 of them in the writings of Paul. This concept was *extremely* important to Paul's theology. Using the Resource Section, find the Greek word used here for "grace" and its definition.

Read Romans 1:1-5 where several critical components of grace are defined. What do you learn?

Write one sentence to summarize the important, foundational truth about grace from these verses.

7. Now Paul goes on to quote the first of five “trustworthy sayings” which occur in his letters. Take the time to write out this “faithful saying”.

Given the context of false teaching, why is it important that Paul sets up this quote as “trustworthy”?

In the context of chapter 1:1-6, what do you think Paul meant by a “saying” that is “*deserving of full acceptance*”? (recall what you learned in Lesson One from these verses)

8. Paul returns to the theme of his disposition before God. What claim does Paul make about himself, verse 15? Write it out.

Paul made similar claims in two earlier letters. The first is 1 Corinthians 15:9, followed by Ephesians 3:8. What seems to be true about Paul’s self-awareness?

Refer to Paul’s claim that you wrote out. Circle the verb. What *tense* is the verb? _____

What is interesting about Paul’s use of that *tense*? Have you noticed that before?

9. Paul cites two reasons for God’s gift of mercy in his life. What are they?

Verse 13:

Verse 16:

How do Acts 22:3 and 26:9 help you to understand Paul’s ignorant unbelief (as opposed to “open-eyed and willful”²)?

² Stott, p. 54

In your own words, articulate your understanding of the *second* reason Paul gives for his salvation (verse 16).

Personal: Now carefully consider whether you really believe what you just wrote. Is there someone in your life who seems to be “beyond saving”? How does this “trustworthy saying” challenge your unbelief?

10. Paul’s recollection of his own story causes him to erupt into a passionate doxology. “Christ acts in the lives of wretched people in so masterful a manner that only God receives the credit, the praise and the honor.”³ Paul directs praise and honor for four particular attributes of God. What are they?

Use the cross-references in your Bible to support Paul’s exclamations about God.

11. Finally, how does Paul address Timothy in the last few verses of this chapter?

What three exhortations does he give?

What was the fate of some who “*made shipwreck of their faith*”? Toward what end?

Take a few minutes to consider the following, from John Stott’s commentary on this passage:

“So serious was the apostasy of Hymenaeus and Alexander that Paul wrote of them: *whom I have handed over to Satan* (20). This is almost certainly an allusion to excommunication, because Paul used the identical expression in relation to the incestuous offernder at Corinth. ‘Hand this man over to Satan’, he wrote⁴, and then explained his meaning: ‘Expel the wicked man from among you.’⁵ Since the church is the dwelling-place of God, it follows that to be

³ Mike Ross, Men, Message & Ministry, p. 27

⁴ 1 Corinthians 5:5

⁵ 1 Corinthians 5:13

ejected from it is to be sent back into the world, the habitat of Satan. Radical though this punishment is, it is not permanent or irrevocable. Its purpose is remedial, 'in the hope that through this discipline' (REB) the offenders may *be taught not to blaspheme* (20). The implication is that, once the lesson has been learned, the excommunicated persons may be restored to the fellowship."⁶

Based on your study, what is the purpose of excommunication?

Final Thoughts

As you consider the description of Paul's pre-Christ life and the definitions that you discovered, are they at all illustrative of your experience? To get at the heart of the matter, complete this sentence: Formerly, I was a _____. Then, "BUT I received mercy." Does that truth resonate with you today? How recently have you experienced such rich pursuit by God?

Consider the reality of grace in your life. How has grace made your life different? Write a prayer of gratitude for God's merciful kindness at work in your life.

Ponder this quote by John Stott:

"Paul was so vividly aware of his own sins that he could not conceive that anybody could be worse. It is the language of every sinner whose conscience has been awakened and disturbed by the Holy Spirit."⁷

Paul knew that he not only *was* a sinner (blasphemer, persecutor & insolent opponent), he acknowledges an ongoing awareness of his sin-nature, "*I am the foremost of sinners...*" An acute awareness of sin is rare among today's Christians. What about you?

Paul is able to articulate the story of his saving faith in 122 words...and his short recollection stirred his own soul to sing praise to God. Are you able to succinctly tell the story of your faith? If so, write it below.

⁶ Stott, p 57-58

⁷ Stott, p. 53

If/when you do so, are you moved to worship and praise the God who saved you?

Write a summary of 1 Timothy 1. What has God taught you? What have you learned *about the church*?

Lesson Three...1 Timothy 2:1-7

Read 1 Timothy all the way through. Now read 1 Timothy 2. Paul began his letter by urging Timothy to counter false doctrine with the Gospel. He now moves to helping Timothy to think for the pastoral leadership of public worship. This text is rich with theological content. For our purposes, we will focus on two main aspects of the local church's worship: its scope and its conduct.

