

=THE EPISTLES=

Lesson 10

Paul's Epistles to Timothy

AIM: to teach my pupils the general theme of I and II Timothy.

POINT OF CONTACT: Since Timothy was a young preacher and was Paul's preacher boy, ask the class to name as many preacher boys as they can who have gone out from First Baptist Church. This list can include the college student preparing for the ministry as well as those now in the work. It might be wise to consider giving pencil and paper to each pupil and awarding some little prize to the winner.

INTRODUCTION: Before we consider I and II Timothy, we perhaps should discuss a little bit the arrangement of the books of the New Testament. In the New Testament there are four biographies of Jesus: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. There is one book of history: Acts. There are twenty-one Epistles and one book of prophecy: Revelation.

Of the twenty-one Epistles, Paul is presumed to be the author of fourteen. We call these the Pauline Epistles. These Epistles receive their titles from the churches or individuals to whom they were written. The other seven Epistles receive their title from the author.

I and II Thessalonians were the first of Paul's Epistles. Now we come to I and II Timothy, which were written at the end of his ministry.

I. PAUL'S CIRCUMSTANCES WHEN WRITING THESE EPISTLES. Both of these are prison Epistles. Paul made mention in II Timothy 4:16 that at first no man stood with him. The word "answer" in verse 16 here means "defense." In other words, apparently Paul is stating that he was on trial and that his friends forsook him! Verse 17, however, of the same chapter goes on to say, "Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion." Obviously, Paul was about to be thrown to the lions. Perhaps he was freed after his first offense. Let us notice several other things concerning his circumstances when writing I and II Timothy.

1. He was a prisoner in Rome. (II Timothy 1:17) Many of his friends had deserted him, II Timothy 1:15. Luke, the physician, was with him, II Timothy 4:11.
2. Now Paul longs to see his beloved Timothy. He is ready to be offered, II Timothy 4:6. Not only does he want to see Timothy, but he wants his cloak, his books, and especially certain parchments, II Timothy 4:13.

II. THE RECIPIENT OF THE LETTER WAS TIMOTHY. Timothy was pastor of the church in Ephesus, which was in a section now known as Turkey. You may find a great deal about Timothy from reading Acts 16:1-3. There we learn that Paul first met Timothy in Lystra and that he accompanied Paul on his second missionary journey. Timothy's heritage is found in II Timothy 1:5. We know that he had a godly mother and a godly grandmother in Eunice and Lois. We also find in I Timothy 4:14 and II Timothy 1:6 that he had been ordained to preach by Paul.

Timothy was one of Paul's most trusted helpers and servants. His name occurs often in other of Paul's letters. Note I Corinthians 4:17; 16:10, 11; Philippians 2:19-23; I Thessalonians 3:1, 2, 6.

You will notice that Paul calls Timothy his son in I Timothy 1:2; II Timothy 1:2; and II Timothy 2:1.

III. THE PURPOSE OF THE BOOK. First you might review the purposes of the previous Epistles. The purpose of Paul's Epistles to Timothy is found in I Timothy 3:15. Paul is writing a young pastor, instructing him as to his conduct in connection with the work of the church. Some of the subjects that Paul covers are as follows:

1. The duties of the pastor.
 - 1) He is to preach the Word, II Timothy 4:2.
 - 2) He is to be an evangelist, II Timothy 4:5.
 - 3) He is to keep the people true to the Gospel, I Timothy 1:3-11.
 - 4) He is to train soul winners, II Timothy 2:2.

It is interesting that many of the things we consider pastoral duties are not listed as the most important things. To be sure, there are other duties besides the aforementioned ones, but Paul takes time to instruct Timothy concerning these.
2. Duties of the deacons. The other office in the church is that of deacon. Let us notice his qualifications in I Timothy 3:8-13.
 - 1) He is to be grave. This means serious-minded. This means a man who can make serious decisions and have wisdom in making them.
 - 2) He must not be double-tongued. This means a deacon should not be critical and should not be a gossip.
 - 3) He should not be given to much wine.
 - 4) He should not be greedy of filthy lucre. This means he should be honest and prompt in his financial obligations and his responsibilities.
 - 5) He should not be a novice, verse 10a.
 - 6) His wife should be dedicated to the work, verse 11.
 - 7) He should be the husband of one wife, verse 12a.
 - 8) He should rule his house and his children well, verse 12b.
3. Women. (I Timothy 2:9-15) In these verses the following things are mentioned:
 - 1) Ladies should dress modestly.
 - 2) Ladies should do good works and good deeds.
 - 3) A lady should not teach men in the church.
4. Widows. You will find that I Timothy 5:3-16 teaches how widows should behave in the church.
5. Servants. See I Timothy 6:1, 2. This would deal with employees. Paul is telling Timothy to preach the Gospel; he is to preach the Word of God, and the Bible is to affect the life of each person.

CONCLUSION: There is so much to teach for the lesson, but it might be well for those who teach children, especially boys, to stress the character of Timothy. Those who teach ladies and adults might stress the importance of Lois and Eunice. Those who teach unmarried adults, etc., might be wise to stress some of the writing of Timothy concerning the behavior of widows, etc. All should be taught the general teaching of the book and should be acquainted with its practical knowledge.