

Bible Studies on

1 Timothy

Loving Church Together

7 Studies



Study 1: The Proclamation of the Gospel (Acts 20:17-38)

Study 2: The Goal, a Trustworthy Saying & the Command
(1 Tim 1:20)

Study 3: First of all...(1 Timothy 2:1-15)

Study 4: Whoever Aspires... (1 Timothy 3:1-16)

Study 5: Train yourself in Godliness (1 Timothy 4:1-16)

Study 6: I Charge You (1 Timothy 5:1-6:2a)

Study 7: Fight the Good Fight (1 Timothy 6:2b-21)



Chris Jolliffe with Ken D Noakes

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Introduction

The Epistle of 1 Timothy is the Apostle Paul's first letter to Timothy, his young protegee, who had the difficult job of leading the church in Ephesus. The job made more difficult by the presence of false teachers, Timothy's comparative youthfulness, and the presence of some tricky pastoral concerns. The Apostle Paul reminds Timothy of the primacy of the gospel of grace, and that foundational to effective leadership is a life and doctrine derived from that gospel. Essential to his ministry must be prayer and scripture.

Yet 1 Timothy is also a letter for all who are members of 'God's household' (1 Tim 3:15). As such we have called these studies 'Loving Church Together' with the hope that what we discuss together in the Epistle of 1 Timothy will outline God's blueprint for a strong church.

Much of what is written will be easily accepted: the centrality of the Bible; the importance of prayer; the need for faithful leadership, the call to flee the love of money. But some of topics addressed are controversial and potentially divisive, such as the different roles of men and women in the public gathering, and who to (and who NOT to) provide practical care. Whilst we will need to work hard together to listen, what should drive us is a united desire to live by the Word of God for the salvation of all (1 Tim 2:4). It must be remembered that 1 Timothy - like all New Testament letters - is written to a particular historical context. Equally, we need to remember that the principles laid down derive from the gospel, and the patterns laid down in creation, are timeless.

These Growth Group Bible Studies have been written by Chris Jolliffe (Senior Pastor of Trinity Aldgate) in 2024 and modified by Ken D Noakes in 2025.

*As you will see in the studies which follow, there are many questions for each passage. **There is no expectation that you will be able to get through all questions in any one Bible study sitting.** Rather, that it is the Leaders role to read, understanding and prepare each passage. In doing that, the Leader would then be able to pick a choose the questions in each section that he/she would like to use for the group.*

Study 1: Acts 20:17-38 - The Proclamation of the Gospel

Introduction

- a. Communities of people gather in many different settings and for various different reasons. At times there are similarities and crossovers. What makes a 'church' distinctively different from a school or sports club or neighbourhood centre?
- b. There are different kinds of leaders - what should be distinctive about someone who is a Christian Leader? What is necessary in a Christian leader?

PRAY for insight.

Exercise: Read Acts 20:17-38 - and as you do, underline each reference to 'knowing' and **highlight** each reference to preaching, declaring or testifying.

Acts 20:17-38 (NIV 2011)

17 From Miletus, Paul sent to Ephesus for the elders of the church. **18** When they arrived, he said to them: "You know how I lived the whole time I was with you, from the first day I came into the province of Asia. **19** I served the Lord with great humility and with tears and in the midst of severe testing by the plots of my Jewish opponents. **20** You know that I have not hesitated to preach anything that would be helpful to you but have taught you publicly and from house to house. **21** I have declared to both Jews and Greeks that they must turn to God in repentance and have faith in our Lord Jesus.

22 "And now, compelled by the Spirit, I am going to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there. **23** I only know that in every city the Holy Spirit warns me that prison and hardships are facing me. **24** However, I consider my life worth nothing to me; my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the good news of God's grace.

25 "Now I know that none of you among whom I have gone about preaching the kingdom will ever see me again. **26** Therefore, I declare to you today that I am innocent of the blood of any of you. **27** For I have not hesitated to proclaim to you the whole will of God. **28** Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood. **29** I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock. **30** Even from your own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them. **31** So be on your guard! Remember that for three years I never stopped warning each of you night and day with tears.

32 "Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified. **33** I have not coveted anyone's silver or gold or clothing. **34** You yourselves know that these hands of mine have supplied my own needs and the needs of my companions. **35** In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind

of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' ”

36 When Paul had finished speaking, he knelt down with all of them and prayed. **37** They all wept as they embraced him and kissed him. **38** What grieved them most was his statement that they would never see his face again. Then they accompanied him to the ship.