1. How would you summarize these verses?

2. Which verses in this text speak to the universal range of the church's responsibility?

Read Ephesians 3:6-11 and remember that it is this same Ephesian church that Pastor Timothy served at the time of Paul's letter.

- a. How does Paul describe the Gentiles (non-Jews) in the Ephesian church?

- b. What is Paul charged to preach to the Gentiles?

- c. How is the "*wisdom of God...made known*"?

- d. What point was Paul trying to make to this church?

How does this text help you to understand the scope of Paul's exhortation in 1 Timothy 2?

3. Look carefully at the very first exhortation Paul gives to Pastor Timothy, 2:1. Paul's language clearly communicates his intent. What do you know about Paul's heart from:

"First of all"

"I urge..."

This chapter is Paul's exhortation to Pastor Timothy about the church's prayer life. There are **corporate** and **personal** applications of his teaching.

What four terms does Paul use to qualify the kind of prayers that the church ought to practice?

Each of these words is different in the Greek translation. However, most commentators suggest that the first three are almost synonymous. How might you summarize them?

What (or whom) is the *focus* of requests and thanksgiving in prayer?

Personal: How does Paul's urgency challenge your personal prayer life?

As you consider the instruction regarding prayer and its corporate application, read and respond to this quote included in John Stott's commentary on this text:

"We resolve ourselves, and call upon our churches, to take much more seriously the period of intercession in public worship; to think in terms of ten or fifteen minutes rather than five; ...to focus our prayers both on the evangelization of the world (closed lands, resistant peoples, missionaries, national churches etc) and on the quest for peace and justice in the world (places of tension and conflict, deliverance from the nuclear horror, rulers and governments, the poor and needy, etc.). We long to see every Christian congregation bowing down in humble and expectant faith before our sovereign Lord."⁸

5. What *specific* group of people is the church urged to pray for?

How do Jeremiah 29:7 and Ezra 6:10 describe the historical precedent in the church to pray for its national leaders?

Read Romans 13:1-7. How does this teaching (also from Paul) give context to the exhortation to pray for *kings and all those who are in high positions*?

⁸ Stott, p. 61 quoting The Grand Rapids Report, 1982

Personal: How do you typically think of your leaders? J.C. Ryle has said that we are to consider three enormous difficulties that rulers have: the temptations that surround them, the countless knots they have to untie, and the immense responsibility of their office⁹. Are you more inclined to critique or to pray?

Challenge: What do you know about the emperor Nero, who reigned at the time of this writing?¹⁰ How does that inform your understanding of Paul's teaching for the church's prayers?

6. According to 1 Timothy 2:2, what is the outcome of such prayer for the church?

"That we may lead a _____ and _____ life, _____ and _____ in every way..."

Which of these results are *internal*?

Read Philippians 4:6, and 7 to consider what happens to the church **internally** as its people make prayer a priority.

Thought: Is the church culture marked by *peacefulness* and *quiet*? Explain your answer.

Which of the results of prayer are *external*? (These qualities are visible to others.)

The Greek word for "godliness" is used *eight times* in this letter. Use the Resource Section to look up the Greek word and its meaning.

What do you learn from the following occasions of the call to godliness in Paul's epistles?

a. 1 Timothy 4:7-8

⁹ "The Primacy of Prayer", Thomas

¹⁰ Information regarding Nero is included in the Resource Section for your further study

b. 1 Timothy 6:3, 5-6

c. 2 Timothy 3:5

Use the Resource section to look up the Greek word for “dignified” (ESV) or “holiness” (NIV). How many times is it used in the whole Bible and where is it used? (NOTE: See the heading “NAS Verse Count”)

What do you learn about this word from 1 Timothy 3:4 and Titus 2:7?

Thought: In general, is the church characterized by *godliness* and *holiness* today? Explain your answer.

What is the result of church life characterized by *peace & quiet, godliness & dignity*, according to verse 4?

7. What do you learn from 1 Timothy 2:4 about God the heart of God for all people¹¹?

How do Ezekiel 18:23 and 33:11 confirm what Paul asserts about God?

Paul was concerned that the church in Ephesus reflect the heart of God. The temptation of Ephesian Christians toward elitism or exclusion (remember question 1) is not isolated to ancient history. There are versions of this exclusivity in the church today. How do we practice this elitism in the evangelical church today?

¹¹ *These texts, considered in the context of the entire narrative of Scripture, tend to raise some questions about God’s heart for all people and the evidence of His electing purpose. There are several interpretations adopted by reformed commentators, several of which are included in the Resource section. For the purpose of this study of 1 Timothy 2, it is sufficient to acknowledge that a mystery exists that cannot be resolved superficially. A right conclusion, however, is that the church has a clear and serious responsibility to the universality of the gospel invitation. And it is that responsibility that merits attention in this lesson.*

8. Verse 5 expands on God's desire that *"all people...come to the knowledge of **the truth**"*. How does this recall an important principle from chapter 1 (Lesson One, Question 11)?

