

# Paul's 1st Letter to Timothy



## Lesson 1-A Divine Charge for Faithful Ministry

**Focus:** Timothy 1:1-20

- **Introduction:** *This letter of 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy was written from Macedonia by Paul the Apostle to Timothy, a young minister and “son in the faith” to Paul. It was perhaps written from Philippi, one of the principle cities there in Macedonia. Timothy was serving in a pastoral or overseer capacity at the church in Ephesus at this time, where Paul had left him (see 1 Tim. 1:3). The name “Timothy” means “Honoring God” or “Honored by God” and it was expected that Timothy was going to hold to such a trust, and do his service to God faithfully!*

*The letters to Timothy, and also Titus (known as Paul's Pastoral Epistles or letters) were the last ones to have been written in his life. **It is believed that the date of writing for this letter would have been about A.D. 62 or 63**, while Paul was in Macedonia. Previously, Paul had been imprisoned in Rome (as Acts 28 shows us), but it is believed that he was able to be released, and to have continued his missionary labors. This would have been known as a part of his fourth and final missionary journey which is dated from A.D. 59 to 62. Paul had anticipated in his letter to the Philippian church, earlier, that he was going to be released from prison (Philippians 1:19, 25,26; 2:24). It is believed that Paul in fact released from that imprisonment, and then continued with these final labors. It is also believed that Paul was able to continue his labors for a time after this, and even to reach Spain from AD 64 to 66, as early church tradition does hold that he actually reached that place. Clement of Rome said the Paul “reached the limits of the West” (1 Clement 5:7). By the time we get down to the writing of 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy, then we can see that Paul was nearing the edges of his death and expected to be put to death soon. Tradition tells us that Paul was beheaded just west of Rome, on the Ostian Way.*

*The authorship of this letter and the other Pastoral Epistles by Paul has been attacked tenaciously by some critics since the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, but both the internal and external evidence state to us very strongly that Paul was indeed the author of this letter and the others! It seems that Satan especially hates the instruction of these books and therefore desires to attack them if possible. All the Postapostolic church fathers attest to the fact that these letters were indeed written by Paul, the aged Apostle! These epistles are some of the only letters that Paul wrote specifically to individuals, and not to churches or regions. However, there instruction is of great importance and value to the whole church in all ages!*

- **Greetings to Timothy and his exhortation to teach God's pure truth faithfully (v.1-5)**

- *Paul greeted Timothy warmly and clearly. Paul had been called by God to be an apostle and was doing his work faithfully! Now he was instructing Timothy how to do his own assigned tasks in the gospel faithfully.*
- *(v.3-5) False teachers teach false or worthless doctrines [teachings]. Their teachings lead people in the wrong way. But true teaching should lead people to have a true and proper faith—a faith which produces love, and purity of heart; it leads to righteousness in the life and loving worship towards God and service for the sake of fallen mankind. Timothy was to teach this pure and true faith, and to ensure that others were doing the same as well! (Not being turned aside from the pure gospel message, unto other things, as has happened with many who are in the wrong way).*
- **Using the law rightly and recognizing the wretched effect of false teachers and their teachings (v.6-11)**
  - The Law needs to be used rightly. That Law is good and there is nothing wrong with it! Paul says this very clearly! See also Romans 7:7,12. The law is great in its proper place! It is a mirror to show us our sins and our guilt, but this should lead us to Jesus Christ who alone can remove that guilt and save us from the guilt and sin. (See Romans 8:1,2; 5:1). Jesus is to give us our salvation. The law cannot save, but it can help us in the process to realize where we have erred and where we need more of Jesus Christ to deliver us from our sins! (John 8:32-36, 11).
  - Sinful people must see the guilt of their sin, by looking into this righteous and holy law. It has power to help convert sinners (Psalms 19:7). And it leads us ourselves closer to God (Psalm 119:9-16). We should meditate in this blessed law of God!
- **The Mercy of God and His saving power exemplified! (v.12-17)**
  - Paul was saved from his wicked life of sin (ignorant though it was), by the mercy and power of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ! God made his life an example and hope to us. If the Lord could save Paul, then God can and is very willing to save us, even terrible sinners as we have or may have been!
- **Stability in the faith by following the prophecies of God's word (v.18-20)**
  - *For example, take a look at what Jesus shared in Luke 24:27-30, 44. Also Paul shared this in 1 Corinthians 15:3-6 and Peter shared the same ideas in 2 Peter 1:19-21. We are to have a sure faith in God and it is the backbone of the "sure word of prophecy" that helps us to place our faith solidly in God and in His plans for the future. These things, when followed, taught, and lived by will bring great strength, help, and stability to our life and faith (See Revelation 1:1-3). God has designed it as such (even see Amos 3:7). See also John 13:19, "...that when it comes to pass, you may believe...". The examples here given by Paul of those who've departed from the faith show us the inevitable results of when some choose to give up, doubt, or not heed the prophecies of God's word!*
  - *It was even by such prophecies as those of Isaiah 53 that the Ethiopian Eunuch came to believe in God (Acts 8:32-37). We are to "war a faithful warfare" by them so that souls may truly be won to God, to trust, love, and serve Him eternally!*

*Question (s) for the Heart:*

**Will you put your trust in this great Savior and Lord and seek to follow His ways? \_\_\_\_\_**