

PRAYER AND WORD CONFERENCE 2019

EXPOSITORY STUDY OF THE FIRST LETTER TO TIMOTHY BY PAUL THE APOSTLE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The letter being considered for this conference is Paul's first letter to his spiritual son Timothy. Paul met Timothy in course of his ministry, and took him as part of his ministerial team, owing to the good testimony he heard of him (Acts 16:1-3). Timothy followed Paul, and was groomed by him in ministry to a level that Paul could trust some of his ministerial assignment to him.

Though there's a lot of controversy over the date this letter was written, but it is certain that Timothy was by this time a mature believer in the faith, though young in age, he could handle certain responsibility. Paul could leave him in Ephesus to put some things right, he nursed the hope of being restored (1Tim.3:14), but while he was absent, there was need for the church to be properly guided. Thus Timothy was left in Ephesus, with the purpose of ensuring that sound doctrine is promoted "1v.3,4". It is to further strengthen this purpose that he wrote, and that "if I tarry long, you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God which is the church of the living God... (Chapter 3:15)

To do this work effectively, there is need for Timothy to be:

- ✓ Sound in faith and in good conscious (1.5)
- ✓ Well equipped for the battle ahead (1.18)
- ✓ Prayerful as to advance the purpose of God. (Chap.2)
- ✓ Carefully select co-labourers (Chap.3)
- ✓ Spiritually fit and vigilant against false teachers (Chap.5)
- ✓ Maintain proper relationship (Chap.5)
- ✓ Avoid distraction that comes through money and the pursuit of knowledge (Chapter 6)

Though the major concern of the book was Timothy as a minister, but it also has a lot to teach the church as its vocation (Chap.2) and government.

There's no other letter so fitting for the preparation of young ministers for the service of the church like Paul's first letter to Timothy, and through this lens we hope to study this letter in line with the theme of this conference **"The Prophetic Intimation"** (Entering in God's Divine Purpose for your Life).

STUDY 1: CHAPTER 1&2

1. GREETINGS AND INTRODUCTION (1:1-2)

- a) i. How did Paul introduce himself? v.1
- ii. What was the basis of his apostolic authority? v.1
- b) i. Who was Timothy to Paul? v.2
- ii. Discuss the significance of the prayer Paul made for Timothy. v.2

2. THE PURPOSE OF WRITING (1:3 – 10)

- a) What was Paul's reason for leaving Timothy in Ephesus? (v. 3&4)
- b) i. Highlight some of the issues Paul wants Timothy to handle in the Church (v.4 – 10)
- ii. What is the effect of teaching fables and endless genealogy as Paul warned? v.4. Can you give example of such fables and endless genealogy today?
- iii. Contrast the effect in (ii) above, with the purpose of the commandment from v.5.
- c) i. From v.6 &7, what mainly leads people into teaching such false doctrines and delving into legalism?
- ii. What is the purpose of the law from v.8 – 10. (See also Rom.3:21, 7:7-13, Gal.3:24)

3. THE TRUST COMMITTED TO PAUL (1:11 -17)

- a) i. Why did Paul claim the "glorious gospel" is committed to his trust? v.11&12 (See also Rom.1:14-17, 1Cor.9:15-18, Gal.1:15-16, Col.1:24-29, 1Thess.2:14, Tit.1:3). Can the gospel be committed to someone who have not first of all experience it?
- b) i. What according to v.15 was the purpose of Jesus coming? See also ch.2:3-4
- ii. Is there possibly anyone that Jesus Christ cannot save? v. 16
- c) i. What does the doxology in v.17 tell us about God's ultimate purpose in salvation of men (See also Rev.5:9-14)
- ii. Discuss each of the term used to describe God in v.17.

4. PAUL'S CHARGE TO TIMOTHY (1:18 – 20)

- a) i. What was Paul's primary charge to Timothy? v.18 (See also 1:3, 6:13,14,20, 2Tim.2:2)
- b) i. Read v.18 from Amplified Version, and discuss what you understand by the term "*The Prophetic Intimation*"
- ii. How is such "prophetic Intimation" necessary to the warfare that lies ahead of the minister.
- c) i. Discuss from v.19 the major contention in this warfare
- ii. What is the implication of losing this warfare? v.19&20

5. THE NECESSITY OF PRAYING IN THE WARFARE (2:1 – 4)

- a) i. What does the phrase "*first of all*" tell us about the importance of prayers in this warfare? v.1
- ii. Identify and expatiate on the various types of prayer mentioned in v.1
- b) i. What specifically are we instructed to pray for and why? v.2-3

- ii. How does prayers relate to bringing the will of God for the salvation of all men, and the spread of the gospel? v.4

6. THE CONTENT OF OUR FAITH (2:5 – 7)

- a) Discuss each of the declarative statement Paul made in v.5
- b) Why is Jesus the only means of salvation for men? v.6
- c) What responsibility does the statement made in v.5 and 6 place on us who already know Jesus? v.7

7. PROPRITY IN PRAYERS (2:8 – 15)

- a) i. Who are commanded to pray and what should be our attitude in prayer
- ii. Identify some impropriety in in prayer, especially with women as seen in v.8-10
- b) What further instruction did the apostle gave for conduct of women in public worship, and what do you understand by the promises attached to it.