1. Overall, what appears to be Paul's main concern?

- **Read Acts 20:17-21**

2. The Ephesians elders clearly know Paul - what motivates his appeal for the elders to listen to what he wants to say?
3. What appears to be his goal?

- **Read Acts 20:22-27**

4. What do you think it means to be 'compelled by the Spirit'?
5. It is interesting that, the role of the Spirit here does not seem to be about comfort or convenience. Do you think there is a difference between the way the Holy Spirit worked in the day of Paul and these Ephesians Elders, and our day today? If so, what and why?
6. What is Paul's attitude toward his own self-worth? How does it shape his purpose in life and ministry? (c.f. Phil 3:4b-11).
7. What is Paul's aim and task? What do you think he means by 'testifying to the good news of God's grace'?
8. Paul seems aware of his impending demise, why declare to the elders that he is 'innocent of the blood of any of them'?
9. Paul was in Ephesus for approximately three years (c.f. Acts 19:1, 8-10 then 20:31) and he says that he has 'not hesitated to proclaim to you the whole will of God' (20:27). What does he mean? He has preached all of the scriptures during that time? He has preached all of the intent of scripture during that time? Something else?

- **Read Acts 20:28-31**

10. Paul switches language to speak of the elders as shepherds of a flock? Why use this imagery?
11. What is the threat he foresees? From where?
12. What is his directive to these elders? Why give these directives to the elders and not the church at large?

- **Read Acts 20:32-38**

13. Here we read his final words - it sounds like a funeral 'I commit you to God...' yet he is not despairing - why?
14. Why do you think Paul reminds them again of the manner in which he has conducted his ministry (in verses 33-34)?
15. Note the obvious and mutual affection that the elders and Paul share. They prayed, they wept, they embraced and kissed - what did they not do (that would seem obvious)?

Application:

- Knowledge sits behind action - and here we see both Paul and the elders relying on what they know about one another. How does knowledge in faith help Christians to live out the gospel in the face of opposition?
- Yet what drives the efforts and the direction in this passage is a clear gospel intent - what can be learnt, and what must our leaders replicate in the way they lead us in our church family?
- What part do we play in helping our elders today to preach, declare and testify to the good news of God's grace?
- What will help us guard against those 'savage wolves who will come among us and not spare the flock?'
- What part can you/do you play in building others in our church family up by the word of God's grace?

Pray for the proclamation of the gospel.

Study 2: 1 Timothy 1:1-20 - The Goal, a Trustworthy Saying & the Command

Introduction

- a. What is it that joins Christians together?
- b. How important is doctrine (truth claims) in gathering as a church family?
- c. Can you think of times when differences in belief have been well-handled, and poorly handled?

PRAY for opportunities to sit under the Word of God and to help others join in that exercise.

Exercise: Read 1 Timothy 1:1-20 - underline each reference which commands or instructs Timothy in a particular way.

1 Timothy 1:1-20 (NIV 2011)

1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the command of God our Savior and of Christ Jesus our hope, **2** To Timothy my true son in the faith: Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

3 As I urged you when I went into Macedonia, stay there in Ephesus so that you may command certain people not to teach false doctrines any longer **4** or to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies. Such things promote controversial speculations rather than advancing God's work—which is by faith. **5** The goal of this command is love, which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith. **6** Some have departed from these and have turned to meaningless talk. **7** They want to be teachers of the law, but they do not know what they are talking about or what they so confidently affirm.

8 We know that the law is good if one uses it properly. **9** We also know that the law is made not for the righteous but for lawbreakers and rebels, the ungodly and sinful, the unholy and irreligious, for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers, **10** for the sexually immoral, for those practicing homosexuality, for slave traders and liars and perjurers—and for whatever else is contrary to the sound doctrine **11** that conforms to the gospel concerning the glory of the blessed God, which he entrusted to me.

12 I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength, that he considered me trustworthy, appointing me to his service. **13** Even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief. **14** The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.

15 Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst. **16** But for that very reason I was shown mercy

so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his immense patience as an example for those who would believe in him and receive eternal life. **17** Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

18 Timothy, my son, I am giving you this command in keeping with the prophecies once made about you, so that by recalling them you may fight the battle well, **19** holding on to faith and a good conscience, which some have rejected and so have suffered shipwreck with regard to the faith. **20** Among them are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan to be taught not to blaspheme.

