

Introduction To 1 Timothy

Preface

It is not suggested to walk through 1 Timothy with newer believers, since there are other topics that should be discussed first. Walk through 1 Timothy with believers that are mature in the faith.

The Background Behind 1 Timothy

1 Timothy is a letter... Therefore, we should read it as one. Let's say that your friend Greg gets an email from school saying that he is on probation. Does that apply to you? No! You're reading his mail. Though it isn't written to you, there are conclusions that you can draw from the email, such as "If you do poorly in school then you might get kicked out." Biblical letters should be read in the same manner. The letters are not addressed to you, but you can draw conclusions from them to apply to your life.

1 Timothy was written by Paul to Timothy. Paul had met Timothy on one of his missionary journeys, and Timothy became one of Paul's very close disciples, which is why Paul refers to Timothy as his "son in the faith." This letter was written about 30 years after Jesus's death and resurrection. At this point, Christianity began growing more structured. You will read in 1 Timothy that, during this time, there are different positions of leadership in the church, such as bishops and deacons, and there are even outreaches specifically for widows. You can also start to see the emergence of creeds, which is a formal statement of doctrinal, non-negotiable beliefs. At this point in time, you also see that some church leaders receive a salary. All of this to say: Christianity is becoming structured. This is good! However, Paul writes this letter to instruct Timothy on what church structure should look like because the health of the church structure and leaders will determine the health of the members. Some of Paul's advice on church leadership is universal, while some of it is specific to the churches that Timothy is ministering to.

For more background information, feel free to read William Barclay's [Intro to 1 Timothy Commentary](#).

Exercise:

- Watch the Bible Project video on the [Book of 1 Timothy Summary](#).

Do For Next Week

- Read through all of 1 Timothy in one sitting. You don't have to "study it," just read through it.