How does Paul define *"the truth"*?

9. Keeping in mind, again, the universality of the church's responsibility, consider the reference to the "one mediator". What is a "mediator"?

The unique qualifications of Christ as the one mediator are found in his person and work. Read the following texts *together* to consider what uniquely qualifies the person of Christ as the one mediator? John 1:1; Colossians 1:15 & 17; Luke 2:7; 1 Timothy 2:5

What is the work of Christ that qualifies Him as the one mediator, identified by Paul immediately in verse 6?

Thought: Why is the declaration of "one mediator" indispensable to the gospel for all people? (Hint: think about Jews and Muslims, who are monotheistic --- believe in one God.)

John Stott summarizes this important truth:

"Since in no other person but Jesus of Nazareth has God first become man (taking our humanity to himself) and then given himself as a ransom (taking our sin and guilt upon himself), therefore he is the only mediator. There is no other. No-one else possesses, or has ever possessed, the necessary qualifications to mediate between God and sinners."¹²

10. In verse 7, Paul identifies himself as a preacher/apostle/teacher to the Gentiles in all faith and truth. Summarize this "faith and truth" as you have understood it in your study this week.

Final Thoughts:

Consider the following from a sermon on this text:

"Prayer is a Christian essential. To justify that we can simply appeal to the New Testament and the fact that the words 'pray' or 'prayer' are found in the New Testament 163 times, whereas the word 'music', for example, is found just once, in the parable of the Prodigal Son when the older brother returns home and hears the sound of music. That is the solitary mention of 'music' in the King James

¹² Stott, p. 71

Version. So music is incidental to Christianity. It is not a means of grace. Prayer, on the other hand, is one of the essentials. Our calling is to major in Biblical majors.”¹³

How does this comment, together with what you have learned from Scripture, inform your perspective about your personal prayer life?

About corporate prayer in worship?

What do you think about the consideration that the “*godliness and dignity*” of the church and its people has the potential to draw men to be saved?

Take the time to personally consider the theology that you have uncovered this week. What have you learned about God?

About the Church?

Is the reality of *One God* and *One Mediator* reflected in your daily life...in your decisions? Relationships? Stewardship?

¹³ “The Primacy of Prayer”, Geoff Thomas

Read 1 Timothy all the way through. Now read 1 Timothy 2.

1. It is important to consider the current text in the framework of what has already been studied. Write a summary statement of 1 Timothy 1.

Summarize what you learned from 1 Timothy 2:1-7.

Now read 1 Timothy 2:8-15. How would you summarize these verses?

The instructions found in verses 8 to 15 are the source of much debate. Three interpretative principles (also known as “hermeneutics”) will be helpful as you study.

The Bible is objective truth. As you study, the question is not: “What do I think this means?” The questions should be “What does God intend and how will I obey?” This is not a subjective approach.

The principle of harmony. The Bible is the Word of God and He does not contradict Himself. Scripture should always be interpreted in light of other Scripture. This is the reason that these lessons lead the student to various passages of Scripture as she seeks to interpret/understand the passage being studied. “So, as we approach these verses about the place of women in the church, we shall not isolate them from Scripture’s fundamental assertion of the equal value and dignity of men and women by creation and redemption.”¹⁴

The principle of history. “God always spoke his word in particular historical and cultural settings...No word of God was spoken in a cultural vacuum...we have to discern in Scripture between God’s essential revelation (which is changeless) and its cultural expression (which is changeable). Then we are in a position to preserve the former as permanent and universal, and transpose the latter into contemporary cultural terms....[in this text] there are *eternal* principles of headship, submission, and sanctified modesty but *cultural expressions* such as clothes and hairstyles.”¹⁵

Keep these principles in mind as you study this week.

2. From 1 Timothy 2:8, what does God desire for men?

¹⁴ Stott, p. 74

¹⁵ Stott, p. 74 excerpts

How do the following verses help you to understand the *posture* of men lifting hands in prayer?

- a. Exodus 9:27-29
- b. 1 Kings 8:22-23
- c. Psalm 28:2
- d. Lamentations 3:40-42

Given what you have read, what eternal principles did Paul want for the Ephesian church *and* for the church today regarding men and prayer?

- 3. Paul's admonition regarding women begins with the phrase "*women should adorn themselves...*". It is important to acknowledge that the Apostle did not instruct women to neglect their appearance, dressing in a drab and out-dated fashion. The question is *how* they should "*adorn themselves*".

What three words does Paul use to describe how women "*should adorn themselves*"?

Use a dictionary to define those three words and make some comments relative to the current cultural context.