1. Overall, what appears to be Paul's main concern?

- **Read 1 Timothy 1:1-7**

2. Who is this letter written by, and who to?
3. What can be said about Paul's relationship to God? and to Timothy? (see also Philippians 2.20-23).
4. What is the purpose of Paul writing this letter? (c.f. 3.14-15) What is significant or surprising about how Paul describes the church?
5. Instead of taking Timothy with him to Macedonia (Philippi, and Thessalonica), Paul tells Timothy to stay in Ephesus. Why?
6. Looking at verses 3-7, can you build a snapshot of what was happening in the church in Ephesus?

- **Read 1 Timothy 1.8-11**

7. What is the proper purpose of the law? (See also Romans 3:19-20, 7:7-12; Galatians 3.19-25).
8. What then, would be an *improper* use of the Old Testament law for Christians? for not-yet Christians?
9. Many old church buildings (e.g., Trinity Church Adelaide, St Andrew's Cathedral Sydney!) have the 10 commandments inscribed on marble and on display.
 - What is good about this?
 - What is potentially unhelpful about this?
 - If you had the power to decide what should be inscribed and on display, what would you choose?
 - Why?

- **Read 1 Timothy 1:12-17**

10. Paul speaks of his own conversion in verses 12-14 to highlight the 'sound doctrine that conforms to the gospel' (v11). What stands out?

11. What is the trustworthy saying? Who is this saying trustworthy for? How so?
12. Why do you think verse 17 is there? How does it follow from a right understanding of the gospel? Does it do so for you?

- **Read 1 Timothy 1:18-20**

13. Here we get a glimpse of the identities of some of the false teachers at Ephesus. What is Paul's two-fold method to deal with false teaching? (c.f. vv18-19a, and v20).
14. Verse 20 is an extreme situation, calling for an extreme response. What might handing them 'over to Satan to be taught not to blaspheme' look like, in real terms?

Application:

- Are you more tempted to live in legalism (obeying God's law to earn / keep his favour) or in license (disobeying God's law, because it's not necessary to obey to be saved)? In what ways?
- Have you experienced or witnessed teachers within the church like the ones described in these verses? What damaging effects did they have? How popular were they?
- Look at the heart of the chapter - Paul's trustworthy saying. How does the gospel preserve the church against both problems?
- If either problem was encountered in our church, how could you help deal with it?

Pray for one another.

Study 3: 1 Timothy 2:1-15 - First of All...

Introduction

- a. What do you think - if a part of the Bible rubs against the grain of our culture, should we disregard it, or pay attention to it? Why or why not?
- b. Famously, 1 Timothy chapter 2 speaks of what God's household is to do when we gather together in church. Controversially (to us today), it speaks of the differences in what men and what women are to do when we gather together as a church family.
- c. Why is this such an issue today (for women as well as for men)?
- d. What do you think of the following quote on this passage?

'How do we, who live under God's word, approach this passage? Quite simply, we have to become indifferent to its message until we've read it carefully. Then, and only then, do we turn to reconstruct our lives and culture in the light of what it teaches. This should make us wary of our own bias - be that conservative, radical, or accommodationist. We need to be ruthless in working against our own bias and determining what the apostle wrote without worrying about the consequences. Only then are we in a position to turn to work out the consequences for ourselves in embracing, modifying, or resisting society's changes'

PRAY - for clarity and humility, and courage to accept God's word.

Exercise: Read 1 Timothy 2:1-15 - underline each reference to 'all people' and **highlight** those references which are particular to men or women.

1 Tim 2:1-15 (NIV 2011)

1 I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people— **2** for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. **3** This is good, and pleases God our Savior, **4** who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. **5** For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus, **6** who gave himself as a ransom for all people. This has now been witnessed to at the proper time. **7** And for this purpose I was appointed a herald and an apostle—I am telling the truth, I am not lying—and a true and faithful teacher of the Gentiles.

8 Therefore I want the men everywhere to pray, lifting up holy hands without anger or disputing. **9** I also want the women to dress modestly, with decency and propriety, adorning themselves, not with elaborate hairstyles or gold or pearls or expensive clothes, **10** but with good deeds, appropriate for women who profess to worship God.

