

The First Letter to Timothy

*. Who wrote the letter?

Paul is stated as the author in the opening words of the letter.

*. When was it written?

This letter appears to have been written about 63-64 AD. Paul had previously been imprisoned in Rome during which time he wrote the Prison Letters (Col., Phm., Eph., Phil). After serving his time, he was released from house arrest and allowed to visit the churches which he had previously founded. During this time after his Roman imprisonment, Paul set down to write Timothy in this first letter.

*. Why was it written?

Paul had founded the church in Ephesus on his second missionary journey – and had developed a good, strong relationship with the church. He sought to encourage the church several times after it was founded both by visiting the leaders and by writing a letter to them. Apparently, Paul understood the importance of this church in this most challenging city.

After his release from Prison, he visited the church along with Timothy. The church was in a time of confusion and in need of leadership so Paul commissioned Timothy to stay behind and sort through some of the issues. In the meantime, Timothy had grown tired, and perhaps discouraged, with the work in Ephesus.

Paul wrote this letter to encourage him and to provide certain guidelines for church organization and leaders. This letter is a very personal letter between Paul and Timothy, especially when one realizes that Paul had invested greatly in the life and ministry of Timothy.

*. What is the main topic?

God desires for his leaders to be committed to the task of obedience to God and to the task of ministry to others.

1 Tim. 1:1-7: ¹ Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus according to the commandment of God our Savior, and of Christ Jesus, *who is* our hope, ² To Timothy, *my* true child in *the* faith: Grace, mercy *and* peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord. ³ As I urged you upon my departure for Macedonia, remain on at Ephesus so that you may instruct certain men not to teach strange doctrines, ⁴ nor to pay attention to myths and endless genealogies, which give rise to mere speculation rather than *furthering* the administration of God which is by faith. ⁵ But the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith. ⁶ For some men, straying from these things, have turned aside to fruitless discussion, ⁷ wanting to be teachers of the Law, even though they do not understand either what they are saying or the matters about which they make confident assertions.

1 Tim. 1:12-17: ¹² I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because He considered me faithful, putting me into service, ¹³ even though I was formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor. Yet I was shown mercy because I acted ignorantly in unbelief; ¹⁴ and the grace of our Lord was more than abundant, with the faith and love which are *found* in Christ Jesus. ¹⁵ It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost *of all*. ¹⁶ Yet for this reason I found mercy, so that in me as the foremost, Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life. ¹⁷ Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, *be* honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

1 Tim. 2:1-4: ¹ First of all, then, I urge that entreaties *and* prayers, petitions *and* thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, ² for kings and all who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity. ³ This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, ⁴ who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

1 Tim. 4:6-16: ⁶ In pointing out these things to the brethren, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, *constantly* nourished on the words of the faith and of the sound doctrine which you have been following. ⁷ But have nothing to do with worldly fables fit only for old women. On the other hand, discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness; ⁸ for bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and *also* for the *life* to come. ⁹ It is a trustworthy statement deserving full acceptance. ¹⁰ For it is for this we labor and strive, because we have fixed our hope on the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of believers. ¹¹ Prescribe and teach these things. ¹² Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but *rather* in speech, conduct, love, faith *and* purity, show yourself an example of those who believe. ¹³ Until I come, give attention to the *public* reading *of Scripture*, to exhortation and teaching. ¹⁴ Do not neglect the spiritual gift within you, which was bestowed on you through prophetic utterance with the laying on of hands by the presbytery. ¹⁵ Take pains with these things; be *absorbed* in them, so that your progress will be evident to all. ¹⁶ Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; persevere in these things, for as you do this you will ensure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you.