

1 TIMOTHY

Lesson 1 w/Answers

Introduction

This lesson begins a study looking at the first of two personal letters that Paul sent Timothy in Ephesus. Both of Paul's letters to Timothy are to be distinguished from the letter that Paul wrote to the church at Ephesus titled "Ephesians," which is addressed separately.

Before we begin our study, we need to have a better understanding of the context, the setting, of the church at Ephesus; and—just as importantly—the man Timothy to whom Paul is writing. We will see that Timothy was much more than simply an evangelist in the city of Ephesus. We will find, for example, that he was not the pastor or the bishop of the church at Ephesus, but rather he was serving as Paul's on location representative, just as he had been in Corinth, Thessalonica, and Philippi.

It may surprise you to discover how much information the Bible contains about Timothy, his parents and grandmother, his upbringing, his relationship with Paul, and his work as an evangelical missionary all before becoming Paul's representative at Ephesus. It may also surprise you to discover how much we know about the city of Ephesus, its people, its false religions and pagan practices, and the number of well-known followers of Christ who worked there, in addition to Timothy and Paul, in establishing the church.

Ephesus became the center of false teaching within the new church, as predicted by Paul in Acts 20:17-18, 26-31. This would come as no surprise to anyone who knew that religious life in Ephesus was heavily focused on the black arts, magic, divination, demon control and the like; as highlighted in Acts 19:13-17.

I have been blessed to have visited the ruins at Ephesus; as they are some of the best in the region, in terms of showing you what the city must have looked like during Paul's visits and Timothy's ministry. Ephesus was originally a seaport; and it was well-known for its Temple of Artemis (one of the seven wonders of the ancient world), the iconic Library of Celsus (built well after Paul and Timothy's time), and a theater capable of holding 25,000 spectators. It was here in the synagogue and marketplace of Ephesus that Paul preached and witnessed daily. Traveling with Priscilla and Aquila, Paul was a bi-vocational evangelist—working as a tent-maker in order to support himself, and to keep critics from saying he was profiting from spreading the Gospel. (See Acts 18:1-2, for example.)

It is also believed that the Apostle John wrote his Gospel from Ephesus and remained there caring for Mary, Jesus' mother. When the Romans attempt at executing John by boiling him in oil failed, he was sent to the island of Patmos, just off the coast of Ephesus. It was on the Island of Patmos that many believe that he wrote the book of Revelation. Today, that shoreline has long since eroded due to heavy silting over time, and a visit to Ephesus now finds its location to be inland.

So, to get us started, let's see what we can learn from the Bible about Timothy, his family, and the church at Ephesus. Look up the following verses and jot down what you learn:

1. Acts 14:6-21

- a. **ANSWER:** Paul and Barnabas preached at Lystra and Derbe on their first missionary trip. They encountered and experienced many things there, and it would have been during this trip that Lois, Eunice and Timothy became believers.

2. Acts 16:1, 3
 - a. ANSWER: Timothy lived in Lystra and was the son of a mixed marriage, Jew and Greek. Since he was uncircumcised at the time of his conversion, Paul circumcised him.
3. 2 Timothy 1:5
 - a. ANSWER: His mother's name was Lois, and his grandmother's name was Eunice. Both were Jews, and both believed in the Gospel. Paul was aware of their "sincere faith" and believed that Timothy also possessed such faith. As Jews, they knew scripture. Timothy's grandmother had been teaching the "Bible" (i.e., Old Testament, or the Hebrew Bible) to him from childhood.
4. 1 Timothy 1:18, and 4:14; 2 Timothy 1:6 and 4:5
 - a. ANSWER: Paul admonishes Timothy to fight the battle well, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of his ministry, and not to neglect the gift he was given when Elders laid hands on him.
5. Acts 13:2
 - a. ANSWER: Barnabas and Saul were set apart for the work which the Holy Spirit called them to do.
6. Acts 16:12 and Philippians 2:19-22
 - a. ANSWER: Timothy traveled with Paul and his team to work in Philippi.
7. Philippians 1:1, 2:19; Colossians 1:1; and Philemon verse 1
 - a. ANSWER: Timothy worked with Paul at the church in Philippi, Colossae and Ephesus.
8. Acts 17:14
 - a. ANSWER: Timothy worked with Paul's team at Berea.
9. 1 Thessalonians 1:1, 3:2; and 2 Thessalonians 1:1
 - a. ANSWER: Timothy worked with Paul and Silas and the church in Thessalonica.
10. Acts 19:22
 - a. ANSWER: Timothy and Erastus worked for Paul at Macedonia.
11. 1 Corinthians 16:10-11; and 2 Corinthians 1:1
 - a. ANSWER: Timothy worked with the church at Corinth at Paul's direction.
12. Romans 16:21
 - a. ANSWER: When addressing the Romans, Paul mentions Timothy who was working with him in Rome.
13. 1 Timothy 5:23
 - a. ANSWER: We find that Timothy was not in excellent health during this period, and Paul provides him some advice regarding his diet.
14. 2 Timothy 4:9-13, 21
 - a. ANSWER: Paul requests that Timothy come to Rome, as many followers had deserted Paul there; only Luke had remained with him.
15. Hebrews 13:23
 - a. ANSWER: We observe that Timothy had been imprisoned—possibly in Rome, but we don't know for sure.
16. 1 Timothy 3:16
 - a. ANSWER: This passage recounts the Gospel Message, as Paul taught it to Timothy and the church at Ephesus.
17. 1 Timothy 1:3-4
 - a. ANSWER: Here, Paul urges Timothy to command the Ephesian believers to stop teaching false doctrine, and to stop devoting themselves to the myths and endless genealogies that were part of their previous belief system.
18. Revelation 2:1-7
 - a. ANSWER: The false teachings of the Nicolaitans is what Jesus had against the church at Ephesus. However, in John's recounting, Jesus also had good things to say about the church at Ephesus, as he was aware of their hard work and perseverance. He also noted, that they hated wicked people, and that they were good at discovering false apostles. He also stated, "You have persevered and have endured hardships for my name and have not grown weary."
19. 1 Timothy 4:12
 - a. ANSWER: Paul instructs Timothy to not let anyone look down on him because he was young; but he should set an example in love, faith and purity. From this, we can deduce that Timothy was young, and that people criticized him because of his age and lack of experience.

20. Acts 20:36-38

- a. **ANSWER:** We observe that Timothy was among those who wept over Paul's departure, realizing that he would never see Paul again.
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As we can see from this brief introduction, Timothy was a young and enthusiastic evangelist who became very close to Paul, who was his mentor and "father" in the faith. Having bi-racial parents (again, his father was a Gentile and his mother a Jew), Timothy could speak from personal experience to everyone, whether Jew or Gentile.

Timothy was also fortunate to have both his mother and his grandmother as role-model believers. Paul also recognized their contributions to Timothy's spiritual growth.

Finally, it is evident that Timothy was far more than a servant in Ephesus. He worked with Paul at a large number of early churches, Philippi, Colossae, Berea, Thessalonica, Macedonia, Corinth, and Rome—as well as at the church at Ephesus. Accordingly, Paul would eventually assign him to watch over the church at Ephesus; and this role is explored more closely in our study of the Ephesian church and Paul's letter to the Ephesians.

I pray this study will open your eyes not only to the work that Paul and Timothy did across a large number of churches, but also to the related aspects that we can learn and apply today to our walk with Christ; and how He would have us help with sending out the Gospel message to our friends, neighbors, and family.

In Christ,

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