

1 Timothy

Life in God's Household



MBM Bible Studies – Adapted from studies written for Moore Women

How to be a good Growth Group member at MBM



Be There

The power of just turning up to encourage others is phenomenal. We don't think of our groups as events we might go to, but people we do life with. Seek to commit yourself to your small group family weekly. The blessings we give and get from one another are of eternal value!

Be Active

It's true, the more you put in, the more you'll get out of your small group. Look through the study or passage before the group meets. Engage in conversation, answer questions, share opinions, be willing to pray, read, lead, help set-up or pack-up. Jesus wasn't lying when he said *"it is more blessed to give than to receive"*.



Be Open

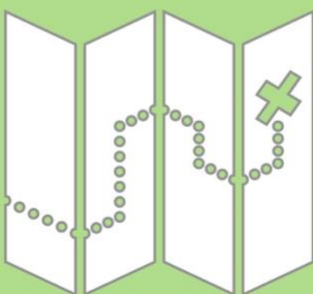
 about yourself, your joys and your struggles.

One of the greatest blessings of a small group is knowing others and being known more personally. So share and listen openly. Similarly, be honest about when you don't understand a question or part of scripture. Chances are, someone else has been through a similar experience and appreciates you sharing it, or had a similar question to you but were too shy to ask it.

Be Concerned

 for others.

Resist the temptation to think *"the group must serve my needs"* before asking, *"how can I serve the needs of others?"* It's also not just the leaders' role to care for the needs of the group; Each member plays their part as we all care for one another. Be concerned for how people are travelling. Ask questions about their week and their life and be active in caring for them as they share. Seek to connect with members outside of the meeting.



Be On About God

One of the temptations of a good small group is to get caught up in each other's interests and end up talking about lots of not-so-meaningful things. Be *on about God* and what He's doing in each other's lives. Share His word with each other, pray for each other, encourage mission and godly living, rebuke, correct and train one another in righteousness.

1 Timothy

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Bible Study Plan		
Week	Study Passage	Topic
1	1 Timothy 1	Fixing False Teaching
2	1 Timothy 2:1-7	Prayer
3	1 Timothy 2:8-15	Men & Women
4	1 Timothy 3	Leading with Integrity
5	1 Timothy 4	Reading the Times
6	1 Timothy 5:1-16	Honouring The Powerless
7	1 Timothy 5:17-6:2	Honouring Authority
8	1 Timothy 6:3-21	Great Gains

Church Sermons	
Sunday	Sermon Passage
18 Jul	1 Tim 1:1-11
25 Jul	1 Tim 1:12-20
1 Aug	1 Tim 2:1-7
8 Aug	1 Tim 2:8-15
15 Aug	1 Tim 3
22 Aug	1Tim 4
29 Aug	1 Tim 5:1-16
12 Sept	1 Tim 5:17-6:2
19 Sept	1 Tim 6:3-21

1 Timothy

Introduction and Context

Written around AD 60-62, 1 Timothy (along with 2 Timothy and Titus) is a pastoral letter written by Paul to ensure his work for the Gospel would continue. Timothy was then in Ephesus, a thriving city where believers were being pressed to conform to the culture progressing around them. Paul writes to confirm and affirm God's foundational pattern for His people - the Church, as they continue doing life together as family.

Paul gives instructions on Church leadership, on roles in relationships, gives guidance for dealing with false teaching, speaks about work and money and urges Timothy to set an example for all by godly living. His main aim is help Timothy keep the Church centred on God's truth, so that, by preserving the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the world might come to know God's great salvation through Him.

After arriving in Ephesus (Acts 19:1), Paul built on Apollos' work spending around 2 years teaching and preaching the gospel "so that all the Jews and Greeks who lived in the province of Asia heard the word of the Lord" (Acts 19:10). After performing incredible miracles, facing severe persecution and yet seeing many converted to Jesus, Paul left for Jerusalem. Along the way, he gathered the leaders of the Ephesian Church together encouraging them to hold firmly to the grace of God and warning them of dangers to come, even from within the Church (Acts 20:17-38).

