

I TIMOTHY

FOR BEGINNERS

MIKE MAZZALONGO

TEACHER'S GUIDE

bibleTalk^{TV}



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I Timothy for Beginners

Mike Mazzalongo

The two letters that the Apostle Paul wrote to the young evangelist, Timothy, provided him with clear instructions for the divinely ordained way the church of the New Testament was to organize and function not only in the first century but throughout history to this day and beyond.



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**Teacher Guide created by
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Overall Teaching Strategy

It is recommended that teachers use a combination of informal lecture and guided discussion to present these lessons. Teachers must be familiar with the associated scriptures, video and/or text for the lesson. There are discussion questions for each lesson with recommended responses. Teachers may use and/or supplement their own questions and responses. A student workbook is also provided for each course.

Students should read the Scriptures, view the associated video and/or read the text for the lesson. This helps them come to the class ready to discuss the lesson and to formulate questions of their own. Teachers should begin the class with a review of key points from the video/reading before starting the discussion.

Begin each lesson with appropriate introductory statements that help students focus on the lesson. Teachers should also provide a summary of the previous lesson and an overview of key points of the new lesson. This helps students see the ongoing narrative of scripture.

Conclude the lesson by summarizing, or having students summarize the information from their notes. It is also helpful to ask questions from the lesson to determine that students grasp the concepts. Asking questions in this manner also serves as an assessment to ensure objectives are met.

Challenge students with a call to action to apply this information to their lives in order to help them grow spiritually and help others to do so as well. This can be accomplished by asking questions of students as to how this information relates to their spiritual development at this time and moving forward.

For more information on teaching adults, please visit:

<https://bibletalk.tv/101/teaching>

Lesson #1 – Introduction to I Timothy

Teaching Strategy

The focus of this lesson is to introduce I Timothy. Of special note is information about Timothy, the church where he served and the issues Paul issue Paul addresses. Given the scope of this lesson, it is recommended that it be covered in two sessions.

Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Understand introductory information about Paul’s first letter to Timothy.
- **Feel:** Value the advice Paul provides Timothy for faithfulness to Jesus.
- **Do:** Use Paul’s teachings to increase our own faithfulness.

Support

- Series – I Timothy for Beginners; Mike Mazzalongo, 2019
- Video/Reading – Lesson 1 – Introduction to I Timothy
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 1

Body of the Lesson

1.0 Session 1 - Introduction

1.1 Background

1.1.1 Time period

1.1.2 Background

1.2 Who is Timothy

1.3 Ephesus

1.4 Authorship

2.0 Session 2 - Heresy at Ephesus and Crete (I Timothy 1:1-3)

2.1 Gnosticism

2.2 Speculative Intellectualism

2.3 Pride

Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as “right or wrong” responses.

1. Answer the following questions regarding the background of I Timothy:

Summarize the inception period of the church.

In Acts 2 we see the beginning of the church during the Jewish feast of Pentecost. This occurred shortly after the ascension of Jesus. At its inception, approximately 3,000 were added to the church following their baptism.

Summarize the expansion period of the church.

Acts 2 closes with the statement, “And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.” (vs. 47) Although the church began in Jerusalem, in Acts 1:8, Jesus gave specific instructions that the apostles were to proclaim the gospel to Judea, Samaria, and to all the world. This occurred in the early chapters of Acts as the church was persecuted and it was driven from Jerusalem. Paul played a part of the persecution in the early period but as we learn in Acts 9, he was converted to Christ and became an important figure in the expansion of the church. This development included a growing number of non-Jews (gentiles) until eventually there were more gentiles than Jews. They brought with them many teachings and cultural issues that were a challenge to their Jewish brethren.

Summarize the consolidation period of the church.

When the church began, it focused on learning from the apostles themselves and strengthening each other (Acts 2:42-47). They may not have known it, but this relatively short period of discipling activity would prepare them for their eventual move away from Jerusalem. As they spread out, they established congregations of the Lord’s church wherever they went (See Acts 8:4). They had no complete New Testament as we have today to guide them. They had the teachings of the apostles and letters, such as those Paul wrote to help them in their efforts. As always happens, God gifted certain Christians with knowledge and skills to support and encourage the Church. Timothy, and others like him, fulfilled this role.

2. Summarize the background information from the text regarding Paul's efforts with Timothy and Titus.

Paul has been released from his first imprisonment in Rome and instead of traveling to Jerusalem as he intended, he spent time in Crete, Ephesus, Corinth, Miletus and Troas. He revisited the churches that he had previously established instead of planting new ones. His efforts included encouraging Timothy, Titus and other preachers in their ministry.

3. Summarize information regarding who Timothy was.

Timothy is first mentioned in Acts 16:1 when Paul was on his second missionary journey. He was a native of Lystra located in what is today, Turkey. His mother Eunice was a Jewish Christian who, along with his grandmother, Lois, raised him to know the scriptures. Later he was apparently baptized by Paul (I Timothy 1:2). Timothy's father was a Greek and a non-believer.

Paul states in I Timothy 1:18 that God selected Timothy for His service. Paul would likely know this through the Holy Spirit's guidance (I Timothy 4:14). Timothy was appointed to this ministry by Paul and the council of elders. Timothy would not only serve as a minister to various congregations but would also travel and minister to Paul (See Hebrews 13:23).

Apparently, Timothy was quite conscious of his youth. Paul recognized this and encouraged him to not let that be a hinderance (I Timothy 4:12). Timothy also apparently had stomach issues (I Timothy 5:23).

4. Summarize information about the city of Ephesus.

Ephesus was a major city in Asia Minor (Turkey). Paul had established a church there and it became the center of Christianity after the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70. Paul sent Timothy there to minister to this church.

There were no large churches as we know them today. Most met in homes. Each had various natural leaders. Paul sent Timothy to train and appoint men to lead these during their early development periods, especially in difficult times.

5. Defend Paul's authorship of I Timothy and why this is important.

The letter begins with Paul's greeting to Timothy and the style of writing is like Paul's style. Further, the content of the letter outlining doctrinal issues and intimate knowledge of his relationship with Timothy validate Paul as the author. There was never any historical challenge to Paul's authorship.

Knowing the author of the various letters of the New Testament demonstrates the continuity of thought and the unity of the message. In this case, we see strong similarities between Paul's instructions to Timothy and historical events from the book of Acts.

NOTE: Consider this as a breaking point for Session 1.

6. Answer the following questions that address the heresies Paul was concerned with as he instructs Timothy:

Why was Paul telling Timothy to remain in Ephesus?

Paul had previously instructed the Ephesian elders to be diligent in carrying out their ministry and warned them against false teachers. (Acts 20:17-32). He now charges Timothy to assist in that action. False teachers continued to undermine the faith of the Christians at that time and continues today.

How does Paul describe the heresies in I Timothy 1:3?

Depending on the version, Paul refers to these heresies as:

NIV – false doctrines

ESV – different doctrines

KJV – no other doctrine

NASV – strange doctrines

What was the primary false teaching Paul was addressing, what are its characteristics and what does the gospel teach as truth?

The primary false teaching was Gnosticism. This false doctrine basically teaches that one had to have special hidden knowledge in order to obtain salvation. It mixed Greek philosophy with mysticism and pagan religions, as well as teachings from Judaism and Christianity. Together these produced a different doctrine than what was taught by Christ and His Apostles.

Gnosticism produced an approach called, “Dualism”. Dualism taught that there were two eternal elements in the world: God/mind and Matter/flesh. God/mind was good, and matter/flesh was totally evil. Humans were a combination of these two. We have flesh, and therefore are totally evil and corrupt. To obtain salvation, our spirit had to escape from us. When that was done (through the insight to the secret knowledge), then one could return to God and be at peace.

The two ways to escape from the flesh were strict asceticism and Antinomianism. These two false teachings were also in conflict with each

other. Strict asceticism taught certain about food, forbade marriage, and the domination of the spirit over flesh. The problem (false teaching) was that this system emphasized a works salvation (the Jewish law for example) and not a grace through faith system as Paul taught in Ephesians 2:8.

Antinomianism, by contrast taught that there should be no laws or restrictions and that one should have complete sensual freedom, or complete indulgence of the flesh. Since the spirit and flesh were separate, one didn't affect the other so a person could do as they wished in the flesh and the spirit would ultimately be free once the flesh died.

The gospel, however, teaches that a soul cannot sin without receiving consequences from God (Romans 6:23).

7. What is speculative intellectualism and what is the danger in this?

Speculative intellectualism is continual discussion and argument concerning issues that are not addressed by the Bible and therefore undermine the gospel. Examples provided in the text are our appearance in heaven, what Jesus looked like and when exactly would Jesus return (also perhaps signs that would point to His imminent return). These are not relevant to the actual message of the gospel which stresses the importance of readiness for the return of Christ and our faithful service to Him in this life.

Continued discussions and arguments on these and similar issues cause disunity and a lowering of faith. They offer no value to our salvation and spiritual growth. They might be classified as "vain talk" but offer no substance as either spiritual milk or meat.

8. Why is pride a danger to Christians, and how does this affect Paul's instruction to Timothy?

Pride is focusing on self and has always been at the heart of sin, even in the garden as Satan tempted Adam and Eve with being like God. Pride is at the heart of all sin and false teaching. The teachings of Gnosticism elevated one over another since one needed special knowledge for salvation. And of course, this knowledge was only available through them. It is submitting to what is important to man rather than what is important to God.

Timothy, as a young preacher needing to grow in confidence, would possibly be susceptible to what appeared to be wise teachings, or unable to adequately defend against it. Paul writes to instruct and provide Timothy with sound apostolic guidance to properly arm and provide him with confidence to overcome the false and heretical doctrine he was facing.