11 A woman should learn in quietness and full submission. **12** I do not permit a woman to teach or to assume authority over a man; she must be quiet. **13** For Adam was formed first, then Eve. **14** And Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner. **15** But women will be saved through childbearing—if they continue in faith, love and holiness with propriety.

1. Overall, what appears to be Paul's main concern?

- **Read 1 Timothy 2:1-7**

2. What is so remarkable about Paul's instruction to pray for world rulers? Why is this so important?
3. Paul urges us to pray for 'Kings and all those in authority'. Who does this include today? Who else?
4. Why pray like this? What is pleasing to God our Saviour? What does he want?
5. How might the decision making of those in authority impact the godly behaviour of God's people?
6. How does the universality of verse 6 fit with the exclusivity of verse 5, and with God's overall desire in verse 4?
7. Reflect: How does/can what you've discovered reshape or re-energise your prayers?

- **Read 1 Timothy 2:8**

8. Men everywhere are called to pray – in what manner? What appears to be Paul's concern?
9. The temptation of men is to let others (women) do the work, or simply to become angry at the inaction of others without getting involved themselves. But - given the need of vv1-7 - how are men in the church to exercise their care and responsibility? (v8). Do we (men) need to 'up our game' in this?

- **Read 1 Timothy 2:9-15**

This passage is often avoided as a kind of pastoral minefield. More books and articles have been written about this passage than we can cover in a brief discussion - each trying to make sense of what Paul has written. Paul values women, and their role in ministry (check out Romans 16).

Working out what Paul is saying is as much an exercise in hearing what he's NOT saying. He's not saying women are less valuable, more sinful, less capable, or less intelligent. It's also an assumption of our culture that equality of value must mean equality of role.

And also, clumsy handling of this passage in the past by unloving and ill-thought-out men has been damaging for Christian women. We must tread sensitively, with respect, and with love.

Here, Paul raises two issues for women: what women wear, and how they learn.

- **What women wear vv. 9-10**

10. If Paul is NOT being legalistic, what principles are to guide women's dress?

11. If clothing is an expression of ourselves, with what should women who worship God adorn themselves?

- **Women and learning vv. 11-12**

12. All women are required to learn. (This was radical and unprecedented in the first century!) As with men and prayer (v8), it is the manner with which women learn that is important. Learning is not just an information download. It is relational.

13. 'Quietness' can mean silence, but more likely refers to a quiet demeanour (see 1 Tim 2:2, 1 Peter 3:4). How does the rest of verse 11 and all of verse 12 help us understand the 'quiet' manner in which women should learn?

The manner of both men and women in these verses aim to achieve a similar outcome – that is no division among the church family. Each gender may need to apply that differently: men without angry or dispute and women in quietness.

- **Adam then Eve vv. 13-15**

14. The logic of verses 13-15 may not be immediately clear, but ... what can be said? Is Paul responding to a situational or historic moment within the culture in the church in Ephesus, or is something else going on?

Creational patterns still apply. The clue to unpicking Paul's instruction of verse 12 lies in the references to creation in verses 13-15. The assumption is that Paul is saying that the patterns laid down in Genesis 1-3 still apply. This may seem strange, but it only takes a moment's thought to realise that we readily accept other patterns laid down in Genesis 1-3 today: the goodness of creation, the primacy of human beings over animals, the foundational importance of marriage between a man and a woman, the goodness of work to people, the impact of the fall (relational difficulty, pain in childbirth, frustration in work) etc.

15. To understand verse 13, answer this question: how did Eve find out the life-saving word of God to her (See Genesis 3:2-3, 2:15-18)?

16. What was the man's role for her?

17. By pure virtue of the fact that God made the man first, what pattern is then set concerning passing on the life-saving word of God?
18. Verse 14 sounds like it is against women. But is it? Or is it an indictment of the man?
19. Who is responsible for the fall of humanity? The woman? Or the man? See Romans 5:19.

1 Timothy 2:14 cannot mean that women are inherently more sinful than men. So, here's the crucial question to understand 1 Timothy 2:14: When Eve sinned, where was Adam? - see Genesis 3:1-6.

20. Given the man's responsibility, what was the man's fundamental failing?
21. What then is the argument from 1 Timothy 2:14?

