

1 & 2 Timothy: Leadership & Discipleship Lessons

Discussion Questions for Classes and Small Groups

If you're working with a class or small group, feel free to duplicate the following handouts in this appendix at no additional charge. If you'd like to print 8-1/2" x 11" or A4 sheets, you can download the free Participant Guide handout sheets at:

www.jesuswalk.com/timothy/timothy-lesson-handouts.pdf

Discussion Questions

You'll find 4 to 5 questions for each lesson. Each question may include several sub-questions. These are designed to get group members engaged in discussion of the key points of the passage. If you're running short of time, feel free to skip questions or portions of questions.

Key Verses

Each of these passages is rich in Bible verses worth memorizing. The verses here are in the New International Version, but feel free to have your members memorize in any translation you're comfortable with. Scripture memory has a way of fixing God's word in our minds. If you haven't tried assigning verses for memory—and then testing the following week—you'll bless your group members, though they may complain about short memories.

"I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you." (Psalm 119:11, NIV)

1. God's Grace and Calling (1 Timothy 1:1-20)
2. Men and Women in God's Household (1 Timothy 2:1-15)
3. Selecting Leaders in God's Household (1 Timothy 3:1-16; Titus 1:6-9)
4. Setting a Godly Example (1 Timothy 4:1-16)
5. Advice about Widows, Elders, and Slaves (1 Timothy 5:1-25; 6:1-2)
6. Reject Greed, Pursue Godliness (1 Timothy 6:3-21)
7. Be Neither Intimidated nor Ashamed (2 Timothy 1:1-17)
8. Endure Hardship for Christ (2 Timothy 2:1-19)
9. Fit for the Master's Use (2 Timothy 2:20-3:14a)
10. Preachers, Teachers, and Holy Scripture (2 Timothy 3:14-4:5)
11. I Have Fought the Good Fight (2 Timothy 4:6-22)

1. God's Grace and Calling (1 Timothy 1:1-20)

Q1. (1 Timothy 1:3-7) What were some of the results of false doctrine in the church at Ephesus? How does doctrinal controversy hurt the spirit of a church? How does it prevent growth? How does it keep the church from its mission?

Q2. (1 Timothy 1:12-14) Why does Paul comment on his own life after a paragraph on the law (1:8-11)? Why does he share this with Timothy and the church that will read the letter? How might sharing this help get the church back on center?

Q3. (1 Timothy 1:17) What do we learn about God from this doxology? What do we learn about praise? Have you ever tried speaking out a doxology in your personal prayer or praise time? What effect does a doxology have on the speaker?

Q4. (1 Timothy 1:18-19) Why does Paul need to remind Timothy about the prophecies spoken over him? In practical terms, what does "fight the good fight" really mean? Why does Paul tell Timothy to "hold on to faith and a good conscience"? What temptation is Paul trying to counter in his protégé?

Key Verses

"Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst." (1 Timothy 1:15, NIV)

"Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen." (1 Timothy 1:17, NIV)

2. Men and Women in God's Household (1 Timothy 2:1-15)

Q1. (1 Timothy 2:1-4) Why does Paul emphasize salvation of all mankind in this letter? What does this suggest about the practice of evangelism in the Ephesus church?

Q2. (1 Timothy 2:5-6) In the context of the salvation of all, why do you think Paul emphasizes the roles of Mediator and Ransom? In what way did Christ fulfill both these roles?

Q3. (1 Timothy 2:8) What problem among the men of the congregation is Paul referring to in this verse? What is so serious about worshipping with the opposite of love in your heart?

Q4. (1 Timothy 2:9-10) How did women dressing in fancy clothes threaten to compromise the church's witness in Ephesus? How do we apply the principle of Paul's directive in twenty-first century churches without instituting a new legalism?

Dear friends, since this is a topic in which various Christ-loving groups disagree, let's be especially careful to state our views with Christian love and gentleness.

Q5. (1 Timothy 2:11-15) How should Paul's instructions about women teaching and leading in the church be applied in the twenty-first century? How do you support your view?

Key Verses

"This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth." (1 Timothy 2:3b-4, NIV)

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

3. Selecting Leaders in God's Household (1 Timothy 3; Titus 1:6-9)

In conjunction with this lesson, use the chart in Appendix 2. Qualifications of Church Leaders (1 Timothy 3:2-12; Titus 1:6-9)

Q1. (1 Timothy 3:2-12) What kind of leader do you believe Paul is indicating for us with the phrase "husband of one wife"? Why is a leader's family an important indicator of leadership potential or problems?

Q2. (1 Timothy 3:6, 10) Why should leaders be observed carefully and tested before placing them in office? What should you be looking for during this period?

Q3. (1 Timothy 3) Why are tendencies to anger, intimidation, force, and pride so important to consider in selecting church officers? What happens when you don't consider these factors?

Q4. (1 Timothy 3) According to our text, do you see differences in qualifications between overseers/elders and deacons? What are they?