9. What is the relevancy of Paul's letter to Timothy and Titus since it appears that they focus on the work of ministers?

Paul is encouraging Timothy to stand firm in the faith and be an example and encouragement. His teachings to Timothy are relevant to us today. In Paul's letter we see his apostolic authority, sound church doctrine, strong leadership, organization and example of proper administration. It is a manual of how to function as a congregation of the Lord's church. These teachings still apply today as we face attacks from Satan, both externally and internally.

Paul closes his first letter encouraging Timothy to "guard the deposit entrusted to you." (I Timothy 6:20) This continues to be a charge today for all of us.

Lesson #2 – Paul’s Charge to Timothy

(I Timothy 1:1-11)

Teaching Strategy

The focus of this lesson is the continued problem and Paul’s response to trouble caused by the false teachers. Of special note is Paul’s instructions and how they apply today.

Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Understand introductory information about Paul’s first letter to Timothy.
- **Feel:** Value the advice Paul provides Timothy for our faithfulness to Jesus.
- **Do:** Use Paul’s teachings to increase our faithfulness.

Support

- Series – I Timothy for Beginners; Mike Mazzalongo, 2019
- Video/Reading – Lesson 2 – Paul’s Charge to Timothy
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 2

Body of the Lesson

1.0 Greetings

2.0 Paul and Timothy

3.0 Lessons

Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as “right or wrong” responses.

1. Summarize Gnosticism from Lesson 1.

The false doctrine of Gnosticism teaches that one had to have special knowledge in order to obtain salvation. It mixed Greek philosophy with mysticism and pagan religions, as well as teachings from Judaism and Christianity. Together these produced a doctrine different than what the Apostles taught.

Gnosticism produced an approach called, “Dualism”. Dualism teaches that there are two eternal elements in the world: God/mind and Matter/flesh. God/mind was good, and matter/flesh was totally evil. Humans were a combination of these two. We have flesh, and therefore are totally evil and corrupt. To obtain salvation, our spirit had to escape from us. When that is done, then we can return to God and be at peace.

2. What are the major elements of Paul’s opening statements of I Timothy and what is its impact on the rest of the letter?

Paul introduces himself as an apostle of Jesus. This is not to carry the title as some position of honor, but to establish that he has the authority and responsibility to teach this information. Further, because of his apostolic authority, Timothy, as well as the church today are obliged to put these teachings into practice.

He further establishes that our hope is in Jesus Christ. This hope is the result of our salvation found only in Jesus.

He specifically addresses Timothy thus providing Timothy with credibility and integrity. He refers to Timothy as a “true child” to signify their closeness and Paul’s trust in him. He blesses Timothy with grace, mercy, and peace.

3. Summarize Paul's charge to Timothy and the desired outcome. (I Timothy 3-4)

Timothy is to remain in Ephesus and teach against false doctrine. It is interesting to note that the method of working against the false doctrine is to teach those that are teaching false doctrine.

Further, Timothy is to pay no attention to the endless discussions and speculation that serves only to distract and undermine faith. He is to focus instead on furthering the gospel through sound doctrine which leads to knowledge and faith.

4. From verse 5, what is the test of true and godly doctrine?

The development of love because of the teaching. The fruit (outcome) is a pure heart, good conscience and sincere faith. The debates, pride and division are not the fruit of sound teaching.

5. What does Paul say in verses 6-7 is the result of false doctrine and how does this impact us?

The teachers are straying from the right path and are distracted by their fruitless discussions. They have left the doctrine of Christ to teach things they do not know answers to but profess to.

We also hear false doctrine that diverts our attention away from the pure gospel of Christ. For example, some are caught up in trying to determine the timeframe of the return of our Lord. Our Lord clearly teaches we cannot know the timeframe but should instead be ready for His return. (Matthew 24-25).

6. Answer the following questions from I Timothy 1:9-11:

What does Paul state in verse 9-10 as to the purpose of the Law?

Paul states that the law is not made for the righteous, but the unrighteous. He gives specific examples, but not an exhaustive list, of who these are in verse 9-10. He explains that this is to show that Christians are under the principle of grace, not the principle of law. He teaches that the Law reveals:

- The nature of sin (Romans 3:20; 7:7)
- The punishment for sin (Romans 6:23)
- God's justice (obey – live; disobey – die)

What is the difference between the principle of grace and the principle of law?

Under the principle of grace, God continues to forgive our sins as He transforms us into becoming perfect in Christ. This is contingent upon our being in Christ and our faithfulness.

Under the principle of law, if we sin, we are condemned. Anything less than perfection is unacceptable. We are saved if we do not sin. It is a salvation based on works.

Why does Paul emphasize that Christians are under grace?

Because the law is designed for godless, unrepentant, ignorant sinners. Paul gives a general listing in verse 10 and concludes it with, "and whatever else is contrary to sound teaching."

To teach (influence others to develop and practice belief) anything contrary to the gospel is condemned. This specifically targets false teachings. (NOTE: A follow-on suggested question is to draw a relationship between Paul's warnings about false teachers and James 3:1. As teachers, we will be judged more harshly because of our ability to influence the faith of others. Those that teach false doctrine face severe judgment for their actions. It is even more important, therefore, that we teach truth.)

7. From the overall passage of I Timothy 1:1-11, what are the two important points Paul makes with Timothy through this passage?

- He establishes Timothy and his teachings as legitimately coming from God.
- He condemns the teachings and teachers of Gnostic ideas as false.

8. How can you use this lesson to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?

We face the same issues today. Nothing has changed from the writings of Paul to the present. The acceptable response for us is to focus on the gospel of Christ and not let man-made philosophies, myths and fruitless discussions and questions change our focus on the true gospel and undermine our faith.



Lesson #3 – Paul’s Personal Witness (I Timothy 1:12-20)

Teaching Strategy

The focus of this lesson is on Paul’s personal witness of salvation. Of special note is how we can use this as a model for our spiritual growth.

Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Understand the teachings from I Timothy.
- **Feel:** Value the advice Paul provides Timothy for our faithfulness to Jesus.
- **Do:** Use Paul’s teachings to increase our faithfulness.

Support

- Series – I Timothy for Beginners; Mike Mazzalongo, 2019
- Video/Reading – Lesson 3 – Paul’s Personal Witness
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 3

Body of the Lesson

- 1.0 Paul’s prayer of thanksgiving (1:12-17)
- 2.0 Paul’s charge to Timothy (1:18-20)
- 3.0 Application

Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as “right or wrong” responses.

1. From I Timothy 1:1-11, what does Paul set out to accomplish?

The purpose of this question is to review information from the previous two lessons.

Paul is seeking to help Timothy deal with issues he is facing in Ephesus. Specifically:

- Establishing Timothy as a legitimate teacher teaching sound doctrine.
- Condemning false teachers and doctrine, especially Gnosticism.

2. Explain Paul's reasons for his humility in being selected for his role as an apostle for Christ (I Timothy 1:12-13).

Paul recognizes his previous role as a persecutor of the church and is now grateful to God for the opportunity to serve in His Kingdom. Paul continues to be humbled by this opportunity as he grows spiritually in his role as an apostle. He gives three reasons his feelings that he did not deserve to be an apostle.

- He was a blasphemer (denounced Jesus as a fake and troublemaker)
- He was a persecutor (Persecutor of followers of Christ)
- He was a violent aggressor (Arrogant, insolent, aggressive, and angry with Jesus and His people)

3. How is Paul an example of how no matter how zealous we are for service to God; it is not enough?

Paul was zealous beyond most of his day. He recognized the futility of all of this. At his conversion in Acts 9, Paul came to realize that he was wrong in his knowledge and motivation. The first action Paul had to do was submit to our Lord through baptism. He had already believed and repented, now he had to follow-through with obedience. As a result, he received God's mercy and forgiveness.

4. Restate I Timothy 1:15-17 in your own words as if you were explaining it to someone.

Look for responses that include that God is faithful (trustworthy statement) that we must accept (beyond simply hearing it, we must believe and act upon it). God sent Jesus to die for everyone's sins. Paul is an example of that faithfulness. For this reason, when we realize we are saved, we give God glory for His grace and love.

5. What three words does Paul use to describe God and how do they apply to us?

Eternal, immortal and invisible. These three descriptions still apply today. God has not, nor will ever change. This includes His promises for us and our salvation through Jesus. These are additional reasons why God is worthy of honor and glory.

6. What does Paul mean when he states to “entrust” in I Timothy 1:18-19 and how does that relate to our role today?

To entrust means to turn over to. Paul is expressing confidence in Timothy that he will act as he needs to as Paul gives him the knowledge and authority for his efforts to minister to Christians. He charges Timothy to remain faithful with a clear conscience (knowing he is doing the right thing).

7. From the text, discuss some reasons given to “discipline” someone in the church. How does this relate to the teachings of Jesus from Matthew 18:15-20 and I Corinthians 5:1-13?

There are many reasons why someone in the Body of Christ needs to be corrected. Remember, however, the purpose is to bring the person back into a relationship with our Lord.

Jesus provided a process in Matthew 18:15-20 that includes handling things in a graduated manner beginning with allowing the person to correct their behavior as early as possible. If that doesn't work, then it is elevated within the leadership of the congregation. It is only as a last resort that a situation is handled in a public way. This is in keeping with Paul's teachings in I Corinthians 5:1-13. A point of note is that we must acknowledge our own sin and to understand that we are judging a person's behavior based on God's word alone and not our likes, dislikes, or personal beliefs (See Matthew 7:1-5).