Verse 15 is perhaps the hardest to understand. Crucially, the word 'women' is singular, not plural (unlike our translation). In context, this is likely a reference to Genesis 3, and to Eve as the mother of creation.

- **Read Genesis 3.15.**

22. Who will be crushed? By whom? What is this likely a reference to?
23. Therefore, which child born to a woman is the saviour of women in verse 15, and the answer to men not passing on the life-saving word of God to women in our passage?

Application

- Think about verses 1-5. Do you need to change the way you pray, including (for example) prayers for our governments and those in authority, whose decisions may impact the godliness of people, and the spread of the gospel?
- Believers - how do we love our church family in equal, yet at times different ways, which helps *all people* to be saved by coming to a knowledge of the truth?
- Men - think about the manner in which you pray. What do you need to do? What must you not?
- Women - think about the manner in which you learn. What do you need to do? What questions do you still have? What would be good to pray for as you wrestle with this word of God.

Pray for one another and for gospel unity among our church family.

Study 4: 1 Timothy 3:1-16 - Whoever Aspires...

Introduction

- a. Very quickly, list out from the top of your head the essential requirements of a church leader.
- b. The third commandment is 'You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain'. This means much more than not using 'God' or 'Jesus' as a swear word. God's 'name' means his reputation, and all of his children - and especially the leaders in his church - bear it. Can you think of church leaders who have enhanced God's name and reputation by the way they've lived, or (alternatively) some who have damaged God's name and reputation, causing harm to the gospel and to people's faith?

PRAY for those leading us in faith.

Exercise: Read 1 Timothy 3:1-16 - Note the section that gives instructions to an a) overseer and the section that gives instruction to the b) deacons.

1 Tim 3:1-16 (NIV 2011)

1 Here is a trustworthy saying: Whoever aspires to be an overseer desires a noble task. **2** Now the overseer is to be above reproach, faithful to his wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, **3** not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. **4** He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him, and he must do so in a manner worthy of full respect. **5** (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?) **6** He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. **7** He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap.

8 In the same way, deacons are to be worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain. **9** They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience. **10** They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons.

11 In the same way, the women are to be worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything.

12 A deacon must be faithful to his wife and must manage his children and his household well. **13** Those who have served well gain an excellent standing and great assurance in their faith in Christ Jesus.

14 Although I hope to come to you soon, I am writing you these instructions so that, **15** 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. **16** Beyond all question, the mystery from which true godliness springs is great:

He appeared in the flesh,
was vindicated by the Spirit,
was seen by angels,
was preached among the nations,
was believed on in the world,
was taken up in glory.

1. Overall, what appears to be Paul's main concern?

This chapter raises the roles of overseer and deacon. Much time and energy can be spent working out what each role looks like within our modern church structures (e.g. Bishops, Priests, Rectors, Deacons, Curates, Assistant Ministers, Pastors, Elders, Leaders – men/women – vocational or lay). Perhaps it may be more fruitful to consider these 'roles' in relation to the leadership of the gospel among the family of God (3:15) and the ministry and mission endeavours which are exercised to see 'all people saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth' (2:4). We each play different roles at differing times and as such there are times when a person will be the overseer of a ministry in one setting and then a deacon in a ministry in another setting .

- **Read 1 Timothy 3:1-7**

2. What is the next 'trustworthy saying'?
3. Of these qualities, here necessary for the overseer, what stands out as obvious?
4. What is surprising? Is anything not mentioned that you assumed should be mentioned?
5. What, in essence, is being talked about as of supreme importance? Why is this so important?
6. Is there anything mentioned that doesn't refer to character?
7. Look at the requirements, and reasons given in verses 5-7. For each, can you explain what may likely happen if these requirements were not met?

- **Read 1 Timothy 3:8-13**

8. Deacons were those set aside to practically oversee the various ministries of the church. What stands out as necessary for deacons?
9. What does it mean to 'keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience'?

10. Note that 'the women' referred to in verse 11 may equally refer to the wives of male deacons or to women who are deacons. What is significant about the expression 'in the same way' used of deacons in verse 8 and women in verse 11?
11. Can you explain the emphasis on the deacon's ('household') family? Is this an overreach?
12. What blessing is given to those who serve well?
13. Australian churches (particularly outside of evangelical dioceses) are currently facing a shortage of pastors and deacons. What are the barriers?

