Session 8: Putting It All Together

Objective: Internalize and synthesize the contents of the book of 1 Timothy and understand what it is trying to communicate

Step 1: Look back over the book of 1 Timothy and identify any major sections that you now see in the book.

1. Chapter 1: Dealing with teachers of deviant doctrine
2. Chapter 2: The goal is to live godly peaceful lives
3. Chapter 3: Criteria for leaders
4. Chapter 4: A word from the Spirit – false teachers will come
5. Chapter 5: Live together as family
6. Chapter 6: Beware of false teachers and keep yourself pure

Paul seems to have 3 topics, and he cycles through them twice.

- False teachers who teach bad doctrine and distort godliness
- Living peaceful lives that promote a quiet godliness
- How to approach leaders and measure their performance

Re-reading the chapter two words really jumped out at me: Doctrine and Godliness. These seem to be key topics throughout the book.

Another common theme is the idea of being respectable in the eyes of the people around the church.

Step 2: Look back through your overview of the book as well as each of the deep dives into the individual chapters and summarize what the book has to say.

The entire book contains 35 specific commands which demand obedience. They are split between commands for what to do in the church (17) and what Timothy should do in his own life (18).

This sets up the dual focus of proper living (doctrine) in the church and Timothy living a proper (godly) life.

Throughout the book Paul gives reasons why the things his is teaching are important:

- 1:5 “The aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.”
- 1:19b, 20 “By rejecting this, some have made shipwreck of their faith… whom I have handed over to Satan.”
- 2:2b “that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way.”
- 3:7 “Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders,”
- 5:7 “Command these things as well, so that they (families of widows) may be without reproach.”

- 5:14b “and give the adversary no occasion for slander”
- 6:1b “so that the name of God and the teaching may not be reviled.”

Paul’s goal is for a church that lives together harmoniously, united by good doctrine, so that individuals can pursue godliness.

Paul opposes people who are introducing bad doctrine, causing friction and conflict in the church, living lives that are self-centered and indulgent.

Timothy’s charge is to clean up the latter which is occurring in the church and promote the former which is the way that the church is intended to function.

Step 3: Identify a single verse which provides the key to the book. This could be the key truth or could be a verse that provides a summary of the book.

I see two possibilities that could fit this bill – and they both seem to align to the same idea:

- 1:5 “The aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.”
- 3:14b-5 “I am writing these things to you so that if I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God.”

Of the 2, I would pick 3:14b-15 as the Key Verse – specifically because it explicitly says “this is why I am writing to you”.

Interestingly, 1:5 is at the beginning of the first cycle through the three topics and 3:14b-15 is at the beginning of the second cycle through the three topics.

Step 4: Write a single sentence that summarizes the theme or purpose of the book.

Pursue harmonious, loving relationships, grounded in godliness and vigilance while eliminating bad doctrine that causes dissention and ungodly living.

Step 5: Considering the way you’ve mapped the audience, what’s one application that comes out of the book of 1 Timothy?

Pursue godliness.