8. How can you use this lesson to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?

We recognize that no matter who we are, we need salvation through Jesus. We also recognize that God is faithful to forgive us when we turn to Him in obedient faith. This action is the beginning of our spiritual growth. We then continue to live faithfully. Part of living faithfully involves teaching others to understand how they need and can be in a relationship with Jesus, and live faithfully as well. We can use Paul as an example for faithfulness.

Lesson #4 – Paul’s Instructions on Prayer and the Role of Men and Women (I Timothy 2:1-15)

Teaching Strategy

The focus of this lesson is on Paul’s instructions for prayer and roles of members. Of special note is our proper attitude in prayer and the distinction between culture and commands. Due to the amount and complexity of information, it is recommended that this information is presented in two sessions

Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Understand Paul’s teachings on prayer and roles for men and women in the church.
- **Feel:** Value the advice Paul provides Timothy for our faithfulness to Jesus.
- **Do:** Use Paul’s teachings to increase our faithfulness.

Support

- Series – I Timothy for Beginners; Mike Mazzalongo, 2019
- Video/Reading – Lesson 4 – Paul’s Instruction on Prayer and the Role of Men and Women in the Church
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 4

Body of the Lesson

1.0 Session 1 – Prayer (I Timothy 2:1-7)

1.1 Instructions on prayer

1.1.1 Types of prayer

1.1.2 Who to pray for

1.1.3 Why we should pray

2.0 Session 2 - Instructions on conduct and role (I Timothy 2:8-15)

2.1 Culture vs. command

2.2 Men

2.3 Women

2.3.1 Attitude of women while learning

2.3.2 Why a command and not culture

3.0 Lessons

Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as “right or wrong” responses.

1. Explain the various types of prayer from I Timothy 2:1.

- Supplication (entreaties) – A specific request or request for a specific situation.
- Prayer – A general word referring to all types or general prayers (requests, adoration, praise, confession, etc.)
- Intercession (petition) – A more intimate relationship with God through prayer. Approaching God on behalf of someone.
- Thanksgiving – Expressing gratitude to God for what He provides.

2. Explain why Paul encourages prayers for those who are responsible for his imprisonment (I Timothy 2:1-2).

Although Paul mentions, “...on behalf of all men”, he specifies in this passage kings and those in authority. He does so since those in authority have the responsibility for keeping the peace so that the gospel can be taught without fear of persecution. Note that God instituted government, therefore, we should honor His plan in this area as well as other areas. (See also Romans 13:1-7 and I Peter 2:13-17)

A possible follow-on discussion is placing this in the context of governmental oppression and persecution the Christians were facing, especially Paul. Note that he does not pray for his relief or comfort, but rather for peace so that the gospel can be spread. This is consistent with his prayer request in Ephesians 6:19-20. He prays that he can complete his mission, and not for his freedom or comfort.

3. Why does Paul state we should pray (I Timothy 2:3-7)?

Use the information from the text to outline this discussion.

- It is God's will – (I Timothy 2:3-4)

How is it God's will? What is God's ultimate goal?

- God's will is worked out with the gospel (I Timothy 2:5-7)

4. How does Paul explain God's plan of salvation in I Timothy 2:5-7 and how does Paul express his role in this? (Follow-on question...what is our role in this?)

- There is one God and one mediator – Jesus Christ.
- Christ gave Himself to purchase (ransom) our freedom.
- Paul is a recipient of salvation and now serves as a teacher to others.
- Like Paul, we have a role in God's plan as well. We are the vehicle through which the gospel is proclaimed.

5. How does I Timothy 2:8 serve as a conclusion and transition in Paul's instruction, and why is this important to us?

Paul frequently uses the word, "Therefore" as he transitions into the application of his teaching. In this instance he is transitioning from the instruction for prayer to the specific application "the men in every place to pray". He is now going to go into spiritual leadership and conduct, and specific roles in the church. This is important because Paul will now give Timothy instruction for church leadership and how we are to conduct ourselves as we worship.

Note: Do not lose the importance of attitude as we explore process and roles. A follow-up discussion can be on our proper attitude as we pray and serve in our various roles.

6. How is I Timothy 2:8 related to I Timothy 2:12?

I Timothy 2:8 – Without wrath and dissension

I Timothy 2:1-2 – Praying for those responsible to provide a peaceful environment.

I Timothy 2:8 is focused internally to the church; however, a peaceful environment removes external pressures and allows the gospel to be spread.

7. Answer the following questions related to culture vs. command:

Explain the four main discussion points related to culture vs. command and the role of women in the church.

(See text for detail)

- The conservative view: Women should do nothing in public worship, including Bible class. Women never speak.
- The mainline position: Christian women help as appropriate, and actively participate in Bible class but do not teach mixed classes of adult males and females, and do not participate in a public way during worship (preaching, praying, serving the Lord's Supper, etc.) (Some congregations use women as interpreters for the deaf in the absence of men who can perform this duty but place restrictions on where they do this so as to not appear to be teaching or leading in worship or class.)
- The progressive view: Women are encouraged to participate in public assembly such as serving the Lord's Supper, leading prayer, and serving as deacons.
- The liberal view: Women and men can do all areas of ministry including serving as congregational leaders.

What are some current examples of culture and its impact on the church?

(Answers will vary based on personal values. Keep the discussion positive. Look for how it helps spiritual growth and the gospel.) These prompts are provided but encourage other examples.

- Baptism
- Dress
- Women having their heads covered during worship and prayer
- Role of men and women
- The use of instrumental music in worship
- Meeting times (Sunday and Wednesday evenings, VBS, other special events where attendance is strongly encouraged or even considered obligatory)

How is baptism both a cultural practice and a command?

Baptism as a practice was commonly used as a religious purification rite in many religions. The people of the time would be familiar with the practice and its religious symbolism. Therefore, Jesus builds on this custom as he commands us to be baptized (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:16). The apostles accepted this and taught and practiced it as well. This command continues today.

How is the role of women in the church both a cultural practice and a command?

In many societies of the early New Testament period, women had a prominent role in society. Some were allowed to hold social leadership positions or were granted special protection by law. Today we see women in all parts of society, including high levels of authority in political, military, law enforcement and education, etc. It is natural that we might expect this to extend into the church, especially if a woman has knowledge and abilities in areas related to our worship practice (education in Bible studies, speaking skills, leadership skills, etc.) Yet, God specifies that when it comes to the church, it is led by men and women are not to take over these leadership roles, nor are men to abdicate their role as spiritual leaders. We must use all of our members and their abilities to serve God, but do so in His way, not our way.

8. Answer the following questions from I Timothy 2:8:

Who is the “men” Paul is referring to?

Specifically, males, spiritual leaders in the congregation and families.

What does Paul mean by “every place”?

He is likely referring to public worship in the areas where this letter is being read. It was intended as a teaching letter to be shared in the various congregations therefore, public worship is likely what he means.

How does “holy hands” relate to those offering prayers?

It was a custom to raise one’s hands as he led prayer. However, the meaning behind the statement is one of a pure heart before God. The men leading public worship and prayer are to be qualified as righteous before God; those whose lives have been turned over in faithful obedience to God. They are not only dedicated to God, but also peace and unity in the church.

9. How does Paul use “therefore” in I Timothy 2:9-10?

Paul is drawing the similarity in purity between men who lead prayer and the internal spirit of godliness in women. It is not a prohibition on jewelry, clothing, or physical makeup. Rather, it is keeping external things in perspective.

10. How do you understand “modesty”?

The intent of this question is to develop an understanding of the application of modesty beyond proper clothing.

Modesty applies to men and women. It includes our appearance that is not based on conceit, pride and vanity. There is certainly no problem with dressing to present ourselves in a favorable manner with proper application of clothing and such, but what is important and proper is presenting ourselves as pure and holy before God. See: Romans 12:1; 13:14; II Timothy 2:15; Colossians 3:5; James 1:27; Matthew 5:8; Philippians 4:8; Proverbs 16:2; 20:11; I Thessalonians 4:3-5

11. How does Paul's instruction to women in I Timothy 2:11-14 apply today?

The use of "quiet" and "submission" is consistent with verse I Timothy 2:10. It is an attitude of humility before God. It does not prohibit asking or answering questions, but rather, a meek and gentle spirit.

Leading worship and teaching publicly (and in mixed assemblies) is a leadership role given to men as spiritual leaders in both the family and the church. Men cannot, nor must not abdicate their role. Men will be held specifically accountable for their obedience to God's commands. Women have a critical and vital role as teachers, but must be practiced within the commands God specifies, and Paul provides application through apostolic authority.

Paul uses God's plan of creation as an example. This is established by God and transcends societal norms, or our personal preferences. God created man first and has the expectation of men as spiritual leaders. Because woman sinned first, God placed her in a submissive role. This is not to degrade any woman, that would be against God's will. Rather, it is a judgment by God that we must all honor.

12. How can you use this lesson to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?

Sometimes it is difficult for us to accept God's will in areas where we either do not understand or feel that we might have a better insight. Paul sets the initial structure and operation of the church with basic instructions for the role of men and women. Our focus must be on using this knowledge and these skills to honor God, rather than indulge our personal preferences.

There is danger in putting ourselves and our ideas before God's will. We must use our gifts but do so according to God's will. When we do as God wills, we bring glory to Him and he rewards our humble service, no matter the role.

Lesson #5 – The Role, Work and Qualifications of Elders (I Timothy 3:1-7)

Teaching Strategy

The focus of this lesson is on elders as our spiritual leaders. Of special note is their worthiness for this role and our responsibilities as we serve with them. Due to the complexity and depth of this lesson, it is recommended that it be divided into two lessons.

Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Understand the role, work and qualifications of congregational leaders.
- **Feel:** Defend God’s plan for leadership in congregations of the Lord’s Church.
- **Do:** Apply God’s plan for congregational leadership in living faithful lives as servants of God.

Support

- Series – I Timothy for Beginners; Mike Mazzalongo, 2019
- Video/Reading – Lesson 5 – The Role, Work and Qualifications of elders.
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 5

Body of the Lesson

1.0 Part 1 – General information about elders.

1.1 Terms for elders

1.2 The work of church leaders

2.0 Appointing elders

2.1 Qualifications of elders

2.2 Appointment of elders

Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as “right or wrong” responses.

1. What are some reasons men may not feel qualified to serve as elders and how does Paul address this issue in I Timothy 3:1?

There are certainly reasons why a man may not feel qualified for the position as shepherd when he compares himself to the basic qualifications Paul outlines. However, if a man is otherwise qualified, he may still feel reluctant to serve. Some may feel that their spiritual development is not mature enough to serve, or they know their shortcomings and weaknesses and may feel they are not able to lead others. In addition to this, some men may feel they would be subject to pressures that they would be unprepared to deal with. To “aspire” communicates the idea that one desires and prepares oneself to serve in this capacity. It is more than simply willing to do so. Given the responsibility and importance of this position of service, aspiration is critical as a qualification.

Paul addressed this by describing the office as a good and worthy work, some versions say noble, and one that someone can aspire to. It is a good argument that men should strive for this role. Even if they are not chosen, they will have grown because of the experience of having been considered and will be better equipped to serve in other capacities should the opportunities occur.

As a side note, one might compare the selection of Matthias over Justus as an apostle (Acts 1:12-26). Note that Justus was not chosen although he was fully qualified to serve in this capacity. There is no indication that he stopped serving. Some scholars think he is the same man mentioned in Acts 15:22 (Judas is a derivative name for Justus). If so, this clearly indicates that he continued in an active role of service. The point is that whether a man holds a title or not is no reason not to serve to his fullest capacity (see also Matthew 25:14-30; the parable of the talents).

2. What are the meanings of the three terms used to describe an elder and how are they related?

See the associated text concerning this lesson for additional details.

Presbuteros – Presbyter / Elder

This communicates a man of maturity, spiritually as well as physically, although the basic term describes age. It is assumed that a person with age has the experience and wisdom to be effective in this role as a spiritual leader.

Epsikopos – Overseer / Bishop / Superintendent / Guardian

This term communicates an office that an elder performs but can also refer to the person himself. It also communicates a position of authority to lead. It is interesting that this is a term also used to describe Jesus (I Peter 2:25).

Poimen – Shepherd / Pastor

This term signifies the way an elder works. It describes the servant attitude of the leader. It is the most common imagery and communicates caring for and guarding of the flock.

These roles refer to the same person. We can draw from this that an elder is a mature man who has the responsibility and authority to lead, guard and guide the congregation in which he serves.

3. Why is the following statement true?

“A woman, no matter her desire, knowledge or skills cannot serve as an elder.”

In the New Testament, the person serving in this role has always been a man. Although in his initial statement in I Timothy 3:1, Paul states, “anyone”, he goes on to describe the person serving in this role to be a man. It is not a casual use of the general male pronoun, “he.”

As additional indications of this, Paul describes the qualifications of deacons specifically as men, and places restraints on women actively participating in worship (I Timothy 2:11-15). It would be impossible for women to serve as elders if they could not lead in public worship and teaching.

4. How do we know that a congregation must have more than one elder and why is this important?

As we observe in the New Testament, the appointment of leaders was always done in groups of two or more. Also, there is never one elder in charge of one or more congregations. This would suggest a type of hierarchy that is not found in scripture but became a model for denominational churches. In the New Testament, each congregation had its own elders who had authority only in their own congregation.

From a practical sense, it was important to have a plurality of elders so that spiritual leadership would have a collective wisdom and avoid the situation where leadership in the local church would be exercised by only one person. (See Acts 20:28).

5. Explain the following responsibilities of church leaders.

See the associated text for this lesson for additional details.

Teach – This is a critical element of leadership in a congregation. To teach is to influence knowledge, attitude and behavior. Therefore, leaders, specifically elders must be involved in this task. See 1 Peter 5:1-3.

Protect – Shepherds, by the nature of their work, protect the flock. See Acts 20:28; Titus 1:9; Hebrews 13:17.

Lead – As with teaching, leadership involves influencing. Elders are to influence the flock to live faithful lives and do so with a servant attitude. For this and other reasons, the church should honor and obey its leadership. See I Timothy 5:17; 1 Peter 5:1-5.

Pray and minister to the flock – It is humbling to have someone represent us to our Lord, and it is an honor to be the one offering the prayer. We regard our elders as faithful and spiritual men who can approach God on our behalf. See James 5:14-15.

Anointing with Oil – Although this was a custom of the period. It was a sacred custom among Jews and was used to transfer holiness and virtue from the Lord. There are some who believe that the various oils used in the period had some medicinal qualities, although this is not communicated in scripture.

Shepherd the flock – This is probably the most common image of our elders. This role is one of protecting, guiding, feeding and sheltering. It is at the heart of who and what an elder is. See I Timothy 3:2-7.

Discipline – Discipline has two basic meanings. One is to give teaching and correction to one who is in error (I Thessalonians 5:12-17). The other is to rebuke and admonish the disobedient (Titus 3:10; II Thessalonians 3:6,14). See also Matthew 18:15-17.

Mature the saints – This is a critical element of the teaching role of our elders as they guide us to spiritual maturity. Much of this type of work is done through the example of holy living provided by the elders in their day-to-day interaction with members of the church. See Ephesians 4:11-16.

Collectively, these roles help the church mature spiritually and successfully carry out our function as the Body of Christ.

6. Explain the importance of each of the qualifications of elders. (I Timothy 3:2-7)

See the associated text for additional details. Note also that various versions of scripture will use different words to describe the qualifications of elders.

- **Above reproach** – This does not mean one is not without sin but rather one is faithfully seeking to serve our Lord (See also I John 1:5-10).
- **Husband of one wife** – There are various understandings of this qualification. The most common understanding is one of attitude, as in a man committed to one woman.
- **Temperate** – One with the ability to reason, analyze and make sound decisions. Also, a person not easily influenced by every new idea.
- **Prudent** – Has a balanced sense of judgment, self-controlled and careful.
- **Respectable** – One who is worthy of respect because of their excellence of character.
- **Hospitable** – has a welcoming spirit and attitude. This includes generosity, kindness and grace.
- **Apt to teach** – This is perhaps at the heart of who and what an elder is because of their role to influence us to live faithful lives. Our shepherds communicate God's will through their ability to teach God's word and model their own teaching.
- **Not a drunkard** – An elder is not addicted to wine, or other influences that would affect their spirituality.
- **Not pugnacious** – This describes someone who is not argumentative, aggressive, and confrontational. This is the opposite of someone who expresses the hospitable nature of an elder.
- **Gentle** – Like hospitable, this communicates someone who looks out for the best interest of others in a kind and gracious way.
- **Peaceable** (see not pugnacious, someone hospitable and gentle).
- **Free from the love of money** – Someone who is not controlled by worldly influences and seeking financial gain as a prime objective in every situation.
- **A well-managed home** – Our family is our first and perhaps most important mission. If a man cannot lead effectively in his own home, then he will have difficulty leading a congregation.
- **Not a new convert** – Satan attacks us in many ways, especially through pride. A new or young Christian would be very susceptible to this form of attack. Further, an elder must have the wisdom and experience not normally seen in a new convert.

7. What other qualifications of elders beyond those in I Timothy 3:2-7 would be appropriate to consider?

The listing from Paul is not an exhaustive list. It does present to us a man who is deeply spiritual and mature enough to lead a congregation. A man in this position must demonstrate a wide range of leadership skills (i.e., good organizational and communication abilities as well as a sense of empathy for others etc.). He is one who can draw upon a wide range of life experiences and Bible knowledge to be an effective elder.

8. Defend or refute the following statement:

“Elders should be appointed by ministers and not by elders.”

The intent of the question is to have learners review Paul’s instructions to Timothy and Titus regarding the qualifications and selection of elders. There is likely to be strong opinions in this discussion.

Defense: The evangelist, not elders are the ones in scripture that appoint elders. The only example and teaching in the New Testament concerning appointing elders is in Acts 14:21-23 and Paul’s instructions to Timothy and Titus. In the Acts passage, Paul and Barnabas, as evangelists (missionaries), appointed elders in Derbe. One can assume that Paul was the key figure in this process. Paul is therefore acting in his capacity as not only an evangelist, but also exhibiting apostolic authority.

In Titus 1:5 Paul states that he left Titus in Crete to appoint elders throughout the region. This would be in addition to the initial elders he and Barnabas appointed when there. Further, he is giving instructions for qualifications of elders to Timothy and Titus. One can infer from this that they, as evangelists, will take the lead in vetting and appointing men as elders.

In a practical sense, an evangelist is a neutral player in the process and likely has a broader insight into the personal lives of the men and is therefore in a better position to make the decision.

Refute: Elders are to oversee the congregation in which they serve. (I Peter 5:1-2; Acts 2:17;28; Philippians 1:1) This includes the responsibility for the direction and spiritual growth of the congregation. Elders should also have a deeper and broader knowledge of the men being considered and thus, be able to make a better choice in who can serve.