Key Verse

"If I am delayed, you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God's household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth." (1 Timothy 3:15, NIV)

4. Setting a Godly Example (1 Timothy 4:1-16)

Q1. (1 Timothy 4:1-2) Why does Paul remind Timothy (and the church) of predictions concerning widespread apostasy? What effect should this knowledge have on his ministry and the church's perception of the situation?

Q2. (1 Timothy 4:3-5) Why is performance of legalistic requirements so attractive to people? What fruit does it produce in a person's life? In what ways is this emphasis so different from the true gospel?

Q3. (1 Timothy 4:7-8) How would you define "godliness"? What produces godliness in a person? How is godliness different from embracing a strict morality?

Q4. (1 Timothy 4:12b) Rigid, unsmiling orthodoxy can teach right doctrine, but cannot produce godliness. Why not? Why is a strong example of godliness in church leaders essential to a healthy church?

Key Verses

"For everything God created is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, because it is consecrated by the word of God and prayer." (1 Timothy 4:4-5, NIV)

"Train yourself to be godly. For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come." (1 Timothy 4:7b-8, NIV)

"We have put our hope in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, and especially of those who believe." (1 Timothy 4:10, NIV)

"Devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching." (1 Timothy 4:13, NIV)

"Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers. (1 Timothy 4:16, NIV)

5. Advice about Widows, Elders, and Slaves (1 Timothy 5:1-25; 6:1-2)

Q1. (1 Timothy 5:1-16) What responsibilities do we have to help aging family members? According to Paul, in what way is this our Christian responsibility? In what way is this a “repayment” of a debt? To what does Paul compare those who refuse this responsibility?

Q2. (1 Timothy 5:17-18) In what circumstances should elders be compensated financially? What is the Scriptural support for such a practice?

Q3. (1 Timothy 5:19-21) Why was it necessary to make formal accusations and “try” the false teachers? Why were the temptations to compromise and not go through with it so great? Why is it so difficult to exercise church discipline today?

Q4. (1 Timothy 5:22-25) Why does Paul say, “Don’t be hasty in the laying on of hands”? What are the dangers in doing so? How can these dangers be lessened?

Q5. (1 Timothy 6:1-2) In what ways has the Gospel sown the seeds that will eventually destroy slavery? Why does Paul seem to condone slavery in this passage? What is Paul’s motive?

Key Verses

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

“The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, ‘Do not muzzle the ox while it is treading out the grain,’ and ‘The worker deserves his wages.’” (1 Timothy 5:17-18, NIV)

“I charge you, in the sight of God and Christ Jesus and the elect angels, to keep these instructions without partiality, and to do nothing out of favoritism.” (1 Timothy 5:21, NIV)

“Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands, and do not share in the sins of others. Keep yourself pure.” (1 Timothy 5:22, NIV)

6. Reject Greed, Pursue Godliness (1 Timothy 6:3-21)

Q1. (1 Timothy 6:5) Why do you think people are so susceptible to distorted Bible teaching concerning financial gain? Admitting that there is some truth in popular teachings in our time, what are the distortions that you may have heard? How do they differ from the truth?

Q2. (1 Timothy 6:6) Why should we seek contentment? Doesn't contentment keep us from trying to get ahead so our families can have what they need? What's the balance between contentment and the quest for improvement?

Q3. (1 Timothy 6:7-10) How does love for money grow? How does it become a trap? How do you escape this deceptive trap?

Q4. (1 Timothy 6:17-19) What kinds of actions are the best antidote for the love of money? How can we cultivate generosity so that it remains healthy, rather than let it go overboard and hurt our families?

Q5. (1 Timothy 6:20-21) How can we guard the faith without becoming narrow, backward-looking people who oppose all change, and complain about "what things are coming to"? How can guards be at the same time positive, loving, and pleasant to be around?

Key Verses

"But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that." (1 Timothy 6:6-8, NIV)

"People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs." (1 Timothy 6:9-10, NIV)

"But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness." (1 Timothy 6:11, NIV)

“Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses.” (1 Timothy 6:12, NIV)

“... God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honor and might forever. Amen.” (1 Timothy 6:15-16, NIV)

7. Be Neither Intimidated nor Ashamed (2 Timothy 1:1-17)

Q1. (2 Timothy 1:6) What advice would you give to a person who has let use of a spiritual gift or ministry lapse? How can a gift or ministry be rekindled? What might be involved in reclaiming use of such a gift?

Q2. (2 Timothy 1:7-8, 12) Can you give examples of how cowardice and shame may have kept you from identifying yourself as a Christian on occasion? From testifying clearly about your faith? According to verse 12, what is the antidote for cowardice and shame? How then do we combat the cowardice and shame we might recognize in ourselves?

Q3. (2 Timothy 1:8-10) Paul is writing to encourage timid Timothy. How is Paul's focus on Christ and the gospel designed to encourage Timothy? How is this an antidote for shame?

Q4. (2 Timothy 1:12) According to verse 12, what is the source of Paul's fearlessness? What does he trust God to guard for him?