The riot described in Acts 19:21-34 was instigated by the silversmiths in Ephesus. Commentators suggest that this scene is illustrative of the economy of the city. It is reasonable to conclude that the church of Ephesus included both very wealthy citizens and many poor people, even slaves. Summarize what Paul has *already* said relative to the universality of the church.

Given that context, what is the eternal principle behind Paul's exhortation to women regarding "*gold or pearls or costly attire*"?

- 4. Read Proverbs 31:16-29. How does the writer describe this woman's "*dress*"?

How does the writer of this proverb add understanding to 1 Timothy 2 as Paul urges women to “*profess godliness---with good works?*” (verse 10)

Recall Paul’s anticipation of godliness for the church from this chapter. What did he expect to be the outcome of such living? How does that apply here (or does it)?

5. Returning to 1 Timothy 2, the wording of verse 11 is significant. The ESV reads: “*Let a woman learn quietly with all submissiveness.*” Write out the first four words.

Given that the Talmudic (Jewish) liturgy read every morning by every rabbi said: “Lord, I thank you that I am not a Gentile, a slave, or a woman”, what was the significance of Paul’s statement: Let a woman learn?

Romans 16:1-15, authored by Paul, includes a list of people to whom Paul expressed his gratitude. What does he say about each of the following women?

Phoebe

Prisca (or Priscilla)

Mary

Junia

Tryphaena

Tryphosa

Persis

Mother of Rufus

Julia

Sister of Nereus

In general, how would you describe Paul’s attitude toward women?

6. That spirit is important to the study of 1 Timothy 2:9-15. While he affirms and encourages their learning, Paul goes on to instruct Timothy with regard to the conduct of women in worship. What two words does he use, verse 11?

Where do you see the occasion of “quiet” elsewhere in the context of this verse?

Using the Resource Section of your lessons, look up the word “quietly”. What is the Greek word and what is its meaning?

Thought: How might the posture of *quietness* impact a woman’s learning in the church?

Using the Resource Section of your lessons, look up the word “submission”. What is the Greek word and where does this word occur elsewhere in Scripture?

Read those verses together to define Paul’s intent as he directs women to “*learn...with all submissiveness*”.

7. What two prohibitions for women in the church are given by Paul, verse 12? (*NOTE: This verse is subject to much debate in evangelical circles. We will stick very closely to the text, to relevant cross-references and to what we know about history.*)

Read 1 Corinthians 14:28-38. This passage, also written by Paul, is primarily about *order* in worship and *specifically* about teaching and leading in worship. According to verse 26, what is the bottom line of his instruction?

“Let all things be done _____.”

With that in mind, what does Paul say about women, verse 34?

What is the foundation for Paul’s instruction?¹⁶ (verse 34b)

How does this teaching echo what you have read from 1 Timothy 2:12?

¹⁶ “When Paul says ‘the law,’ ...he means either the whole Old Testament, or especially, the first five books of the Old Testament, the Torah, the Books of Moses.” Ligon Duncan, “Silent in the Church: Why Can’t Women Preach?”

How do the following verses instruct your understanding of Paul's prohibition of teaching by women?

- a. Acts 18:24-26 with Romans 16:3
- b. 2 Timothy 1:5 with 3:14,15
- c. Titus 2:3, 4

Consider this from Douglas Moo:

"The activity of teaching, precisely because it does come to God's people with the authority of God and His Word, is authoritative....we argue that the teaching prohibited to women here includes what we would call preaching...". What are your thoughts?

- 8. Our full understanding of Paul's meaning is gained as we go on and study the prohibition to "*exercise authority over a man*". What additional insight do you gain from:
 - a. 1 Thessalonians 5:12
 - b. Hebrews 13:17
 - c. 1 Timothy 3:4 and 5:17

From what you have read, summarize your understanding of "*I do not permit a woman...to exercise authority over a man...*"¹⁷

- 9. Paul concludes this passage by supplying a biblical basis for what he has written in verses 11 & 12. 1 Timothy 2:13 & 14 give specific reference to the foundation alluded to in the 1 Corinthians passage as "the law". Here, Paul goes all the way back to the creation story.

Why are women prohibited from "*exercising authority*" over men, according to verse 13?

Verse 14 speaks to the deception of Eve. Read Genesis 3:1-7. What happened in these verses?

¹⁷ "It must be noted that these instructions have nothing directly to say about teaching and authority in the marketplace or the academy or the public square. They are about order in the church." *Hughes & Chapell, 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus*

Who “exercised authority” here? Who *should have* exercised authority? What was the result?

How does that principle apply to Paul’s teaching in 1 Timothy 2?

Consider the following:

“Paul says that the reversal of roles that is contemplated when the all male qualified teaching office is violated in the church is precisely the same circumstance that we see played out in the Fall of man where Adam abdicated his responsibility as the covenant keeper and Eve started a chain that led to the fall of man.”¹⁸

9. Finally, verse 15 may appear at first glance as if Paul is suggesting that childbearing is an act that merits salvation for women. However, this would contradict doctrine that is foundational to faith. Consider Ephesians 2:8,9; 2 Timothy 1:9 and Titus 3:5 (all writings of Paul) and summarize the common theme about salvation.