SUMMARY

The letter opened with Paul introducing himself as an apostle (one sent to champion a course), He expressed a strong sense of obligation, responsibility, and authority in the gospel by stating the fact that he received his apostleship by the commandment of God, and that the Gospel is entrusted to him (1:1, 11). Paul intent was to commit this same trust and authority to Timothy as a minister of the gospel. He is to preserve the true gospel, and guard it against false teachers. He is to keep in view of all the purpose of the commandment which is “love from a pure heart, from a good conscience, and from sincere faith...” (1:3) and the aim for which Christ came into the world: “to save sinners...” (1:15, 2:4). Most importantly he must prepare himself in line with the prophecies made concerning him, to wage a good warfare, east he make a shipwreck of all that has been committed to him (1:18).

To pursue his ministry, there is need to be committed to prayer; both personal and cooperate praying. Our praying must be universal in nature, with the aim of promoting the cause of Jesus Christ. Prayer must be backed by a life of holiness and absolute dependence on God, devoid of wrath and doubting (2:8). And with respect to public prayers and worship, proper authority must be respected, and propriety must be maintained especially by women who have the more tendency to be showy.

Study 3: CHAPTER 3& 4

1. QUALITIES OF A CHURCH LEADER (3:1-13)

- a) i. What do you understand by the phrase “the office of a bishop” and the office of a deacon? v.1&8
- ii. Why do you think Paul commend the aspiration to such in office?
- b) i. Read v.2-3,8; list and discuss each of the personal qualities that must be found in anyone aspiring to leadership in ministry.
- ii. Discuss the importance of having a well ordered domestic life for anyone who aspire to be useful in the service of God. How might this domestic order be achieved? (v.4,5,11,12)
- iii. Read v.6&7 and discuss other ministerial qualities that must be found in a man who aspire for divine usefulness.
- c) i. What does it mean to “hold he mystery of the faith in a pure conscience” v.9?
- ii. Why is it necessary that a man be tested first before significant commitment is given to him? V.10
- iii. What benefit accrues to the man who have been so tested and approved? v.13

2. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CHURCH (3:14-16)

- a) i. How did Paul describe the Church in v.15?
- ii. What basic truth of God is the church expected to uphold, and how might we uphold this truth (or mystery)? v.16

3. CONTENTION AS TO THE ETERNAL MYSTRY OF GODLINESS (4:1 – 6)

- a) i. What is the primary force behind the contention to the mystry of godliness? v.1
- ii. How does v.1&2 describe the condition/state of heart that makes on susceptible to the influence of seducing spirit. What are these conditions?
- iii. Give examples of such teachings as stated in v.3-5. What other such false doctrines do we hear today?
- b) From v.6 how was Timothy instructed to deal with such false teachings and teachers? See also v.11

4. SPIRITUAL EXERCISE UNTO GODLINESS (4:7 – 10)

- a) How may we protect ourselves against being influenced by seducing spirit and false teachers? v.7
- b) i. What do you understand by the phrase “exercise thyself unto godliness” and how can that be done? v.6 – 10
- ii. What is the benefit of such exercise unto godliness? v.8
- c) What is the motive behind the labours of the apostles? v.10 (compare this with 2:4 – 7)

5. BASIS FOR SUCCESS IN MINISTRY (4:11 – 16)

- a) i. Timothy was instructed to command and teach; this implies he is to exercise certain level of spiritual authority. What could give credence to such exercise of authority? v.12

- ii. Read v.12 and discuss exhaustively on the various areas Timothy was commanded to set examples.
- b) What three things did Paul instruct Timothy to pay attention to in v.13? How will that help one to succeed in ministry?
- c) Discuss exhaustively the importance of the following for success in one's calling:
 - i. The Gift of the Holy Spirit (v.14)
 - ii. Meditation on God's word. V.15
 - iii. Total commitment to the work of the ministry v.15
 - iv. Paying attention to one's personal life and teachings. V.16

SUMMARY

This section of the letter opens with instructions concerning the appointment of church leaders. The apostle commend such aspiration to the place of responsibility in the church, but did not mince word when he stated the qualification to such an office. Those qualities cut across the personal character (He must be blameless, sober-minded, of good behaviour, etc), the domestic lifestyle (he must be a husband of one wife, and must rule his house well by setting the examples), and the ministerial qualities (he must not be a novice, must be able to teach, and hold the mystery of the faith in a good conscience). If indeed we aspire to usefulness in God's house we must review our lives always in line with these qualifications.