- **Read 1 Timothy 3.14-16**

14. How is this church described?
15. One potential barrier to people becoming overseers or deacons is the thought, 'I'm not godly enough!'. Where is our hope?
16. Verse 16 is probably an early creed or hymn describing Jesus' descent to earth, and ascent to heaven. How does each part aid our godliness?
 - 'He appeared in the flesh' (c.f. Hebrews 2:14-18)
 - 'was vindicated by the Spirit' (c.f. Romans 1:4; Hebrews 9:14)
 - 'was seen by angels' (c.f. Luke 24:6, 1 Peter 1:10-12)
 - 'was preached among the nations' (c.f. 1 Timothy 2:5-7)
 - 'was believed on in the world' (c.f. 1 Thessalonians 1:8-10)
 - 'was taken up in glory' (c.f. 1 Peter 1:8-9)

Application

- How can we pray for our church pastors and leaders?
- Think ... is there someone you know who would be suitable for this role, who is currently not in this role? How could you encourage them to consider it?

Spend time in prayer – and pray for the ongoing raising up of overseers and deacons for the household of God.

Study 5: 1 Timothy 4:1-16 - Train yourself in Godliness

Introduction

- a. What threats are there to a church being strong?
- b. What needs to be done for a church to be strong?

PRAY for our individual and collective spiritual maturity. And our efforts to help others grow in faith.

Exercise: Read 1 Timothy 4:1-16 - There are several specific instructions cited in this passage - underline each as you go.

1 Tim 4:1-16 (NIV 2011)

1 The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. **2** Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron. **3** They forbid people to marry and order them to abstain from certain foods, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and who know the truth. **4** For everything God created is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, **5** because it is consecrated by the word of God and prayer.

6 If you point these things out to the brothers and sisters, you will be a good minister of Christ Jesus, nourished on the truths of the faith and of the good teaching that you have followed. **7** Have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives' tales; rather, train yourself to be godly. **8** 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. **9** This is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance. **10** That is why we labor and strive, because we have put our hope in the living God, who is the Savior of all people, and especially of those who believe.

11 Command and teach these things. **12** Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity. **13** Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching. **14** Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through prophecy when the body of elders laid their hands on you.

15 Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress. **16** Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers.

1. Overall, what appears to be Paul's main concern?

- **Read 1 Timothy 4:1-5**

2. What does the Spirit say will be the things taught by demons (vv.1-3)?
Where have you seen this today?

3. Why do you think that the church forbidding people to marry, and forbidding the eating of meat (for example) would cause people to abandon the faith?
 4. How does a robust doctrine of creation help counter the teaching of demons (vv.3-5)?
- **Read 1 Timothy 4:6-10**
 5. What is the 'good teaching that you have followed' referring too?
 6. What is the relative benefit of physical training vs. training yourself in godliness?
 7. What is the next 'trustworthy saying' that deserves full acceptance? What connection does it have with the gospel?
 8. Look at verse 10. In what sense can God be the 'Saviour of all people', and 'especially those who believe'?
 - **Read 1 Timothy 4:11-16**
 9. Paul accents the importance of Timothy's leadership being grounded on both his life, and his doctrine. How is this to come out?
 10. Must Timothy be sinlessly perfect? If not, then what must people see? What must they experience of Timothy in church?
 11. What would happen if Timothy's life (conduct) was good, but his doctrine poor?
 12. What would happen if Timothy's doctrine was good, but his conduct poor?
 13. What would happen if Timothy persevered in watching both his life AND his conduct closely, being diligent in them, giving himself wholly to them?

Application

- *Watch your life* - look at verse 12. Do you give yourself to training yourself in godliness? If so, or if not, which area of godliness is most necessary for you to train yourself in? Talk about this in the group. What are some ideas for doing it?
- What can you do to *watch your doctrine* (v. 16) more closely?

Pray about these things – and pray for those who lead our church they might be 'good ministers of Christ Jesus, nourished on the truths of the faith and of the good teachings that [they] have followed'.

Study 6: 1 Timothy 5:1-6:2a - I charge you.

Introduction

- a. All people are made in God's image, and worthy of respect and love, but not all people are the same. Similarly, all church members have God as their special Saviour, but our love for one another will look different, because we're different to one another, and will have different needs.
- b. Think - what are some relational differences between church members that cause us to relate differently?