An attempt to understand this verse must be made by reading it *in context*. Paul is making a case for the imperative adherence to the creation order in the church. What have you learned about the “creation order” from the context?

Paul is deploying a grammatical tool called a “synecdoche.” The definition of a synecdoche is:
“a figure of speech in which a part is used for the whole or the whole for a part, the special for the general or the general for the special.”

Keeping in mind the context of creation order and roles, how is Paul using “*childbearing*”, a “part”, as a figure of speech for “the whole”?

¹⁸ Ligon Duncan, “Silent in the Church: Why Can’t Women Preach?”

The ESV Study Bible refers to this final verse as “notoriously difficult to understand”. And the verse does, indeed, elicit several interpretations by various commentators and Bible scholars. Several commentaries are included in the Resource Section. However challenging, it is important to consider the benefits to the church of God’s kingdom order of male headship. *In the context of this chapter*, it is clear that the way we conduct ourselves has everything to do with the cause of the gospel.

FINAL THOUGHTS

As you think, in general, about these verses regarding men and women in the church, what is your reaction? What do you think and feel?

Now take the time to submit your reaction to the Holy Spirit. What is really going on in your own soul? Is it pride? Fear? Disappointment? Jealousy? How must you “*renew your mind*” (Romans 12) according to the Word?

Consider particularly Paul’s words relative to the “outer appearance” of women. Think specifically about your own motivation when you choose your wardrobe. What is it? Is it that your style would “*profess godliness*”?

How anxious are you to *learn quietly*? What prohibits your *quiet learning*?

How do you respond to the thought that as women in the church are *professing godliness* in their attitude and actions they are a witness to the lost world? In their *quietness* and *submission*?

Prayerfully and thoughtfully consider the text about the conduct of women in the church. These are not easy principles to apply, particularly given our culture. Submit your predisposition to the Holy Spirit and to the Word. Do not give up just because you don't agree. What does God say? How will you obey?

Finally, use the text as a means to pray for the men in your church. Are they *leading* in prayer? Are they *teaching* faithfully? Are they *exercising authority* as a means to care for the body? And if they are not, are you tempted to STEP UP and take over...? How can you help and not undermine?

Lesson Five...1 Timothy 3

Read 1 Timothy all the way through. Now read 1 Timothy 3. It is helpful to see chapter 1 as Paul's instruction to the Pastors & teachers of the church at Ephesus, and chapter 2 as his instruction to the people of the Ephesian church. Chapter 3 begins Paul's particular instruction to the ordained leaders.

1. It is important to consider the current text in the framework of what has already been studied. Rewrite your summary statement of 1 Timothy 1 from Lesson Two.

Write a summary statement of 1 Timothy 2.

2. Paul begins chapter 3 with a second "*trustworthy saying*". From the context, why does he need to qualify his instruction that way?

What is the *trustworthy saying*?

Using the Resource Section, define the Greek word for "overseer".

By writing to the overseers, Paul is affirming the *structure* of the church. This is thematic in his writing¹⁹. How is the idea of structure and order consistent in the context of chapters 1 and 2?

3. In verses 2-7, Paul speaks to the *character* of an overseer. What is the first qualifier?

Use a dictionary to define the word "reproach".

What does it mean to be "above reproach"?

With that in mind, consider the following verses to deepen your understanding of Paul's meaning.

1 Timothy 5:7

1 Timothy 6:13-14

¹⁹ See Acts 20:29, Philippians 1:1, 1 Timothy 4:14, 5:17-19 and Titus 1:5-7

Titus 1:6

4. Paul now expands on his exhortation by applying it in five areas. How does he call overseers to be “above reproach”?

Marriage	Personal Character	Family Life	Spiritual growth & maturity	Community

Thought: How does this definition of character in a leader compare to the current cultural definition of a leader?

5. Read verses 4-5 again. Look up the Greek word for “manage”.

Now read 1 Timothy 5:17. What is the Greek word for “rule”?

Given what you know of the context of these verses, what point is Paul making?

6. What qualifications does Paul list for the office of “deacon”, verses 8-10 and 12?

Marriage	Personal Character	Family Life	Spiritual growth & maturity	Community

Highlight those qualifications which are also listed in the previous verses, describing the office of “overseer”, or “elder”.

Thought: Why is that significant?

What blessing is associated with godly service as a deacon, verse 13?

Look up the Greek for “good” and “standing”. What do you find?

Personal: How does such a reputation merit your acknowledgement and appreciation? Are you typically grateful for these men?