Additional thoughts: As noted in the text for this lesson, elders are not self-appointed, nor are they chosen by popular vote. They are selected, trained, and appointed by evangelists and elders together when the congregation is adding new or additional elders and not appointing them for the first time, as was the case for Titus.

At the time Paul was instructing Timothy and Titus, and in his missionary efforts in Crete, there were no elders at the congregations in which they served. It was, therefore, very appropriate for Paul, Timothy, and Titus as evangelist and leaders within the congregation to take on the responsibility for appointing elders. It is also important to note that in I Timothy 4:14 we see that the elders have appointed (commended) the evangelists into ministry.

As congregations and elderships mature, it is appropriate and within the sphere of responsibility for elders to include this responsibility as overseers. The ideal situation is one in which the evangelist and elders work in partnership to vet and appoint men whom the members of the congregation have identified as shepherds among them.

A possible follow-up question would be to ask how the congregation's process for selecting elders fits that which is described in scripture.

Lesson #6 – Elders, Deacons, and the Church

- Part 1 (I Timothy 3:8-13)

Teaching Strategy

The focus of this lesson is the attitude we should have towards our leaders. Of special note in this lesson is on our response to our leadership and an introduction to the role of deacons. More detail of the qualifications and selections of deacons will be discussed in a follow-up lesson.

Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Understand the role, work and qualifications of congregational leaders.
- **Feel:** Appreciate God’s plan for leadership for congregations of the Lord’s Church.
- **Do:** Apply God’s plan for congregational leadership to live faithful lives as servants of our Lord.

Support

- Series – I Timothy for Beginners; Mike Mazzalongo, 2019
- Video/Reading – Lesson 6 – Elders, Deacons, and the Church
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 6

Body of the Lesson

1.0 Elders

1.1 Response of the church to leaders

1.1.1 Remember them

1.1.2 Imitate them

1.1.3 Hold them accountable

1.1.4 Honor them

1.2 Lessons

2.0 Deacons

2.1 Word meaning

2.2 Roles

2.3 Lessons

Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as “right or wrong” responses.

1. What ways should members of a congregation respond to leaders?

- Appreciate and respect them – We appreciate the work these men do as they serve our Lord and the congregation in their ministry. They take on the extra work of guiding us to greater spirituality and faithfulness. (I Thessalonians 5:12-13; Hebrews 13:17)
- Remember them – We do this as we pray for our leaders, implement their teachings and obey their guidance.
- Imitate them – We look at their lives and conduct as practical examples of how to produce the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5). By imitating them, we, too, develop these traits until they become part of who we are.
- Hold them accountable – Our leaders are men and are susceptible to Satan’s attacks like all of us. We continue to love and respect these men, especially in these times. We respectfully challenge them in a decision, not to refute or weaken, but to grow together in understanding, always remembering that they share in the responsibility for our souls. (I Timothy 5:19-22)
- Honor them – Our congregations are led by elders specifically, as well as deacons and teachers. They serve us in special ways and so are to be honored for their love, humility and servant hearts.

2. What are some practical lessons we can learn about the role of elders that help us grow spiritually?

These men demonstrate the servant nature that God asks of all of us. They serve us selflessly looking for no honor for themselves but rather glory to God. There is no specified age required to serve in this role, however, the implication is that these are men who are mature in age, wisdom and experience. Many of these men spend many years serving the church in this capacity, even past the normal expected retirement age.

We develop a deep love and respect for these men as we recognize their love for us and desire to guard our hearts in Christ. This love and respect are given in appreciation as they continue in their service. They are indeed men worthy of honor and respect by all. They are not perfect, but they strive for faithfulness in service to our Lord and ourselves.

3. What does the word “deacon” mean and how does it describe this role in the church?

The word deacon basically means a servant. It is true that all that are in the church are to be servants, but this designation has a different application in scripture as it has come to mean a man who serves the church in a specified capacity.

There are some congregations that have appointed men as “deacons at large” (not an official title). These men serve as a first option when there is a specific need. Most congregations appoint men to serve in a designated area based on their specific knowledge and skill. Note that there is no requirement that men who are chosen to serve as elders must first serve as deacons. Although this is sometimes done, however, it is not a requirement.

4. What is the history of the word “Diakonos” that we use today to describe a deacon?

This word from the Greek means to wait upon as in a waiter. It carries the idea of attending to, rendering service or ministering to. A good example of this is found in Acts 6 where the apostles appointed seven men to organize the serving of food to widows in the church. These men are named but of special note is Stephen and Philip who both later had roles (evangelists) beyond serving as deacons (Acts 7, 7; Acts 9).

Our Lord elevated the role of servant as one He considered great in the Kingdom and fulfilled that role Himself as an example. Servanthood grew from a lowly position to one of high regard among the disciples of Jesus even to this day.

The apostles chose this word to designate men they had set forth for special service. Paul would later recognize them as he listed deacons in his greetings (Philippians 1:1) and in special gifts given to those who serve the Church (Ephesians 4:11-13).

Today, these men are appointed by elders within a congregation having met specific qualifications to serve.

5. What are ways that the work of elders and deacons are similar and different?

There are similarities between the two positions of leadership. Some of the qualifications are the same. Both positions are held by men who serve the church. The major difference between an elder and deacon is in responsibility and scope of practice. An elder exercises general oversight and guidance within the congregation. Sometimes he serves as an administrator, but more often he serves as a teacher and protector of the faith. A deacon has a specified office or area of responsibility and exercises management and leadership within that area. He is usually accountable to the eldership in general and sometimes to a specific elder.

6. How can you use this lesson to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?

Whatever our role, whether a formal role as a deacon or elder or being a membership at large, we are all expected and directed by our Lord to serve. We must recognize our abilities and develop them to a higher level as we use our gifts to serve the Lord's church. When we do so, we honor God and each other and will receive recognition for our service (Matthew 25, "Well done good and faithful servant.") But we must always remember that we are servants, and He is the master. Our role is to serve the Master in all ways and in all things. As we do so, we bring honor and glory to God.

Lesson #7 – Elders, Deacons, and the Church – Part 2 (I Timothy 3:8-13)

Teaching Strategy

The focus of this lesson is on the service of elders and deacons. Of special note is the qualifications and role of deacons.

Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Understand the role, work and qualifications of congregational leaders.
- **Feel:** Appreciate God’s plan for leadership for congregations of the Lord’s Church.
- **Do:** Apply God’s plan for congregational leadership in order to live faithful lives as servants to our Lord.

Support

- Series – I Timothy for Beginners; Mike Mazzalongo, 2019
- Video/Reading – Lesson 7 – Elders, Deacons and the Church – Part 2
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 7

Body of the Lesson

1.0 The first deacons

1.1 Acts 6:1-6

1.2 I Timothy 3:8-13

2.0 Lessons

Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as “right or wrong” responses.

1. Summarize the situation that led to the first deacons being appointed and what were the results (Acts 6:1-7 – see also Acts 2:42-47)?

As the church began in Acts 2, we see the new Christians enjoying a loving fellowship. Part of this fellowship included sharing and caring for each other as the need arose. With time the church had a large group of widows that required care. One particular group (the Grecian widows) felt underserved because of their nationality and a complaint was raised because of this situation. Eventually, this issue was brought before the apostles because it threatened to disturb the unity and peace of the church.

The apostles asked the community of believers to select seven qualified and spiritual men to take over the work of giving out food so they, the apostles, could focus on their key role of preaching the gospel and prayer.

The results were that the issue was resolved, unity was restored and the gospel was spread (Acts 6:7).

2. What are the qualifications of deacons as listed in the following passages and how does this generally describe them?

Acts 6:3 – Although the title, “deacon” is not used in this passage, their work and qualifications are: they are to be men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and wisdom, and assigned a specific task. This indicates faithful Christian men, well thought of and known for their character. They were men who exemplified the key characteristic of servants in that their focus was on the agape love our Lord wishes for us to exhibit.

I Timothy 3:8-13 – (**Note:** Different versions will use different terms or descriptions. Those listed in this discussion are from the text associated with this course.) Overall, Paul’s instructions to timothy regarding deacons does not differ in principle to those of elders but has some specific qualifications not listed in Acts 6.

- Men of dignity – A man respected, not flippant or coarse.
- Not double tongued – Not hypercritical, insincere or talking behind someone’s back. In other words, men whose word could be trusted.

- Not addicted to much wine – Although wine was a part of the normal culture of the time, these men were not to be addicted to it. This communicates men who have self-control, especially in this area.
- Not fond of sordid gain – These men have an honorable occupation that could be seen as a good example within and without the Christian community. Furthermore, they were honest in their work.
- Holding the mystery of the faith with a clear conscious – Men who were baptized believers and faithful to our Lord in both thought and deed.
- Are first tested – They were already serving effectively, perhaps not in the area they would be assigned to, but capable of serving.
- Their wives also – Their wives were to be honorable women, well respected, clear thinking and faithful. This was critical to the man serving. His wife provided tremendous support and encouragement.

(Author's note: As a serving deacon, I could not begin to serve without my wife. Not only does she support and encourage me in my area of service, but she is also a wise counselor. I indeed see the wisdom of God in this requirement.)

- Husband of one wife – This is the same requirement of elders. The generally accepted understanding of this is that he is dedicated to one woman as his wife.
- Good managers of their children and household – this is the same requirement of elders. A man's first mission and primary role is that of spiritual leader of his family. He must demonstrate his abilities in this area first.

In summary, from both passages we see deacons as men faithful to our Lord and the Kingdom. They are active in their faith as servants. They are dedicated to the family of God as well as their own families. They are knowledgeable of God's word and live accordingly. They show a willing spirit to do what is necessary to ensure what is best for others before self.

