

THE BIG READ (15)

Jesus in 1 Timothy

A. Introduction

1. Every book of the Bible has one dominating theme – Jesus is the Christ.

“Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. He told them, ‘This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.’”
(Luke 24:45-47)

Jesus is the Christ who will suffer and die.

Jesus is the Christ who will rise from the dead on the third day.

Jesus is the Christ who will forgive the sins of all who repent.

Jesus is the Christ who will be preached to the nations.

2. After the four Gospels that tell the story of Jesus’ earthly life, and Acts which traces the spread of the gospel from Jerusalem to Rome, the remainder of the New Testament is made up of epistles or letters that were sent to individual Christians or churches.

These letters address specific situations in the lives of believers and through them we are taught how to live as God’s people.

3. 1 Timothy is the first of three letters that the apostle Paul wrote which are known as the Pastoral Epistles.

The Pastoral Epistles (1 & 2 Timothy, Titus) are the only letters addressed to individuals in positions of church leadership.

B. Why did Paul write this letter?

1. Timothy was converted during Paul’s first missionary journey when he visited to Lystra.

This is why Paul often refers to Timothy as his ‘son’.

“To Timothy my true son in the faith.” (1 Timothy 1:2)

“Timothy, my son.” (Timothy 1:18)

2. When Paul returned to Lystra, on his next missionary journey, he found that Timothy had made such progress in the faith that he took him with him as his apprentice, and later co-worker.

“He came to Derbe and then to Lystra, where a disciple named Timothy lived, whose mother was a Jewess and a believer, but whose father was a Greek. The brothers at Lystra and Iconium spoke well of him. Paul wanted to take him along on the journey, so he circumcised him because of the Jews who lived in that area, for they all knew that his father was a Greek.” (Acts 16:1-3)

3. Fast forward the years to AD62.

Paul had been released from his two-year imprisonment in Rome, and has travelled to Macedonia from where he writes this letter.

Timothy however had been left behind in Ephesus to pastor the church.

This was a tricky assignment.

Chapters 3-4: By appointing appropriate leaders.

Chapters 5:1-6:10: By teaching the church how to be godly.

Chapter 6:11-21: By setting an example to follow.

3. In chapters 1 and 2, Paul instructs Timothy to fight for the gospel.

"Timothy, my son, I give you this instruction in keeping with the prophecies once made about you, so that by following them you may fight the good fight, holding on to faith and a good conscience." (1 Timothy 1:18-19)

By silencing the false teachers.

"As I urged you when I went into Macedonia, stay there in Ephesus so that you may command certain men not to teach false doctrines any longer." (1 Timothy 1:3)

By leading the church to pray for all people, especially those in authority.

"I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone – for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness." (1 Timothy 2:1-2)

By teaching the church how to display the gospel.

"I want men everywhere to lift up holy hands in prayer, without anger or disputing." (1 Timothy 2:8)

"I also want women to dress modestly, with decency and propriety, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or expensive clothes, but with good deeds, appropriate for women who profess to worship God." (1 Timothy 2:9-10)

"I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she must be silent." (1 Timothy 2:12)

4. In chapters 3 and 4, Paul instructs Timothy to appoint appropriate leaders – elders who are supported by deacons.

Good leadership is vital if the church is going to be focussed on its mission of making disciples.

Paul gives Timothy the qualifications for elders and deacons.

"Now the overseer must be above reproach..." (1 Timothy 3:2)

"Deacons, likewise, are to be men worthy of respect..." (1 Timothy 3:8)

5. In chapters 5:1 to 6:10, Paul instructs Timothy to teach the church how to be godly.

Particularly focusing on areas of life where the church's witness could be damaged.

Their relationships with one another.

"Do not rebuke an older man harshly, but exhort him as if he were your father. Treat younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, and younger woman as sisters, with absolute purity." (1 Timothy 5:1-2)

Their relationships to those in need.

"Give proper recognition to those widows who are really in need." (1 Timothy 5:3)

Their relationship with the elders.

“The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honour, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching.” (1 Timothy 5:17)

Their attitude to work.

“All who are under the yoke of slavery should consider their masters worthy of full respect, so that God’s name and our teaching may not be slandered.” (1 Timothy 6:1)

Their attitude to money.

“For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.” (1 Timothy 6:10)

6. In chapter 6:10-21, Paul finishes off the letter by instructing Timothy to set an example for the church to follow.

“But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses.” (1 Timothy 6:11-12)

“Don’t let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity.” (1 Timothy 4:12)

D. Jesus in 1 Timothy

1. Jesus is the only Saviour.

“Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners – of whom I am the worst. But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his unlimited patience as an example for those who would believe on him and receive eternal life.” (1 Timothy 1:15-16)

If He can save Paul – He can save anyone!

2. Jesus is the only Mediator.

“For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men – the testimony given in its proper time.” (1 Timothy 2:5-6)

The perfect mediator needs to be able to represent both God and man perfectly.

Only Jesus who is fully God and fully man can do this.

3. Jesus is the only King.

“And for this purpose I was appointed a herald and an apostle – I am telling the truth, I am not lying – and a teacher of the true faith to the Gentiles.” (1 Timothy 2:7)

He is King of the church, ruling His people through His Word.

The church is ruled by King Jesus, whose voice is heard, through the faithful preaching of His Word.