7. Situated in the middle of these verses about deacons is a word to the leaders about women. The ESV reads: “*Their wives, likewise, must be dignified, not slanderers but sober-minded, faithful in all things.*” (verse 11). Commentators are not agreed with regard to this verse --- its meaning and/or application. We will consider three interpretations of the text.

What is the original Greek word translated: “*their wives*” and how is it defined?

- a. **FIRST POSSIBLE INTERPRETATION:** Paul is referring to women deacons, or “deaconesses”.

Read Acts 6:3-6. Who were the Apostles to select? For what purpose?

The Greek word “deacon” is diakonos. Diakonos and the related terms appear approximately 100 times in the New Testament. This word is often deployed in a general, nonspecific sense; however, a derivative of this word is used four times in these verses. It is generally understood that the *men* selected in Acts 6 were to fill the newly formed *office* of “deacon”.²⁰

Use the Reference section to find the Greek word for “*appoint*”, from Acts 6:3. What is its original meaning?

Returning to 1 Timothy, what do you recall from the context about women, men, and authority (via the original meaning of “appoint”) and how does that apply to the text in 1 Timothy 3?

The PCA speaks specifically to this issue of women being ordained as deacons. Read the selected texts from the Book of Church Order (BCO 17-2 and 9-7) found in your Resource Section. How does the BCO help you to understand this text?

²⁰ Virtually all reformed writers/commentaries support this position. Additionally, church history supports this interpretation. The early Church assigned the distribution of food to deacons and many other administrative affairs after the pattern established in this passage. In fact, the Church at Rome for many years limited the number to seven.

- b. **SECOND POSSIBLE INTERPRETATION:** Paul is literally referring to the *wives* of the deacons.²¹

What is the context of the subject matter for this text? What is this chapter about?

Does Paul address *specifically* the wives of Elders in this chapter?

If he does not, how does that instruct you with regard to *this* interpretation of the text as being written to “*wives of deacons*”?

If you interpret this text as Paul writing literally to the *wives of deacons*, how does that instruct your thinking about the qualification for deacons? For their wives?

- c. **THIRD POSSIBLE INTERPRETATION:** Paul is referring to a group of women who helped the deacons.

Two commentators provide support for this translation (from the GNB).

“Since there was no word in Greek for ‘deaconess’...it is likely that ‘women’ here would have been understood women who served the church in some capacity.” (Gordon Fee)

“These women are here viewed as rendering special service in the church, as do the elders and the deacons. They are a group by themselves, not just the wives of the deacons nor all the women who belong to the church.” (William Hendriksen)

Do you believe that this translation fits within the context of 1 Timothy 3?

Is it consistent with Paul’s teaching about men & women from 1 Timothy 2?

The bottom line is that the text is challenging, but there is weight to careful consideration of context, original language and even church history. Whatever Paul’s original intent, clearly he had some parameters for this group of women, just as he set out for Elders and Deacons.

6. What are the four qualifiers that Paul lists for this select group of women (whoever they were), 1 Timothy 3:11?

²¹ In his sermon on this text, Mike Ross states: “It must be noted that the word for ‘their’ is supplied by the ESV [and the NIV]; it is not in the Greek text.” (“Are There Women Deaconesses?”)

Which of these have been established as character traits for Elders and/or Deacons?

Thought: Why might Paul see a need for this kind of woman to help the Deacons in their work?

7. According to 1 Timothy 3:14, why is Paul writing to the church at Ephesus?

This verse is significant. Paul has written more than 1,000 words for this purpose. Recalling what you have learned, what were the issues that concerned Paul as he instructed Timothy in *how to behave in the household of God*?

Thought: It is tempting to dismiss this text with the idea that this letter was written to a very *young* church who had a new vision, new leaders and baby Christians in its membership. How significant is this writing for today's church?

8. What three descriptive expressions does Paul use for the church?

- a. Paul uses the Greek word *oikos* translated "household". Look up the meaning of the word *oikos*.

What do you learn about *oikos* from the following verses?

1 Peter 2:5

Hebrews 3:5,6

1 Peter 4:17

What are the implications of our being God's household or family? (Consider Galatians 3:26; 6:2 and Hebrews 10:2,3)

- b. How do the following texts instruct you about "the living God"?

Exodus 25:8 & 29:45-46 and Joshua 3:10

Psalm 114:2

What is Paul's meaning that we are to be a "*church of the living God*"?

- c. Use a dictionary to look up the word "buttress". What is its meaning?

How does this illustration of the church as the "*buttress of truth*" answer Paul's repeated concern regarding sound teaching?

What is the purpose of a building's *pillars*?

Consider this comment by John Stott:

"The purpose of pillars is not only to hold the roof firm, but to thrust it high so that it can be clearly seen even from a distance. The inhabitants of Ephesus had a vivid illustration of this in their temple of Diana or Artemis. Regarded as one of the seven wonders of the world, it boasted 100 Ionic columns, each over 18 metres [almost 59.5 feet] high, which together lifted its massive, shining, marble roof."²²

Thought: How is the church faring today? Is Stott's comment reflective of the church? Why or why not?

