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THE HOLY BIBLE **NKJV** REFERENCE GUIDE

NEW TESTAMENT

BOOK 54

1 TIMOTHY



The Apostle Paul Mentors Timothy

SUMMARY

The first of Paul's final series of letters—which along with 2 Timothy and Titus are called the Pastoral Epistles. 1 Timothy offers practical and pastoral advice from the aging apostle Paul to a young pastor named Timothy working in the church at Ephesus.

More than a decade prior to writing this letter, Paul had first met Timothy in the city of Lystra—in Asia Minor—where Timothy was known and respected by the Christians. Upon recognizing Timothy's impressive qualities, Paul recruited the young man to travel with him as he continued his second missionary journey.

The presence of Timothy would have met an important need for Paul, their friendship coming on the heels of Paul's split with his close friend and partner in missions, Barnabas.

The Bible's silence on the ultimate fate of Paul has engendered a great deal of debate in modern times. The book of Acts ends with Paul sitting in a Roman prison awaiting his hearing before the Roman emperor, a privilege of appeal that all Roman citizens possessed.

However, the writing of the Pastoral Epistles clearly dates to a time after the events of Acts. So where was Paul when he wrote 1 Timothy? Paul had expected the Romans to release him from prison, something that likely happened near the end of AD 62.

His release allowed him the opportunity to travel to Ephesus and eventually place Timothy in ministry at that church. Paul then went on to preach in Macedonia, where he heard reports of Timothy's work at Ephesus that prompted him to write 1 Timothy, probably in AD 63.

First Timothy presents the most explicit and complete instructions for church leadership and organization in the entire Bible. This includes sections on appropriate conduct in worship gatherings, the qualifications of elders and deacons, and the proper order of church discipline.

Paul advised Timothy on these practical matters in a way that would have helped the young pastor to emphasize the purity that should characterize Christian leaders and the gatherings they oversee.

Timothy's youth no doubt served him well, allowing for the energy and vigor he needed to serve his people. However, it also caused inevitable difficulties with older Christians who may not have taken quickly to the leadership of such a young man because of his lack of knowledge and experience in leadership.

It was important to Paul that Timothy set an example of consistent faith and a good conscience, remaining above reproach and exercising the spiritual gifts that God had given him.

However, Paul knew that such a task would not be easy for the young man. Therefore, on two occasions Paul encouraged Timothy to fight the good fight. Perseverance in what was good often became a slog for Timothy, one that required thick skin and a clear purpose.

SUMMARY Continued

The leaders of our churches fill important roles as they participate in encouraging the spiritual growth of Christians under their care. We know the significance of these men in our churches and in our personal lives, but 1 Timothy helps us to gain a clearer understanding of the proper qualifications and roles for church leaders.

Paul's letter shows us those things he hoped Timothy would address in his ministry, providing a template of sorts that our leaders can follow in their own ministries. Our churches will be strongest when they are closest to the biblical vision laid out for them.

NKJV SELECTED SCRIPTURE

- 1:9** knowing this: that the law is not made for a righteous person, but for the lawless and insubordinate, for the ungodly and for sinners, for the unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers,
- 1:10** for fornicators, for sodomites, for kidnappers, for liars, for perjurers, and if there is any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine,
- 1:11** according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God which was committed to my trust.
- 1:17** Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.
- 2:11** Let a woman learn in silence with all submission.
- 3:2** A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach;
- 3:3** not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous;
- 3:4** one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence
- 3:5** (for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?);
- 3:6** not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil.
- 3:8** Likewise deacons must be reverent, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy for money,
- 3:9** holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience.
- 4:7** But reject profane and old wives' fables, and exercise yourself toward godliness.
- 4:8** For bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come.
- 6:3** If anyone teaches otherwise and does not consent to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which accords with godliness,
- 6:4** he is proud, knowing nothing, but is obsessed with disputes and arguments over words, from which come envy, strife, reviling, evil suspicions,
- 6:5** useless wranglings of men of corrupt minds and destitute of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain. From such withdraw yourself.
- 6:6** Now godliness with contentment is great gain.

NKJV SCRIPTURE Continued

- 6:7** For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.
- 6:8** And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content.
- 6:9** But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition.
- 6:10** For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.
- 6:11** But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness.
- 6:12** Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.
- 6:13** I urge you in the sight of God who gives life to all things, and before Christ Jesus who witnessed the good confession before Pontius Pilate, that you keep this commandment without spot, blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ's appearing,
- 6:14** which He will manifest in His own time, He who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords,
- 6:15** who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see, to whom be honor and everlasting power.
- 6:16** Amen.

CHARACTER Definitions

TIMOTHY - Timothy was a native of Lystra. In the KJV New Testament, he is referenced a total of twenty-eight times (nine times using his well-known name and nineteen times as Timotheus).

Church tradition suggests he was born around 17 A.D. The mother of Timothy was a Jewess named Eunice. She later, however, became a Jewish Christian. His father was a Greek (Gentile). His grandmother on his mother's side was named Lois and she, too, became a Christian.

Both women were likely converted during Paul's first evangelistic journey to the city in 46 A.D., when he healed a cripple man but soon after was stoned to death and resurrected.

According to Paul, Timothy was taught, when he was a child, about the Scriptures. Note that the Old Testament, which many people disregard, was the foundation on which salvation could be achieved!