PRAY for those spiritual Fathers or Mothers who have, or do, play significant roles in growing us in Christ.

Exercise: Read 1 Timothy 5:1-6:2a - There are several different people (or groupings of people) cited in this passage - underline each as you go.

1 Tim 5:1-6:2 (NIV 2011)

1 Do not rebuke an older man harshly, but exhort him as if he were your father. Treat younger men as brothers, **2** older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters, with absolute purity.

3 Give proper recognition to those widows who are really in need. **4** But if a widow has children or grandchildren, these should learn first of all to put their religion into practice by caring for their own family and so repaying their parents and grandparents, for this is pleasing to God. **5** The widow who is really in need and left all alone puts her hope in God and continues night and day to pray and to ask God for help. **6** But the widow who lives for pleasure is dead even while she lives. **7** Give the people these instructions, so that no one may be open to blame. **8** Anyone who does not provide for their relatives, and especially for their own household, has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

9 No widow may be put on the list of widows unless she is over sixty, has been faithful to her husband, **10** and is well known for her good deeds, such as bringing up children, showing hospitality, washing the feet of the Lord's people, helping those in trouble and devoting herself to all kinds of good deeds.

11 As for younger widows, do not put them on such a list. For when their sensual desires overcome their dedication to Christ, they want to marry. **12** Thus they bring judgment on themselves, because they have broken their first pledge. **13** Besides, they get into the habit of being idle and going about from house to house. And not only do they become idlers, but also busybodies who talk nonsense, saying things they ought not to. **14** So I counsel younger widows to marry, to have children, to manage their homes and to give the enemy no opportunity for slander. **15** Some have in fact already turned away to follow Satan.

16 If any woman who is a believer has widows in her care, she should continue to help them and not let the church be burdened with them, so that the church can help those widows who are really in need.

17 The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching. **18** For Scripture says, “Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain,” and “The worker deserves his wages.” **19** Do not entertain an accusation against an elder unless it is brought by two or three witnesses. **20** But those elders who are sinning you are to reprove before everyone, so that the others may take warning. **21** 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 favouritism.

22 Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands, and do not share in the sins of others. Keep yourself pure.

23 Stop drinking only water, and use a little wine because of your stomach and your frequent illnesses.

24 The sins of some are obvious, reaching the place of judgment ahead of them; the sins of others trail behind them. **25** In the same way, good deeds are obvious, and even those that are not obvious cannot remain hidden forever.

6 All who are under the yoke of slavery should consider their masters worthy of full respect, so that God’s name and our teaching may not be slandered. **2** Those who have believing masters should not show them disrespect just because they are fellow believers. Instead, they should serve them even better because their masters are dear to them as fellow believers and are devoted to the welfare[c] of their slaves.

1. Overall, what appears to be Paul’s main concern?

• **Read 1 Timothy 5:1-2**

2. How is Timothy to relate differently to people at church, depending on their age (relative to himself) and their sex? Why?

	Older	Younger
Male		
Female		

3. Write down the name of one or two people at church in each of those categories

	Older	Younger
Male		
Female		

- **Read 1 Timothy 5:3-16**

- Throughout history, widows were often the most vulnerable group of society (for women could not inherit property, and there were no government run social services). From verses 3-8, what makes a widow someone who is 'really in need' vs another widow who is not?
- Look at verse 8, and verse 16. If someone is in need at church, who is (first of all) responsible for their care? Is there someone in your family you ought to be providing for who you are not currently providing for?
- From verse 9-15, it appears that there was to be a list of widows that the church provided for. But not all widows were to be put on that list. What was the criteria for support?
- From verse 11, is there any problem with younger widows remarrying? (Hint: what is their 'first pledge'? - see 1 Corinthians 7:39, 1 Timothy 5:14-15).

- **Read 1 Timothy 5:17-21**

- Some churches pay their pastors. Others don't. Should we? Why or why not?
- What if we have a complaint against an elder? Can't we just write letters about them, or accuse them publicly? Why/Why not?
- What if an elder really IS sinning? What should happen?

- **Read 1 Timothy 5:22-24**

- How may a quick appointment of someone to leadership be not just unwise, but wrong?
- What does verse 24 add to this?