3. How does Paul describe the reward for deacons who serve well and why is this appropriate?

Paul states that they receive high standing (respect) and increased faith. These men answer the call to be servants. They are those that our Lord taught as the greatest in the Kingdom. These men are humble in their service and are, therefore, elevated by God. As they are successful and effective in their service, they see their faith validated and increased.

4. Defend the Bible's teaching that women cannot serve or be appointed as deacons (deaconesses).

Peter specified men as servants in Acts 6. Paul does not use the term deaconess in his instructions in I Timothy 3. The context of Paul's instructions is a list for men. The reference to women is in the capacity of wife for both deacons and elders. The teaching and references do not carry over to mean that a woman can serve as a deacon (See Romans 16:1).

Many people, both men and women, serve faithfully and well but are not designated with the office of deacon. All Christians, both male and female, are to serve in the body of Christ and thus bring glory to God. Only certain ones, however, are appointed by elders to be responsible for certain tasks. Keep in mind, that although there are cultural issues to consider, women of the period sometimes held positions of responsibility and authority so Paul could easily have allowed women to serve as leaders in the congregation. But both he and Peter in their role as apostles and with their authority (Matthew 16:19) as apostles, designated the men who qualified to hold these positions.

5. How can you use this lesson to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?

Whether serving as an elder or deacon or a "regular" member of the body of Christ, the key is that we are servants. As we continue to serve in whatever capacity we can, we grow in our faith and receive glory and praise from God.

Lesson #8 – The Reason for Paul’s Letter to Timothy (I Timothy 3:14-16)

Teaching Strategy

The focus of this lesson is on reasons for Paul’s instructions to Timothy. Of special note is the impact of not following God’s instructions and how we grow spiritually when we do God’s will.

Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Understand Paul’s reason for writing I Timothy.
- **Feel:** Recognize the importance of Paul’s instructions.
- **Do:** Apply God’s will to live faithful lives as servants to our Lord.

Support

- Series – I Timothy for Beginners; Mike Mazzalongo, 2019
- Video/Reading – Lesson 8 – The Reason for Paul’s Letter to Timothy
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 8

Body of the Lesson

- 1.0 Review of the first part of Paul’s instructions to Timothy
- 2.0 Mystery of Godliness – I Timothy 3:14-16
 - 2.1 How Paul refers to the church
 - 2.2 Paul’s summary of the mystery of Godliness
- 3.0 Lessons

Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as “right or wrong” responses.

1. Summarize Paul's key points in I Timothy 1 – 3:13.

See the associated introduction from the text for key points.

2. What is the “Mystery of Godliness” and why would he refer to it in this way? (I Timothy 3:14-16)

It is the gospel, the death, burial and resurrection of Christ (I Corinthians 15:1-9). The concept of a mystery usually refers to something unknown. Now we know. Throughout man's history God promised a redeemer. Through Jesus Christ we see the Redeemer, and God's full plan for our salvation through Him is now known.

3. Explain how Paul refers to the church in I Timothy 3:15.

- Household of God – We're God's family dwelling in His household.
- Church of the Living God – God is real, alive and active in our salvation through the Holy Spirit. We have received His blessings reserved for His family.
- Pillar and Support of the Truth – We hold to the truth (the gospel message) and demonstrate it by our faithful lives and the proclamation of it to others. We teach God's truth, not the teachings and philosophies of men (false teachers and teachings). (See also Ephesians 1:3-14; 3:1-13)

4. Discuss the following questions from I Timothy 3:16.

What is “revealed in the flesh” and what is the importance of God being revealed in the flesh?

This is the incarnation; God becoming flesh in the person of Jesus Christ. This is a foundational teaching of Christianity. We defend and promote this truth. (See John 1:1; 1:14)

What is meant by “vindicated in the Spirit”?

Jesus confirmed who He was and His role through His resurrection. Without the resurrection, He would be just another false teacher. Vindicated by the Spirit specifically refers to the Spirit’s role in resurrecting Jesus. It also refers to Jesus speaking truth by His resurrection. NOTE: At our Lord’s baptism and transfiguration, although all three members of the Godhead were present, God the Father was primarily active in these events. At the resurrection, God the Father is silent, but the Spirit takes the lead (Romans 1:4. Through these three actions we see Jesus identified and glorified as the Son of God.)

What is meant by “beheld by angels”?

Not only was Jesus’ resurrection witnessed by those that saw Him die and alive afterwards, but angels also testified about Him (Matthew 28:2).

What is “proclaimed among the nations” and “believed on in the world” and what was the result?

Jesus began to be proclaimed among the nations at Pentecost in Acts 2. Peter and the others provided the truth of who Jesus was to those gathered there. As the church was scattered (Acts 1:8; 8:1) they took the gospel with them wherever they went, not to forget that Paul, the Apostle, was charged by Jesus to bring the Gospel to the Gentile world which he did establishing churches throughout the Roman Empire. We continue that work today as faithful disciples. The result is that the Church grew then and continues to grow today, just as Jesus commanded.

5. What are the four basic teachings of Paul for Timothy to pass on and what is our role today?

(See the summary for this chapter in the text for discussion points)

- Specific order and organization for the church
- Qualifications for church leadership
- Conduct for members of the Church
- Role of the church

6. How can we use this information to remain faithful and help others grow spiritually?

God has placed the responsibility and opportunity of sharing the gospel on us (II Corinthians 4:7). We begin by learning and following God's will for our own salvation and then helping others do the same. As members of God's household, we enjoy the blessings He provides. But just as God told Abram (Abraham) in Genesis 12:1-2, there is an expectation that we will pass on those blessings to others. As we do so, we grow spiritually and help others learn of salvation. All of this combined brings glory to God.

Lesson #9 – The Minister and His Ministry (I Timothy 4:1-16)

Teaching Strategy

The focus of this lesson is on Timothy’s responsibilities as a minister. Of special note is the proper response to false teaching and apostasy. The intent of this lesson is to present Paul’s instructions and how we should respond to these threats today.

Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Understand our response to threats from false teaching and apostasy.
- **Feel:** Accept the responsibility to adhere to the truth and help others do so as well.
- **Do:** Apply the teachings of Paul to help us remain faithful to God’s will.

Support

- Series – I Timothy for Beginners; Mike Mazzalongo, 2019
- Video/Reading – Lesson 9 – The Minister and His Ministry
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 9

Body of the Lesson

- 1.0 The two teachings of the Christian faith
 - 1.1 Deity and resurrection of Jesus
 - 1.2 Content and preaching of the gospel
- 2.0 Apostasy predicted and identified (4:1-6)
 - 2.1 What is apostasy
 - 2.2 Causes of apostasy
- 3.0 False teaching or immaturity
- 4.0 The good minister
- 5.0 Lessons

Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as “right or wrong” responses.

1. Discuss the two basic teachings (doctrines) of the Christian faith Paul communicates to Timothy.

(See Chapter 9 introduction)

The deity and resurrection of Jesus – This is the foundational teaching of Christianity. The Bible clearly teaches that Jesus is the Son of God (note: Some denominations and other false religions state Jesus is either a prophet or “a” son of God.) The Bible also teaches that Jesus rose from the dead as prophesied. In doing so, we too can overcome death through Him.

Scriptures to help with the discussion:

- John 1:1
- 1 John 5:20
- Matthew 16:13-20
- Colossians 2:9
- John 5:23
- John 20:28

The content and preaching of the gospel – the gospel is the good news of Jesus Christ. Our charge is to teach the true gospel in its purest form.

Scriptures to help with the discussion:

- I Corinthians 15:1-8
- Romans 3:23
- Romans 8:3-4

2. What is apostasy?

It means to abandon former loyalty and belief; to fall away from a fixed position.

3. Why does Paul say some will fall away and how are some ways this happens (I Timothy 4:1-2)?

They pay attention to deceitful spirits, doctrines and demons. This is a clear reference to the false teachers. They work as agents of Satan. When we follow them, we also work as agents of Satan, not only jeopardizing our own salvation, but drawing others away from the truth as well.

(Follow-up question – How can this happen to us today? There are many ways, but anything that causes us to lose our focus on Jesus and abandon our faith is a danger leading eventually to apostasy. It is often seen when one follows different teachings than those of Christ and His Apostles, or erroneous teachings claiming to have scriptural authority. Note also that Satan improperly uses God’s word to cause some immature believers to fall away. He will take something out of context or teach it in an erroneous way. We must study to ensure that we understand and can vigorously defend the truth.

4. When is the “later times” Paul is referring to and how do these apply to us?

Paul is referring to our age, the Christian age, in which we live. We must be aware of this and ensure that we don’t participate or cause others to fall away. Note also Paul’s writing on this subject to the Thessalonians (II Thessalonians 2).

5. What is Paul meaning by “the faith”?

“The” faith refers to the body of teachings that together make up the Christian faith, and not necessarily our belief or faith in our Lord. (See: Jude 3; Galatians 1:23; Acts 13:8)

6. Why would forbidding to marry and eating certain foods be harmful to spirituality?

These false teachings remove our focus on what God has given us as blessings and uses restrictions in these areas to establish a “works” oriented manner of gaining salvation thus corrupting the essential teaching of the gospel that we are saved by our faith responding to God’s grace. (See Mark 7:18-23; Colossians 2:16; Acts 10:15; 1 Corinthians 7:1-10; 9:3-5; I Timothy 3:2; Hebrews 13:4)

7. What does God expect from us for His blessings and how do we do this?

God expects gratitude, not denial of his blessings. We do this by including in our prayers thankfulness to God for giving His blessings, including the truth of His word. Further, we learn and live faithfully according to God’s word. Always remember that God does require perfection, but rather asks us to have faith.

