

The First Letter to Timothy

19

Morning Devotions

Select a passage in God's Word. Talk with the Lord as you read the passage, then go back and find one or two verses which the Lord has impressed on your heart and meditate on them.

Morning Study

This morning we begin reading the book of **1 Timothy**. This letter is different from all the previous letters of Paul that we have looked at so far, in that it was written to an individual, not a church. Before we begin reading this letter, then, let's take a quick look at the person to whom Paul is writing.

Read Acts 16:1-5

Timothy was a native of Lystra (now in modern Turkey), a Jew with a Greek father. Note how in **1:2**, Paul calls Timothy "my true son in the faith" (see also **1 Corinthians 4:17; Philippians 2:22**). Paul had fathered Timothy in the faith and had mentored him in ministry. Timothy had been a part of Paul's ministry team, one of Paul's "companions" (**Acts 16:6**) who traveled together on his missionary journeys (note **Acts 17:14-15; 18:5; 19:22; 20:4; Romans 16:21; 2 Corinthians 1:19**).

Paul counted Timothy as one of his closest disciples and often included Timothy's name as a co-author of his letters (see **2 Corinthians 1:1; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:1; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:1; Philemon 1**) and he often sent Timothy on special missions to the churches they had established (**1 Corinthians 4:17; 16:10-11; Philippians 2:19; 1 Thessalonians 3:2-3,6**).

Timothy had been instructed to look after the church in Ephesus, while Paul went on to Macedonia during his fourth missionary journey. He wrote this first letter to Timothy to deal, in part, with a dangerous heresy that was attacking the young church. This heresy combined three toxic elements:

- ☞ Decadent Judaism (note **1:3-7**)
- ☞ False asceticism (note **4:1-5**)
- ☞ Early gnosticism (as we will later see in **2:11-15**)

With this in mind, let's read through the whole book of **1 Timothy** in one sitting, and capture, if you can, the heart of Paul for his spiritual son, Timothy.

Memory Verse

Fight the good fight of faith. Take hold
of the eternal life to which you were called
when you made your good confession
in the presence of many witnesses.

1 Timothy 6:12

Here are a few suggestions that may help you to memorize your memory verse:

- ➡ Ask the Lord to help you remember his Word (see [John 14:26](#)).
- ➡ Use the version of the Bible you are most familiar with. What you normally read in your Bible is what you need to be memorizing.
- ➡ Don't just memorize the contents of the verse; memorize its "address" (the verse reference) as well. You can do this by following this pattern: Step 1: **reference**; Step 2: **verse content**; Step 3: **reference**. Then repeat steps 1-3. Note that you are quoting the reference twice as many times as you quote the actual verse content. This gives the verse a clear "reference tag."
- ➡ After you have read your memory verse out aloud several times, try going through your memory verse *without* reading your computer screen.
- ➡ Look up your memory verse in your Bible. Look at its immediate context and read the verses that come before and after your memory verse.
- ➡ Print out your memory verse or jot it down on a piece of paper. Take this paper with you when you go to work or do other daily activities. Meditate on the meaning of the verse throughout the day.
- ➡ During your noon appointment with the Lord, take out your memory verse and go over it again. Talk to the Lord about what this verse means to you personally.
- ➡ In the evening (at either your evening study or your evening devotions), see if you can quote your memory verse from memory. Then, without looking at the memory verse itself, see if you can find it in your Bible.
- ➡ The next day, before you begin committing a new verse to memory, rehearse your previous day's memory verse and see if you can remember it (without cheating!).
- ➡ Finally, at the end of the week (possibly on the Sunday), collect all your week's memory verses, rehearse them and see if you can recall them without reading them. Spend a little extra time on any verses you have difficulty recalling.
- ➡ Remember: Don't just memorize a verse. Put it into practice ([James 1:22](#)). It is not being able to quote a verse from memory that counts. It is His Word *abiding* in your heart that counts ([John 15:7](#)). When you actually apply a verse consistently to your daily life, that is when you *truly* know that verse!