In early 50 A.D., Paul meets an unmarried Timothy in Lystra soon after he began his second missionary journey. At the time of their meeting, they were roughly 48 and 33 years old, respectively.

Based on the recommendation of several church members both in the city and in Iconium, Paul decides to take the young man with him as he travels preaching the gospel. Before this can happen, however, the apostle pays to have him circumcised.

CHARACTERS Continued

Why did the apostle, who vigorously argued that circumcision was not necessary in order to receive salvation have his friend undergo this painful procedure? It was likely for the sake of expediency.

Paul's method for evangelizing a particular area was to first visit the local synagogues and preach the gospel to Jews and proselytes. He would then (usually because many in the synagogue would reject his message) preach about God's kingdom to Gentiles.

The apostle no doubt felt, given the zealously-held prejudices against those not circumcised, that a circumcised Timothy would circumvent these biases and allow the gospel to be heard by synagogue members.

Now, for Apostle Paul to travel among the Synagogues with a companion in this condition (uncircumcised), and to attempt to convince the Jews that Jesus was the Messiah, when his associate and assistant in the work was an uncircumcised Heathen, would evidently have been to encumber his progress and embarrass his work.

Had Timothy not been circumcised, a storm would have gathered round the Apostle in his further progress. The Jews, who were ever ready to persecute him from city to city, would have denounced him still more violently in every Synagogue.

The Bible records, after he was ordained to serve by Paul and church brethren, he ministered in at least five New Testament churches. Timothy accompanied Paul on most of his second journey travels after he left Lystra.

Scripture then informs us he was with the apostle in Ephesus during his third missionary journey. While in the city he and a man named Erastus are sent by Paul to minister to brethren in Macedonia.

Later on, he meets with others at Troas to accompany the apostle through Asia on his way to Jerusalem. Paul is imprisoned in Rome, beginning in 61 A.D., at the end of his fourth missionary journey.

While he is in prison, he writes four epistles, three of which mention Timothy being with him. At the end of his fifth and final journey, while in Rome a second time just before his death, he requests his closest friend visit him and bring his personal copies of his writings.

Paul testifies to those in Philippi regarding Timothy's unique Christian character and his dedication to spreading the gospel.

Catholic tradition states Timothy died in Ephesus when he was over 80 years old. According to the first chapter of Foxe's Book of Martyrs, he died in 97 A.D. upholding the truth of the Bible. Foxe's states he was the bishop of Ephesus and was murdered when he told a crowd of pagans that their idolatrous celebrations were ridiculous.

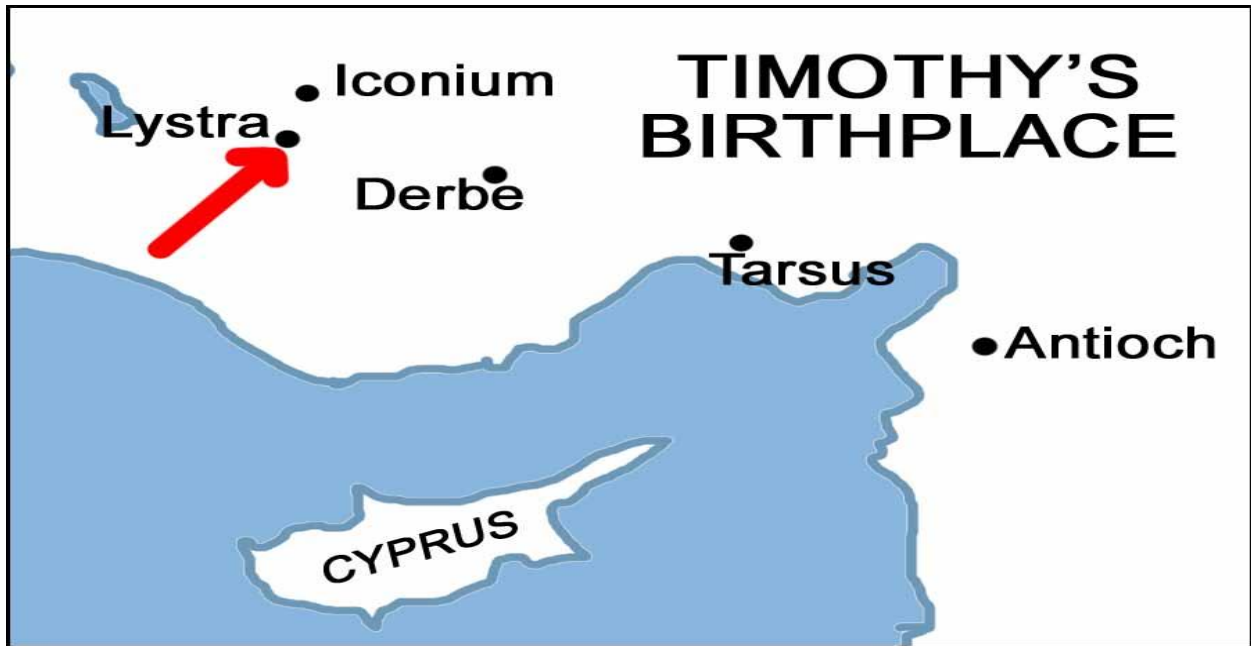
BIBLE TIMELINE

63 AD

Paul Writes to Timothy

1 Timothy 1 - 6

MAP REFERENCES



Timothy sent to Ephesus