8. What is “false teaching” and how does this differ from erroneous teaching?

Remember that in context, Paul continued to deal with man-made philosophies and religions such as Gnosticism. He was warning and equipping Timothy, and by extension, ourselves today. False teaching is any teaching (doctrine) that denies, changes or attacks the basic elements of the gospel. This includes adding or subtracting from it. False teachers do this knowingly and willingly.

An erroneous teacher is one who mistakenly teaches something incorrectly through lack of knowledge or incorrect teaching from another. This person is mistaken and seeks to learn truth. Once truth is learned, the error ceases and truth is taught.

9. How are we “good ministers” today? (I Timothy 4:6-16)

We point out what is true from what is false (vs. 6). This necessitates that we understand scripture and seek to properly apply it in our own lives. It goes beyond simple knowledge to include living as God wills (vs 7-12). We preach (teach) God’s word as appropriate, and as we are able (vs. 13-14). We also persevere in our ministry.

10. How can we use this lesson to strengthen our faith and help others grow spiritually?

Note that the word ministry is not restricted to the preacher in the pulpit but refers to anyone who serves. As we serve in our individual capacities, we add to the overall success of the Body of Christ. This includes our responsibility to share the gospel in its purest form with others so they too can begin their faith walk.

Lesson #10 – The Care of Widows (I Timothy 5:1-16)

Teaching Strategy

The focus of this lesson is on internal activities within a congregation. Of special note are doctrinal matters and caring for those vulnerable due to life circumstances, such as widows. Also note the principle of love, compassion, and mercy as well as personal responsibility for honoring our parents that are at the heart of these instructions.

Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Understand the importance of showing the love, compassion and mercy of Christ.
- **Feel:** Recognize the importance of caring for others.
- **Do:** Show the characteristics of Christ as we live our Christian lives.

Support

- Series – I Timothy for Beginners; Mike Mazzalongo, 2019
- Video/Reading – Lesson 10 – The Care of Widows
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 10

Body of the Lesson

- 1.0 Attitude of the minister (5:1-2)
- 2.0 Care for widows
 - 2.1 By family (5:3-8)
 - 2.2 By the church (9-16)
- 3.0 Application

Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as “right or wrong” responses.

1. What is the relationship between Paul's teaching from I Timothy 5:1-2 and his instructions in Titus 2:1-5 and how do these apply to each of us?

Paul is providing practical instructions to Timothy and Titus on the roles and relationships in the body of Christ. To Timothy, he addresses this primarily from a position based on respect. In his instructions to Titus, we see that if they fulfill their role, then they are indeed worthy of our affection and respect. In both cases, we see that our senior saints are worthy of our love, respect and honor.

Although Paul provides instructions to Timothy and Titus, we must remember that all of us are to minister (care for) others. It is not the singular responsibility of those we hire as ministers to fulfill our own responsibilities towards those in need.

2. What is the relationship between Paul's instruction for widows in I Timothy 5:3-4 and what James teaches in James 1:26-27?

We are to show compassion, love and mercy as our Lord demonstrated for us. There is no greater need than to care for those who are unable to provide for themselves. The culture of Paul's and James' day did not have the institutional means to provide for widows. If families could not or did not provide for them, they became truly destitute and incapable of providing for themselves. The church has historically been sensitive to provide for its members who are widows in need (Acts 6). This care has been a true measure of the sincerity of the church's love for Christ.

3. Defend the following statement:

“Being a faithful Christian means you care for your family members in need.”

Our circumstances in life change but we must always remain faithful. The family was the first institution God created. Caring for family, especially our elderly parents is one way we honor our parents.

4. What are some lessons we can learn from Paul’s instruction to Timothy concerning the church’s responsibility to provide for widows; why is it important for the church to be active in this area; how does this relate to Paul’s teachings in Galatians 6:10 and the early church’s activities seen in Acts 2:42-47?

Look for responses about providing for each other, caring for one another, especially those of the household of faith. This is an important part of the role of the church. It was demonstrated early on in Acts 2:42-47 and is an ongoing responsibility of the church to this day. When this happens, the reputation of the church is enhanced, and people see our Lord’s love demonstrated thus encouraging them to become a part of the body of Christ.

In this instance, Paul’s teaching to Timothy focused on the widows, who were among the most vulnerable people of that time. The lesson here was that when the church showed compassion to widows, it demonstrated the character of Christ Who was especially concerned with the most vulnerable in that society. We ask for His love, mercy and compassion so we must therefore express and demonstrate that to others as well. It would be easy for someone to be overlooked in a large and busy church, especially a widow in need. Paul’s teaching was a reminder to keep the most vulnerable in mind while carrying out the busy demands of ministry.

A point of note. Even if someone has a family to care for them, we still should monitor the situation to ensure that needs are met. There are not only physical needs, but also emotional and social needs as well. One way we do this is to include them in our congregational activities and utilize their talents and resources.

5. What are some modern applications for caring for widows and what other ministry opportunities relate to this?

Our care is not limited to widows. We are responsible to provide for our families. This has always been part of God's will (See Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 5:16). This also impacts the task of caring for our neighbor (See Luke 10:25-37). Consider, for example, young mothers who need help caring for small children.

Although there are various resources in our society that can care for those in need, caring for peoples' needs is still a significant responsibility of the church, especially for those who are members of the body of Christ. This provides encouragement for faithfulness and encouragement for those seeking a relationship with Jesus.

Benevolence work provides a ministry opportunity for many, including those who would be receiving help. We offer a blessing to those in need and enable them to pass blessings on to others.

Lesson #11 – Disciplining Leaders

(I Timothy 5:17-25)

Teaching Strategy

The focus of this lesson is proper interaction with church leaders. Of special note are our interactions with leaders who cause trouble. NOTE: We should always remember the humanity of our leaders and our responsibility to respect, encourage and support them as fellow servants of our Lord.

Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Understand God’s plan for how to deal with church leaders in difficult circumstances.
- **Feel:** Honor church leadership.
- **Do:** Apply God’s word in our relationship with church leaders.

Support

- Series – I Timothy for Beginners; Mike Mazzalongo, 2019
- Video/Reading – Lesson 11 – Disciplining Leaders
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 11

Body of the Lesson

1.0 Concerning Elders

1.1 Honoring elders

1.2 Correcting elders

1.3 Selecting elders

2.0 Concerning Timothy (5:23-25)

3.0 Lessons

Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as “right or wrong” responses.

1. Explain the three areas of an elder's work:

Ruling – Ruling applies to the elder's role in leading the congregation.

Preaching – Preaching refers to the elder's role in proclaiming God's word.

Teaching – Teaching is instruction and application of God's word given by church leaders.

These are three distinct roles, yet all three are interrelated and equally important for elders to shepherd and guard their respective congregations.

2. Explain Paul's use of "double honor" for elders who rule well.

There are several opinions as to what "double honor" means: Double pay, honor plus pay, twice the amount 60-year-old widows received, honor for age and carrying out the role of an elder. The general thought on this is that elders may receive a salary from the church as seen in the context of I Timothy 5:17-18. An example of this is when an elder also serves as a pulpit minister and is paid for his services.

3. How do we determine if an elder rules well?

There will certainly be different thoughts on this point. Look for responses that include an elder's commitment to the physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual well-being of the members in their congregation.

4. How does Paul's instructions about correcting elders relate to Jesus' instructions in Matthew 18:15-17?

Some may feel there is not a relationship here since it deals with one sinning against another. Yet the principle behind these instructions may certainly apply to one's individual relationship with an elder. We should go to that person one-on-one and seek to resolve the situation. If the situation is severe enough then we should follow our Lord's instructions. As per Paul's instructions, we must have witnesses to the elder's sin, and just as Jesus Himself instructed, if the behavior persists, then the matter should be brought before the congregation.

5. Explain Paul's use of "Laying on hands" in I Timothy 5:22 and explain the wisdom behind it.

Laying on of hands was a method of signifying various actions. One was a way of blessing someone (Matthew 19:13). It was a sign of healing (Mark 8:25). Note that in this case, it was for miraculous action by Christ and would be exercised later by the apostles. It is not used in this way today. It can be used as a sign of empowerment (Acts 8:18). It can also be used as a sign of commendation (Acts 6:6). Today, we use the laying on of hands as a way of blessing or commending someone to a certain ministry (preaching, missions, elder, deacon etc.).

6. What is today's application of I Timothy 5:23 concerning Paul's instruction about using wine?

Paul is not necessarily condoning the use of alcoholic beverages. In the context of the time, water was not purified and contained potential parasites and other impurities, so wine was a common drink which did not contain these impurities. In our world today we have access to cleaner water (in most cases). We also have medications to treat various illnesses that were not available at that time.

7. What is the relationship to Paul's use of character traits (I Timothy 3:2-7) and deeds (I Timothy 5:25) for qualifications of elders?

The character traits that enable a man to serve as an elder must be and are generally evident to others. In the same way, their deeds, whether good or not, will also be evident.

8. What are some lessons we learn regarding elders?

They are human. We sometimes place unfair and unattainable standards on our elders forgetting that they are human and subject to the same issues all of us face.

Elders need our encouragement and sometimes correction. We must recognize that they carry an extra load, well beyond what many of us are capable of bearing. We should support them. If we are in a situation where we must correct them, we must take into consideration, not only God's word, but the honor due them as well.

9. How can we use this lesson to strengthen our faith and help others grow spiritually?

It is God's plan that we have elders as our leaders in our congregations. We must honor these men and encourage them in their ministry. We work with these men and grow spiritually as they apply God's word in their teachings and examples.

