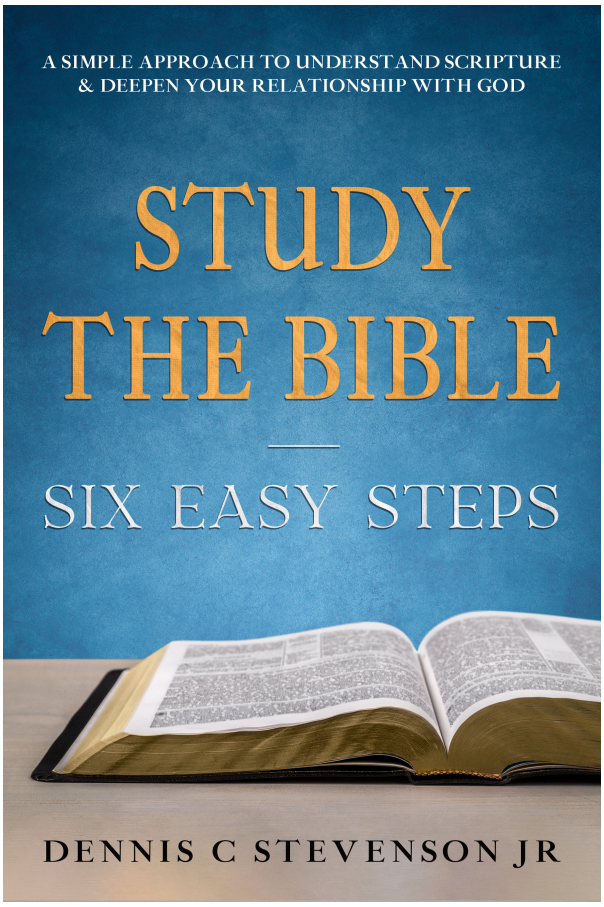

FIRST TIMOTHYA BIBLE STUDY

INTRODUCTION

Study the book of 1 Timothy in the New Testament of the Bible. A study over eight weeks focusing on one chapter per week. This study follows the approach used in Study the Bible – Six Easy Steps.

Dennis C Stevenson Jr

1 Timothy - A Bible Study

How to approach studying the Bible

1. Read the book: Establish author, audience and context
2. Read the chapter: Identify the message being communicated
3. Identify questions that you want to have answered: Use resources to find answers.
4. Read the chapter: Identify the message being communicated
5. Map the audience & message: Apply the message to your life
6. Compare your conclusions with others: Trace back any differences to the text

Session 1: Setting the Context

Objective: Become familiar with the contents of the book of 1 Timothy and understand what it is trying to communicate

Step One: Read the book and identify the author and everything they reveal about themselves.

In 1:1, the author identifies himself as the apostle Paul. Additionally we learn:

- When Paul was going to Macedonia, he urged Timothy to remain at Ephesus
- Paul has been entrusted with the gospel of the glory of the blessed God.
- Paul is thankful that Jesus judged him faithful. Jesus also gives him strength.
- Paul's appointment to service (as an Apostle) is from Jesus
- However, Paul self identifies as the foremost opponent of Jesus before he was saved.
- Paul's salvation was through the mercy of God, because before he did not know God.
- Paul's radical transformation was to highlight the mercy of God
- Paul handed two previous fellow workers over to Satan because they abandoned their faith
- Paul urges prayer for the civil authorities
- Paul does not permit women to exercise authority over man – citing Adam and Eve as the pattern
- Paul hopes to come to visit Timothy soon, but is writing in case that doesn't happen

Step Two: Read the book and identify the audience and everything revealed about them.
Map the audience – how close or far are they to us today?

In 1:2, Paul identifies his audience as Timothy. Additionally we learn:

- Paul sees Timothy as his spiritual child in the faith
- Timothy at one point remained behind at Ephesus, and had the charge to correct the doctrine of some people there.
- Timothy was the recipient of some prophesies made about him, seemingly about his ministry.
- Timothy is supposed to teach the brothers where he is and in doing so will be a good servant of Jesus.
- Timothy has been trained in faith and doctrine, which he has followed.

- Timothy has a gift, which was given by a prophecy about him at the time when the council of elders laid hands on him.
- Timothy seems to suffer from poor health and an upset stomach
- Timothy is called a man of God
- Timothy has made a public profession of faith in front of a lot of people.
- A deposit (of something) was entrusted to Timothy. Probably faith or ministry.