Key Verses

"For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands." (2 Timothy 1:6, NIV)

"For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline." (2 Timothy 1:7, NIV)

"God ... has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace." (2 Timothy 1:9a, NIV)

"This grace ... has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." (2 Timothy 1:9b-10, NIV)

"Yet I am not ashamed, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him for that day." (2 Timothy 1:12, NIV)

8. Endure Hardship for Christ (2 Timothy 2:1-19)

Q1. (2 Timothy 2:2) Why is it important for pastors and church leaders to execute a strategy of mentoring teachers and elders in a congregation? How much time should be devoted to this teaching of future leaders vs. the time spent in administration and programs?

Q2. Why do you think our churches tend not to declare the call to endurance and suffering? Why did Timothy tend to shy away from it? What is the result of a willingness to suffer for the gospel?

Q3. (2 Timothy 2:3-7) Paul calls Timothy to endure hardship for the sake of the goal. What in the experience of a soldier, an athlete, and a farmer illustrates this well? Which of these examples speaks most strongly to you?

Q4. (2 Timothy 2:15) Exactly what is the analogy with a skilled workman that forms the basis for Paul's instruction to Timothy? How does this apply to our teaching of Scripture today?

Key Verses

"Endure hardship with us like a good soldier of Christ Jesus." (2 Timothy 2:3, NIV)

"If we died with him,
we will also live with him;
if we endure,
we will also reign with him.
If we disown him,
he will also disown us;
if we are faithless,
he will remain faithful,
for he cannot disown himself." (2 Timothy 2:11-13, NIV)

"Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth." (2 Timothy 2:15, NIV)

9. Fit for the Master's Use (2 Timothy 2:20-3:14a)

Q1. (2 Timothy 2:20-22) When do you put your good plates and silverware on the table? When do you use your everyday tableware? What point is Paul making with this example? In practical terms, how do we “cleanse ourselves” so that we might be useful and ready for the Lord’s use?

Q2. (2 Timothy 2:24-25) In your own words, explain the various characteristics that enable a Christian teacher to correct opponents. How does the lack of any of these hinder the task?

Q3. (2 Timothy 3:5) Why is it so easy to become a hypocrite? How can we prevent our faith from degenerating into “a form of religion” without the power?

Q4. (2 Timothy 3:10-12) How does a failure to accept the inevitability of persecution hinder our witness? Just what does it mean to “take up his cross daily” (Luke 9:23) and to “carry his cross” (Luke 14:27)? Is Jesus talking about persecution—or something else?

Key Verses

“In a large house there are articles not only of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay; some are for noble purposes and some for ignoble. If a man cleanses himself from the latter, he will be an instrument for noble purposes, made holy, useful to the Master and prepared to do any good work.” (2 Timothy 2:20-21, NIV)

“Flee the evil desires of youth, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.” (2 Timothy 2:22, NIV)

“Those who oppose him he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth, and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will.” (2 Timothy 2:25-26, NIV)

“... Having a form of godliness but denying its power.” (2 Timothy 3:5a, NIV)

“... Always learning but never able to acknowledge the truth.” (2 Timothy 3:7, NIV)

“In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.” (2 Timothy 3:12, NIV)

10. Preachers, Teachers, and Holy Scripture (2 Timothy 3:14-4:5)

Q1. (2 Timothy 3:16) What does inspiration of Scripture mean? What does the term “God-breathed” tell us about the source and authority of Scripture? Why is the doctrine of inspiration of Scripture important?

Q2. (2 Timothy 3:16-17) In what ways does Scripture equip a Christian for ministry? In what different ways can the Scriptures function, according to verse 16?

Q3. (2 Timothy 4:1-2) Why do you think Paul has to resort to the command in verses 1-2? Why does he have to talk about being ready when it’s inconvenient and when it is convenient? What problem is Paul trying to overcome here? How do these verses speak to you in particular?

Q4. (2 Timothy 4:5) Why does Paul command Timothy to “discharge all the duties of your ministry”? What is the work of an evangelist that Timothy is to do? What does the command in verse 5 mean to you personally?

Key Verses

“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” (2 Timothy 3:16-17, NIV)

“Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction.” (2 Timothy 4:2, NIV)

“But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry. (2 Timothy 4:5, NIV)

11. I Have Fought the Good Fight (2 Timothy 4:6-22)

Q1. (2 Timothy 4:6-7) What does it mean to have “fought the good fight” or “run the good race”? What does it take to “finish the race(course)” God has designed for you? What does it mean to “keep the faith”?

Q2. (2 Timothy 4:8) What does the “crown of righteousness” represent? To whom is it given? On what basis is it awarded?

Q3. (2 Timothy 4:9-12) Why is it so difficult when trusted friends desert us? Why is it so difficult when they move away or die? Is it better to trust no one? Who remains with Paul besides Luke? (Hint: see verse 17a).

Q4. (2 Timothy 4:21a) Why is it important to Paul for Timothy to come before winter? What happens if Timothy delays? Do you think Timothy dropped everything and came to Paul’s side? Would you, if you were Timothy?

Key Verses

“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.” (2 Timothy 4:7-8, NIV)

“The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and will bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom. To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.” (2 Timothy 4:18, NIV)