9. Paul summarizes the truth which the church must guard and proclaim, verse 16. It seems that Paul is quoting from an early hymn²³ that has three pairs of phrases. What six doctrinal truths about Christ does the hymn declare?

What is the significance of this weighty proclamation at the end of this particular section of Paul's letter? Why is it concluding the text regarding church leaders?

Final Thoughts:

Summarize your personal response to Paul's teaching with regard to ...

Elders & Deacons

²² Ibid, p. 105

²³ Ibid, p. 106

The women

The church

As you consider the characterization of leadership in the church, how seriously have you taken your responsibility to nominate Elders and Deacons? How has your understanding of the theology of church leadership grown as you've studied?

If Paul is referring to a "select group of women" in the context of his instruction to *leaders*, what is your response to the idea of women helping the deacons? Do the characteristics outlined by Paul describe you, or someone you know? How will you respond?

If you determined that Stott's comment (question 10 regarding the purpose of pillars) was *not* reflective of the church today, how will you pray? What might you *do* to change the church's witness to the world?

Lesson Six...1 Timothy 4

Read 1 Timothy all the way through. Now read 1 Timothy 4. Remember where we have been:

- chapter 1 is Paul's instruction to the Pastors & teachers of the church at Ephesus
- chapter 2 as his instruction to the people of the Ephesian church
- chapter 3 is Paul's particular instruction to the ordained leaders.

Chapter 4 will speak to those same three groups of people, to the Pastors/Teachers, the congregation and to the ordained leaders.

1. Recall the purpose of this epistle from 1 Timothy 3:14. Keep that in mind as you do this lesson.
2. What three means of corruption does Paul warn against, 1 Timothy 4:1-3? We will look at each of these separately.
3. How do the following verses add to your understanding of "deceitful spirits and teachings of demons"?
 - a. John 8:44
 - b. 2 Corinthians 4:4
 - c. 2 Timothy 2:24-26

The concept of spirits and demons is difficult for modern Americans to accept. According to Stott, "We tend not to take this fact sufficiently seriously".²⁴ But Paul says that people actually *depart from the faith* because of the influence of such evil supernatural influence. How has Paul given an "antidote" to such influence already in this epistle?

4. 1 Timothy 4:2 warns about "the insincerity of liars whose consciences are seared". Use the Reference section to find the Greek word for "insincerity". What is the Greek word and what is its meaning?

How does Jesus describe a "hypocrite"?

- a. Matthew 15:7, 8

²⁴ Page 111

b. Matthew 23:25-27

According to Paul, the root of the hypocrite's problem is a *seared conscience*. Paul uses the verb *kauteriazō*. It is the root of our word "cauterize" and occurs only here in the New Testament. What is the meaning of the word "cauterize"?

How does that apply to the hypocrite?

Respond to this comment by Douglas Milne:

"...through repeated and willful acts of sinning, conscience can become seared or deadened to such an extent that it virtually ceases to function."²⁵

5. The third warning about corrupt influencers identifies them by their false sense of morality. What two prohibitions do these false teachers adhere to, verse 3?

What does Paul say elsewhere about marriage and food?

- a. Romans 14:20
- b. 1 Corinthians 8:8
- c. 1 Corinthians 7:9, 36
- d. 1 Timothy 5:14

These --- marriage (sex) and food --- are basic appetites of the human body. They are natural, God-given appetites. Some teachers, from the beginning of church history, have argued that these are unclean appetites. What can you conclude about Paul's position on these "appetites"?

Returning to 1 Timothy 4, how does Paul refute this false morality? (verse 4)

²⁵ Quoted by Mike Ross, sermon "How to Choose a Good Church"

Challenge: Notice that Paul does not say that everything is good, but only those things “created by God” are good. Why is that nuance significant for the church today?

6. In contrast to those who bring corruption and deceit to their teaching, Paul defines a “good servant of Christ” in verse 6. What definition does Paul give?

“If you _____, you will be a good servant [literally good *minister*] of Christ Jesus.”

From the context, what are the “*these things*” that Paul refers to?

Thought: How does the church today define a “good minister of Christ Jesus”?

Now Paul speaks personally to Timothy as a Pastor/leader. In the context of this personal message, the Apostle gives two fundamental tests to separate *good servants* from those who would “depart from the faith” --- obviously urging Timothy to measure himself. The first test is theological. The second is ethical.

7. The theological test to detect false teachers is found in verse 6. Here Paul gives a description of *good servants* (ministers). What two areas of training will be evident in a good minister?

Notice the definitive article (“the”) that Paul puts before these two qualifiers. Where have you seen that before in the context?

