



First Timothy

Getting Started

A Brief Introduction to Paul and Timothy

I Timothy 1:1, 2

Lesson One

Mission Arlington/Mission Metroplex Curriculum



First Timothy

A Study of the First Letter of the Apostle Paul to His Son in the Faith

In our lesson today, we are going to look at two important people in the beginning days of Christianity. They are the Apostle Paul and a young man who Paul called his “son in the faith.” (I Timothy 1:2)

First, the Apostle Paul. He was born in a busy city called Tarsus. He studied the Jewish religion, called “The Law,” under one of the most outstanding teachers (Rabbi) of the day, Gamaliel. He began his career identifying Christians so they could be tried in religious court, put in jail, or even killed, for believing in Jesus as the Messiah. (Messiah is the name for the person the Jews expected to come from God to sit on a throne and lead them or rule the world.) One day, Paul was on the way to Damascus, a city to the north of Jerusalem. He was on his way to arrest Christians there. Just before he got to Damascus, a bright light came from Heaven and blinded Paul. Paul heard the voice of Jesus.

Paul’s life turned around, and he believed in Jesus. He became the most important missionary in Christian history, and he wrote thirteen of the twenty-seven books in the New Testament. They are all in the form of letters. On his first missionary trip, Paul went to a city called Lystra. That was the home town of Timothy.

Timothy was the son of a Greek (Gentile) father and a Jewish mother. (To the Jews, anyone who was not a Jew was a Gentile.) He was taught the Scriptures (Old Testament) from his childhood up.* His grandmother Lois, and his mother Eunice, had become Christians sometime, maybe at the time Paul visited on his first missionary journey, and had been strong influences on Timothy. (II Timothy 1:5)

From the New Testament book of Acts, from I Timothy and other letters Paul wrote, we can put together several additional facts about Timothy. Being recommended by his local church, he joined Paul and Silas on Paul’s second missionary journey. He worked with Paul in Macedonia and Achaia. He was with Paul most of the extended time that Paul was in Ephesus, he traveled with him from there to Macedonia, on to Corinth and back to Macedonia. They went on to Asia Minor and we know Timothy was with Paul in his first imprisonment in Rome.

Paul sent Timothy with special messages to churches on several occasions. Because Timothy was of Jewish-Gentile heritage, he was the very best choice to be a missionary to the culture of that day. He was also, because of his background in Old Testament Scripture, a very good person to help with the conflict in the churches caused by the Judaizers. (These were teachers who tried to convince people that they had to become Jews before they could become Christians.) The first record we have of Paul’s meeting Timothy is in Acts 16:1. We are sure that Timothy went with Paul when Paul traveled through several towns teaching the Gospel. They

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ended up in Troas, a coastal town. There, Paul had a dream. A man from across the Aegean Sea pled with Paul to come over into Macedonia and help them. So, Paul, Timothy, and Dr. Luke (who wrote the Gospel of Luke and Acts), along with others in the missionary party, made their way to Philippi in Macedonia.

About fifteen years later, Paul wrote his friend, and helper, Timothy, a letter. By this time, Timothy was a leading pastor of the church at Ephesus. (See 1:3) Many think that Paul had been released from his imprisonment in Rome and was in Macedonia when he wrote this letter.

Very likely, Paul had heard about the Judaizers at work in the church at Ephesus, and wrote this letter to encourage Timothy and assist him in dealing with these false teachers. Also, this letter should encourage spiritual leaders, today, to take a serious look at their lives and their work of ministry.

Now we begin our study of this important letter. (Read I Timothy 1:1, 2) The beginning of the letter is just like all of Paul's other letters. This was the way most letters were written in those days. There was the mention of the sender's name, then the recipient's name, a greeting which often took the form of a prayer to whatever god or gods that person worshipped.

As we have noted, Paul refers to Timothy as his true son in the faith. This is a spiritual relationship. Timothy was probably very young (I Timothy 4:12) when Paul took him along on his second missionary journey, and even now Paul recognizes that people might not consider him one of the "elders." Paul had, obviously, mentored Timothy and watched him grow in the faith.

In Paul's greeting, he offers a prayer for "Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord." Paul began every letter of his that we have in the New Testament with this kind of prayer. We don't know for certain why he adds the word mercy only in the letters to Timothy. Grace is God's undeserved favor. Peace is a prayer for general well-being, both with God and other humans. The word mercy is translated best as loving kindness. It is a gentle word, expressing a double portion of goodwill.

*Underlined words and phrases answer questions on the *Student Worksheet*.

Lesson Goal: To prepare students for the study of the first of Paul's letters to Timothy.

Scripture Memory: "Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord." I Timothy 1:2b



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Student Worksheet—Following Through

1. In what city was Paul born?
2. What did Paul do before he became a Christian?
3. When did Timothy begin to learn Scriptures?
4. What was Timothy's Grandmother's name?
5. On what missionary journey did Timothy join Paul?
6. What were the people called who tried to convince people that they had to become Jews before they could become Christians?
7. What doctor went with Timothy and Paul from Troas to Philippi?
8. At what church was Timothy the leading pastor?
9. Grace is God's undeserved _____.
10. What is the best translation for mercy?

How to begin a Personal Relationship with God:

First, believe that the God of the Bible is the true God.

Second, believe that Jesus, God's Son, was sent to earth to die so that you can have a relationship with God.

Third, ask God to forgive your sins in Jesus' name. Jesus' death on the cross paid the price of every sin you commit.

Fourth, ask Jesus to be your Savior and the Lord of your life.