Step Three: Read the book and highlight or mark key words that jump out of the text at you.
These could be key connecting words discussed in chapter 4, or words that seem important to the book (e.g. repetition, topical).

There seems to be a normal distribution of *and*, *but*. Not a lot of *therefore* or *because*. The word *for* is used frequently – implying some kind of reasoning or explanation.

The word **charge** seems to be important. It occurs 6 times. There are also some synonym like words (urge, desire) that seem to play along the same idea.

Paul points to 3 trustworthy sayings throughout the book.

The first 2 chapters seem to be explanatory with no imperative statements.

Chapter 3 begins the imperative section, although Paul seems to explain a lot of the reasoning behind these statements.

Step Four: Read the book and summarize each paragraph with 1-3 key words from the paragraph.

My text has the following paragraphs:

- 1:1 Paul an apostle
- 1:2 Timothy my child
- 1:3 Teach true doctrine
- 1:8 The law is for lawless
- 1:12 I am the foremost
- 1:18 Wage the good warfare
- 2:1 I urge prayers for leaders
- 2:8 Pray without anger or quarreling
- 3:1 Overseers must be above reproach
- 3:8 Deacons must be dignified
- 3:14 I hope to come soon
- 4:1 Some will depart the faith
- 4:6 Train yourself for godliness
- 4:11 Be an example

- 5:1 Relating to people
- 5:3 Honor widows
- 5:9 Widows defined
- 5:17 Honor for elders
- 6:1 Bondservant behavior
- 6:2b Teach the sound words of Jesus
- 6:11 Pursue righteousness
- 6:17 Rich: set hopes on God
- 6:20 Guard the deposit

Step Five: Make a list of questions that you have based on what you've read. Use your resources to look up information to answer the questions.

When was this book written?

- [Halley's Bible Handbook] Most likely in AD 61/62 – between Paul's 1st and 2nd imprisonment in Rome. When Paul last spoke to the Ephesian leaders at the end of his 2nd missionary journey (in Miletus, not Ephesus), he said he would not come back. However, after the extended imprisonment in Rome, he may have come back, with Timothy, but had to leave for Macedonia before fully giving Timothy instructions for what to do while he was gone.

What is the relationship between Paul and Timothy?

- [Unger's Bible Dictionary] Paul and Timothy were close professionally and personally. Timothy was converted as a result of Paul's visit to Philippi on his first missionary journey. Timothy joined him some years later as Paul visited again on the second missionary journey. Timothy himself is listed with Paul in the salutations of numerous epistles. As Paul approached his execution, he specifically expressed a desire to see Timothy again.

What was the prophesy made about Timothy?

- [ESV Study Bible] We do not have any specific details regarding what the prophecy said. However it is not unreasonable to think that at some point Timothy was confirmed by the elders in a church setting (laying on of hands). At that time it is possible that someone could have exercised the gift of prophecy (speaking words revealed directly from God) confirming Timothy's appointment to ministry. This is all speculation, but seems to fit the description Paul provides.

What is an "overseer" and a "deacon"?

- [Word Study New Testament] Overseer: the Greek word is *episkope* which is also translated as elder or bishop. It refers to a pastoral leader of the church. Typically the overseer had oversight for a local gathering, and was responsible for the care and teaching which took place in that gathering.

- [Unger's' Bible Dictionary] Deacon: This is an appointed position originating in the early church with the responsibility of serving. In Acts 6, when the equitable food distribution to widows became an issue, deacons were appointed specifically to administer this church function under the authority and direction of the Apostles.

Step Six: Write out in one sentence or a short paragraph what you <u>currently</u> understand the book of 1 Timothy to be about.

This should be a concise version of all the information captured above:

- Author
- Audience
- Setting
- Reason for writing
- Key points made

The Apostle Paul is writing to his protégé Timothy, charging him to pursue purity in the church in Ephesus and to resist those who would preach another gospel message in the church. Paul addresses the way that the gospel should be seen through the lives in the church:

- In the teaching of the church – uniformity to the true gospel
- In elders, lives that reflect the gospel
- In deacons, lives that are dignified
- In the ways that Timothy addresses and teaches the people in the church
- In the way that widows are cared for
- In the way that slaves relate to their masters
- In the way that the rich relate to those in the church.