- **Read 1 Timothy 6:1-2**

13. The first century church comprised people from all social standings, including slaves, and masters. At church, they would come together as one in Christ, and equal before the LORD. What temptation might a Christian slave have had regarding their work as a slave if they had a Christian master? (Think: have you ever experienced something similar if you had a Christian boss at work?)

Application

- Think through the different people at church. How can you better show proper recognition to:
 - Older and younger men and women?
 - People presenting as 'in need'?
 - People who really are in need?
 - Elders
 - Emerging leaders

Pray for one another and pray generally for those more vulnerable among our church family.

Study 7: 1 Timothy 6:2b-21 - Fight the Good Fight

Introduction

- a. Occasionally on our newsfeed, we'll hear an interview with someone who is the oldest living person (in their country, or the world). They're invariably asked the secret to living for so long. What are some of the things you've heard are the key to a living a long life?
- b. What do you think is the key to staying faithful to the end of your natural born life as a Christian?
- c. What attitudes to money did you gain from your family of origin? For example: Was money important? Was it ever given away? Was it always worried about? Was there never enough? Were your parents content with what they had?

PRAY for insight.

Exercise: Read 1 Timothy 6:2b-21 - There are several different references to money/riches/wealth cited in this passage - underline each as you go.

1 Tim 6:2b-21 (NIV 2011)

2b These are the things you are to teach and insist on. **3** If anyone teaches otherwise and does not agree to the sound instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ and to godly teaching, **4** they are conceited and understand nothing. They have an unhealthy interest in controversies and quarrels about words that result in envy, strife, malicious talk, evil suspicions **5** and constant friction between people of corrupt mind, who have been robbed of the truth and who think that godliness is a means to financial gain.

6 But godliness with contentment is great gain. **7** For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. **8** But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. **9** Those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. **10** 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.

11 But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness. **12** 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. **13** In the sight of God, who gives life to everything, and of Christ Jesus, who while testifying before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, I charge you **14** to keep this command without spot or blame until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, **15** which God will bring about in his own time—God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords, **16** who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honour and might forever. Amen.

17 Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. **18** Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. **19** In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.

20 Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to your care. Turn away from godless chatter and the opposing ideas of what is falsely called knowledge, **21** which some have professed and in so doing have departed from the faith.

Grace be with you all.

1. Overall, what appears to be Paul's main concern?

Read 1 Timothy 6:3-5

2. Looking back, what do 'these things' that Timothy is to 'teach and insist on' refer to? What hints are given in vv3-5 as to why Paul is so insistent? Who is verse 3 talking about?
3. Jesus said of false teachers 'by their fruit you will recognise them' (Matthew 7.20). What does Paul say?
4. Have you ever heard the promise of money/wealth being leveraged in the name of God?

- **Read 1 Timothy 6.6-10**

5. What is Paul's argument in these verses?
6. Australian Musician Paul Kelly sang: "It's true, you can't take it with you." From Verse 7, in the end, what do we need to be content?
7. Reflect: On a scale of 1-5, are you content with what you have? What are the real barriers to being content?
8. Discuss: Is it possible to be content whilst paying off (or not paying off!) a mortgage? Is 'godliness with contentment' possible? (See 1 Timothy 4:8)
9. If we're honest, there have been many moments when we've not been content, even though we're Christians. The tenth commandment is against coveting (Exodus 20:17). So - what is the root of all kinds of evil? How does it bring grief to people?

- **Read 1 Timothy 6:11-16**

10. What is Timothy to do regarding the love of money, and the fear of missing out? (v11)
11. Given vv6-10, what does it mean to 'fight the good fight of the faith'?

12. Look at verses 12-16. Who is watching? What is the impact of describing those watching as he does?

13. What is the finish line? Who will we see there?

- **Read 1 Timothy 6:17-21**

14. What are the rich to be commanded to do? How does this apply to yourself?

15. Is verse 19 saying that rich people can buy their way into heaven? If not, what is it saying? (See verse 10).

16. Timothy is told in verse 20 to 'guard what has been entrusted to your care'. What does this refer to?

17. What is the particular temptation of those who teach God's word (vv.20-21)?

Application:

- So ... *what is the key* to staying faithful to the end?
- What do you need to *actively flee* to stay faithful to the end?
- What do you need to *cultivate and develop* to stay faithful to the end?
- This brings our study of 1 Timothy to an end – what have you found most helpful? How has this letter shaped you to love church together

Pray for one another and our church.