The Church cannot afford to have unqualified leaders because of her eternal vocation as "the ground and pillar of truth". This is especially critical in this end time when the spirit is speaking expressly that many shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of the devil. The minister must prepare himself and the church by exercising unto godliness, being an example of the believers, and not neglecting the gift of the Holy Spirit. No man does any great exploit and progress in his chosen field, except as he gives himself wholly to it, so too the apostle instruct Timothy to give himself wholly to his call, so that he might blaze a trail for those coming behind.

STUDY 3: CHAPTER 5&6

1. PASTORAL RELATIONS AND CHURCH WELFARE (5:1-6)

- a) Identify the various categories of people and discuss how Timothy, a young minister is expected to relate with them. (v.1-3)
- b) Read v.4-10 and discuss:
 - i. The Church's responsibility to widows, and what qualifies them for welfare care? What is the implication of this as to the expectations the church have for Christian women in general? v.5-7, 9-10
 - ii. The responsibility of brethren to their widowed relative and family members. v. 4,8,16
 - iii. Discuss Paul's advice to younger widows from v.11-15. What lessons can we draw from this instruction?

2. TREATMENT OF CHURCH ELDERS (5:17 – 25)

- a) From v.17
 - i. What does it mean for an elder to rule well?
 - ii. What do you understand by the phrase "double honour"?
 - iii. Why is the "labour in word and doctrine" given such preference?
- b) Comparing v.18 with 1 Corinthians 9:1 – 14 and Gal. 6:6 discuss the importance of honorarium and/or welfare to ministers of the gospel.
- c)
 - i. How should an accusation against a church elder be received, and what should be the guiding principle in the discipline of such? V.19-22
 - ii. From v.24-25, what should be our attitude in handling an accusation which we do not have enough fact to decide on?
- d) Read v.23 and discuss the importance of good health care for Christian labourers. Does faith in divine healing rule out the use of drugs?

3. THE CHRISTIAN'S ATTITUDE TO SERVICE AND TO MONEY (6:1-10)

- a) Discuss what Christian attitude to service should be from 6:1-2. (See also Eph.6:5-8, Col.3:22-25)
- b) Why would anyone want to teach against such doctrines in v.3-5?
- c)
 - i. What should be our attitude towards money and material things? V.6-8,17-19)
 - ii. What is the implication of being content with "food and covering"

- d) Reading v.9-10 and discuss exhaustively the peril of those who make the pursuit of money their design for life.

4. THE PURSUIT, FIGHT AND TRUST OF A MAN OF GOD (6.11-21)

- a) What should be the primary pursuit of the man of God? (v.11)
- b) i. Why is the fight of faith considered “a good fight”? v.12
ii. What is at stake in this fight? v. 12
- c) i. What is the charge/trust Paul committed to Timothy in v.14?
ii. Read v.13-16 and discuss the Solemn nature of that charge, what further motive Paul gave Timothy for keeping the charge?
iii. What might be the possible distraction to Timothy from keeping his trust and what advice/warning did Paul gave him (v.20-21). How does this apply to us and especially young ministers today?

SUMMARY

As the apostle begins to conclude this letter, there was need to call the attention of Timothy the young minister to his pastoral duties. This include how he is to relate with the various categories of persons in the church; to the elderly, he must show proper respect and to the young he must show an example of a true brother, with special care in relating to young female. He is to ensure due welfare is given to widows and the church leaders are given due honorarium. Premium is placed on those who labour faithfully in word and doctrine. Also the issue of accusation against a leader must not be taken lightly, but must be handled with great wisdom.

Finally, Timothy and indeed every minister must develop the right attitude toward money. The desire to be rich and the love of money are deadly for any one, most especially for ministers. Our focus must be on the pursuit of godliness. Every minister must heed the instruction given to Timothy at the end of this book: **“O Timothy, guard what was committed to your trust” 6:20**

HYMNS: A CHARGE TO KEEP I HAVE

A charge to keep I have,
A God to glorify,
A never-dying soul to save,
And fit it for the sky.

To serve the present age,
My calling to fulfill:
Oh, may it all my pow’rs engage
To do my Master’s will!

Arm me with jealous care,
As in Thy sight to live;
And O Thy servant, Lord, prepare
A strict account to give!

Help me to watch and pray,
And on Thyself rely,
Assured, if I my trust betray,
I shall forever die.