Read verse 6 again and take out the word “being”. How does that change the meaning of Paul’s description of these ministers? What difference does that one word make?

How does Paul’s particular instruction in 1 Timothy 4:13-16 help you to understand his meaning in verse 6? What does it mean to be “*trained in the words of faith and of the good doctrine*”?

8. The ethical test to separate *good servants* from false teachers is found in verse 7. Two additional qualifiers for *good servants* are identified. What are they?

Lesson 3, question 6 addressed the topic of “*godliness*” as it described the life of the Church. Refresh your memory about the Greek word by referring to that question. Write the Greek word here.

Here, Paul uses the word to describe a *good servant* (minister/teacher) as one who literally “exercises himself unto godliness”.²⁶ Go back to the quote from Milne in question 4 of this lesson (about a seared conscience). How does this “*exercising unto godliness*” underscore the difference between the *good servant* and the false teacher?

What contrast does Paul make regarding *training* in verse 7? (Notice he uses the word “rather”.)

This contrast helps define what Paul means by *training ...for godliness*. If busy-ing oneself with “silly myths” is not training for godliness, what can you infer is training for godliness?

Comment on this by John Stott:

“In contrast to ‘godless myths’, Scripture is the most godly book that has even been written. It is a book by God about God. It might even be termed the autobiography of God, since in it he talks to us about himself. Consequently, we cannot become familiar with this godly book without becoming godly ourselves.”²⁷

Paul emphasizes this significant distinction for identifying false teachers by a third “trustworthy saying”. Why does the *good servant* exercise himself unto godliness?

Leaders: In the interest of time and focus, we are not exploring the theology around “*the Savior of all people, especially of those who believe*”. It may be helpful for you to know that the word “*especially*” is the Greek word “*malistra*” and it means “to be precise” or “in other words”. So here Paul says literally: “*the Savior of all people, precisely those who believe*”.

9. Summarize what you have learned about those who “*depart from the faith*”.

²⁶ Stott, p. 117

²⁷ *ibid*

The last section of this chapter continues Paul's exhortation to Pastor Timothy. Here he gets more specific in his instruction.

10. Read verses 11 to 16. Paul tells Timothy not to worry about his age but rather his godliness. What five things is Timothy to focus on (verse 12)?

Look up the **Greek word for "despise"** from verse 12. What does it mean?

Thought: How do young people typically respond to being "despised"?

In response to public opinion about his youthfulness, Paul urges Timothy to let his life silence their ridicule.²⁸ How is his admonition consistent with the principle found in 1 Peter 2:12?

Challenge: How might the command in verse 12 be significant as it follows verse 11?

11. Paul shifts from the Pastor's personal character to his ministry. What three priorities is he to focus on (verse 13)?

What verb does he use in verse 13? "*Until I come, _____ yourself ...*"

Thought: How descriptive is this text of Pastors in this evangelical culture? What are they tempted to be "devoted to"?

Paul wanted Timothy to be reminded and reassured of his calling. How does Ephesians 4:7-8, 11-12 help you to understand Paul's admonition to "*not neglect the gift you have*"?

How was the gift confirmed, according to Paul? (1 Timothy 4:14)

Go back to 1 Timothy 1:18, 19. How has Paul already alluded to Timothy's confirmation & ordination as a Pastor?

²⁸ Mike Ross, "Devotion to the Right Things"

12. Finally, Paul uses fervent language to encourage the young Pastor in his personal life and ministry. What four phrases does he use to communicate the urgency of his training?

Verse 15:

_____ *these things*

_____ *in them*

Verse 16:

_____ *on yourself*

_____ *this*

How is Paul's encouragement "*that all may see your progress*" a strategy for the church's ability to discern those leaders who *will depart from the faith* and those who are *good servants*?

At the very end, what is the Pastor's ultimate concern? (verse 16b)

Final Thoughts

As you consider the three "means of corruption" exercised by those who will depart from the faith:

Do you take the reality of deceitful spirits and demons "sufficiently seriously" (Stott)? What have you learned?

How serious is the threat of a "seared conscience" in your own life? In what area must you be on your guard?

Do you adhere to a false sense of morality? If not regarding sex and food, then what? What external behaviors are you tempted to set up as your own measure of holiness?

As you think about the importance of a "*good servant/minister*" being trained, how patient are you with your leaders who have not yet arrived at perfection, but are *being* trained? How will you pray for them?

Re-read the quote from Stott, question 8. While it is applied particularly to Pastors/leaders in this text, how does that quote challenge *you personally*?

If you are “young”, compare your response to being “despised” with Paul’s command to Timothy to “*set the believers and example*”. (see question 10)

If you are “old” (er), how are you challenged in your attitude toward young leaders as you study this text?

How is the fervent language of Paul’s last remarks to Timothy instructive for you?

Finally, recall the *purpose* of this letter. What have you learned about “behaving in the household of God” from your study this week?