Lesson #12 – Paul’s Teachings on Slavery (I Timothy 6:1-2)

Teaching Strategy

The focus of this lesson is on Paul’s teachings concerning slavery. Of special note is the relationship that Christians have regardless of political, social, economic or other differences. Emphasis is also placed on how we can use our status to serve the Lord and each other.

- **Student Learning Outcomes**
- **Know:** Understand the impact of slavery on the lives of early Christians.
- **Feel:** Recognize the importance of faithfulness to the Lord regardless of social status.
- **Do:** Demonstrate to all the love required of faithful followers of Jesus.

Support

- Series – I Timothy for Beginners; Mike Mazzalongo, 2019
- Video/Reading – Lesson 12 – Paul’s Teachings on Slavery
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 12

Body of the Lesson

- 1.0 Review of previous lessons
- 2.0 Understanding slavery in scripture
 - 2.1 Slavery in the Old Testament
 - 2.2 Slavery in the New Testament
 - 2.3 Slavery in the first century church
- 3.0 Application

Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as “right or wrong” responses.

1. What is the relevancy of Paul's teachings today concerning masters and slaves?

The intent of this question is to help students realize that the church represents the Lord in the world. Some of the issues may have been wrong morally but still were part of that society. Changes in these areas eventually occurred in order to bring them into line with God's will. Sometimes this change was gradual, sometimes radical. In our world today we face issues other than slavery. In Paul's instructions to Timothy, we see that slavery was an issue for that period. In today's environment we might switch that out for the issue of abortion. Although completely immoral and against God's will, abortion remains a part of many societies and must be dealt with within the confines of the law.

Also keep in mind that social issues are secondary to the primary issue of salvation. When we convert people to Christianity, we can then continue to guide them into living by His will in all things.

2. How does the slavery/master issue (I Timothy 6:1-2) relate to Christians' attitude towards rulers?

Paul and Peter teach us to submit to authorities (Romans 13:6-7; I Peter 2:13-25). By doing so we recognize they hold positions sanctioned by God. We may disagree with them, but we are to honor their position.

Our view on slavery is generally based on our western historical model. In such a model, the focus is on cruel and unjust oppression. In the period of Paul and Peter's writing, it was an integral part of the social and economic model. Regardless, masters had to recognize their responsibility to be just, and slaves/servants were to fulfill their role honorably.

In many of our modern societies, we don't have slavery, but we still serve our managers or supervisors etc.. We must, as Christians, respect and honor them as we fulfill our various roles.

3. Describe slavery in the Old Testament period.

- Why people became slaves – The result of war; sold into slavery by their family (Genesis 17:12); born into slavery; to make restitution for a crime (Exodus 22:3); to pay off a debt (II Kings 4:1); to escape poverty and destitution (Exodus 21:2-6); Forced to become a slave through kidnaping and piracy.
- Jewish laws regarding slavery – Several Old Testament laws prescribe the treatment and status of slaves.

Leviticus 25:2 – A Jew could not hold another Jew in permanent slavery because of debt or self-sale.

Exodus 21:7-11 – Female slaves and families were protected from abuse.

Several general prohibitions were based on humane treatment among God's people (could not kill a slave as in the pagan world).

4. Describe slavery in the New Testament period.

During the New Testament period most attitudes about slavery were changing although differences remained between Jewish and Gentile practices. This is due in large part to the number of slaves in the Roman Empire. It is estimated that 1/3 of the population were slaves in one form or another. There was also a movement at the time to grant slaves more freedom.

5. Describe slavery in the first century church.

The most common form of slavery was household slaves. It was not a source of general social unrest, especially since it was so common in Roman society. The early church was a mix of various social situations, especially slave and free. They recognized their social position but placed emphasis on their relationship with God first. Slavery was not specifically denounced by the apostles for three primary reasons:

As a social system, slavery was already passing away. Paul placed emphasis on loving relationships among believers (I Corinthians 7:21-22; Ephesians 6:8; Colossians 3:22; 4:1) not their social rank.

There was nothing to replace it as an economic model. There was no middle class to absorb a large number of freed slaves. It is not an excuse for slavery, but a realization that stability was necessary and the removal of this system without a sound system to replace it would lead to many more problems worse than most experienced in their slave/master relationships. Furthermore, keep in mind that it was a legal system that must had to be dealt with using the existing laws.

Slavery was temporary. Our conversion to the Lord is permanent. Through it we take an eternal view beyond the temporary situation in which we live. We take on a new identity as slaves to God but are free and equal to one another in Christ. Our freedom is from sin, an eternal status not based on economic conditions.

6. What is our task as citizens in God's Kingdom?

Our task is to build the Kingdom of God regardless of the world order in which we find ourselves. We certainly are aware of social issues and concerns, but our focus is bringing salvation through the freedom from sin offered only through Jesus Christ. This world and its man-made institutions will pass away but God's Kingdom is eternal.

Our task is to further strengthen and encourage one another to live faithfully. This is done regardless of our status in any social or economic structure.

Lesson #13 – Paul’s Final Instructions to Timothy and the Church (I Timothy 6:1-2)

Teaching Strategy

The focus of this lesson is on Paul’s warnings as he completes this letter. Of special interest is the preserving of the faith and Timothy’s ministry. Application is made for the church and those serving in ministry today.

Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Understand the content and purpose of Paul’s instructions to the church and Timothy.
- **Feel:** Commit to applying Paul’s teachings to the church and ministers.
- **Do.** Apply Paul’s instructions in our own lives to help us live faithfully.

Support

- Series – I Timothy for Beginners; Mike Mazzalongo, 2019
- Video/Reading – Lesson 13 – Paul’s Final Instructions to the Church and Timothy
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 13

Body of the Lesson

- 1.0 Review of previous information
- 2.0 Instructions to Christian slaves
- 3.0 General instructions
 - 3.1 Warnings about division
 - 3.2 Warnings to those who desire money
 - 3.3 Warnings to ministers
- 4.0 Doxology
- 5.0 Application

Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as “right or wrong” responses.

1. Review Paul's instructions in the following areas:

Slavery in the Old and New Testaments: Slavery existed in both Jewish and Pagan societies, as well as in the Roman Empire and among Christians. The main difference was that slaves in pagan societies were considered property and could be treated as desired. In Jewish and Christian communities, religious laws and Christian principles were included to protect slaves.

Jesus and the apostles' view of slavery: Although rarely commented on and not supported, the issue was not condemned outright for various reasons: it was an integral part of the social and economic environment, the practice was beginning to wane, there was no widespread replacement system, the focus of Christianity was on spiritual salvation, not social issues.

2. What are the two key teachings of Paul on slavery as given to Christian slaves in Ephesus? (Ephesians 6:9; Colossians 4:1) Also, how does this apply today in our society?

Honor and respect their pagan masters as a witness of their faith. We have the same responsibility today as we work in our various occupations. Our work ethic and attitudes reflect our belief system as Christians.

Do not take advantage of the fact that your master is a fellow believer. This is a wonderful situation but it does not remove the responsibility for us to fulfil our role as Christians. It perhaps adds even more responsibility as we serve, support, encourage and hold each other accountable.

3. Discuss the general instructions to the church and Timothy from I Timothy 6:3-21.

Warnings to those who cause division (I Timothy 6:3-5). Division is hated by God (Proverbs 6:16-19. **Note:** Although not specifically stated, the seven things listed cause division.). If one teaches a different doctrine than that given by our Lord and the apostles, it will cause division and lost souls; those who teach it and those who follow it. Timothy and the church are to oppose these type of teachings and those who teach it.

Warnings to those whose desire is money (I Timothy 6:6-10). True godliness focuses on being content with the blessings that God provides and using those blessings for His glory, not our personal gain. One pursuing (desiring) money can easily slip into that pursuit over pursuing godliness. The issue is focus. Anything that takes precedence over our desire for godliness is dangerous for our souls. See also Matthew 6:24; Proverbs 23:4-5; 11:28; Ecclesiastes 5:10; 1 John 2:15-17; James 5:1-6)

Warning to ministers (I Timothy 6:11-15). These instructions are to Timothy and those serving as ministers in the church. (Author's opinion: Don't isolate the title of minister to those who preach from the pulpit. It can be applied to anyone serving the church regardless of role, gender, or status.) A person involved in ministry has a great deal of influence. Therefore, this influence must be used to support and encourage, not to cause division. Primary goals are to be for spiritual matters over worldly ones. Ministers, like everyone else, must strive for faithfulness to the Lord in all things. We are to use the gifts and opportunities given to us to further the proclamation of the gospel to everyone.

4. Discuss the closing (doxology) of Paul's instructions to the church and Timothy (I Timothy 6:15b-16).

Paul opened his letter by stating his position as an apostle and offering grace, mercy and peace from God and our Lord Jesus. He concludes with strong encouragement to Timothy to maintain his faithfulness. Paul inserts praise and glory to God in the middle of his final instructions. This praise underscores the purpose of our lives as faithful servants, we are to glorify God in all ways. Paul is giving us an example of this. He speaks to the eventual return of our Lord, yet another reason to remain faithful.

5. How can we use Paul's final instructions to grow spiritually and help others do the same?

Our focus is on obeying and serving our Lord. A major teaching of Jesus and the apostles was about remaining faithful in all things and not causing division. Note that even as Jesus was praying in the garden before His torture and death, He prayed for unity (John 17). There is a practical reason for this focus on unity. One tactic Satan uses against the church is to cause division. He knows that if we are divided we then can be easily defeated. When we stand united with our Lord and each other in our faith, then we are able to withstand Satan's attacks.

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