In the letter to the Ephesian Church in Revelation 2:1-7, Jesus convicts them of abandoning their first love. It appears the devotion they had to Christ and his people at first had become compromised as they were hard-pressed by their surroundings. Now, not only did the Ephesians face that pressure, but since then, the same danger has been experienced by every Church, not least in our very own Church today!

Just as Paul encouraged Timothy and the Ephesian Church to "Fight the good fight of the faith" (1 Tim 6:12a), God will also call us to do the same as we commit ourselves to hearing His voice in this letter.

Optional pre-study

Read all of 1 Timothy

Take note of any questions you have and points of interest along the way. You may like to underline repeated words or themes. Re-write any verses you want to remember or memorise.

1. What was Paul's reason(s) for writing this letter to Timothy?
2. What do you think Paul is seeking to achieve through this letter?
3. What use do you think 1 Timothy has for us today?

Study One: 1 Timothy 1

Fixing False Teaching

Discuss: Are you a rule keeper or rule breaker? What drives your rule keeping or breaking? (Give an example)

Read 1 Timothy 1

1. In **1:3-7 & 18-20**, What is Timothy's role in the church at Ephesus? What does Paul charge him to do?

Leader of the Church in Ephesus. Not a teacher of the law, but of the gospel. Paul calls him keep living out the faith well, to keep the Church focused on the true gospel and to straighten out false teaching/teachers.

2. From **1:3-11 & 18-20**, What is the nature of the false teachings that Paul attacks? Why does Paul not allow any deviation from the gospel? (**see also Gal 1:6-12**)

A focus on Myths and Genealogies (important descendants and names that held special meanings/codes). Meaningless talk is talk that doesn't promote faith in the gospel of Jesus where the outcome is love of others. The false teachers are also calling people to follow the old law, which only exposes and condemns sin, rather than serving to remove sin. The law ultimately points us to Jesus who perfectly kept and fulfilled it for us. The gospel Paul has been entrusted with is the only saving message from God and turning away from it only results in eternal condemnation. Timothy must be on guard against false gospels.

3. How would this false teaching lead to people wandering away from the faith? What is attractive about it?

Humans have an inherent pull towards boasting in themselves and what we have done to achieve salvation on our own efforts. We all want to think and be told we are “good enough” or “worthy” of God. Teaching about obeying the law or teaching that says faith is not all it takes is attractive because it turns the spotlight on us and our achievements. But instead of highlighting good works, this spotlight should only reveal how far we are from God and should drive us back to Jesus.

4. In **1:7-11**, Who is the law laid down for? What effect does it have on them?

v9 - Sinners of all kinds, as it exposes sin. It reveals lives that are lived contrary to a life that conforms to the gospel (v10-11).

5. The false teaching taught that the law was a means of righteousness. In **1:8-16**, how does Paul show the limitations of the law and the superiority of the gospel?

He shares a personal story of how salvation came to him: That it was when he was a sinner, by the grace of God and the love of Christ.

6. How does Paul describe himself before he met Christ (**vv.12–16**)? How did Jesus deal with him and why?

Blasphemer, persecutor, violent man, ignorant and unbelieving. Jesus showed grace, love and immense patience.

7. What was your experience of the gospel like, compared with Paul's in **verses 12–17**? What features does Paul emphasise? How has Christ shown you mercy, grace and patience?

8. From **verses 18-20** why is it necessary to “fight the good fight” with “faith and a good conscience”? What other alternatives are there? (Compare also with 6:12)

This may help expose false ideas of those who say they believe in Jesus, but still trust in their works to get in God's good-books. “Fighting the battle” seems very practical and me centred. It seems to expect a lot of hard work on my part. But the weapons we fight with are faith and a clear conscience before God because of our relationship with Jesus and his work.

9. How can we avoid the dangers Paul points out to Timothy, and how can we keep our eyes focused on Christ and his amazing grace?

Try to help people reflect personally (I can...), not generally (we should...)

Ask someone to read this out before praying if you have time.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer once wrote this regarding Paul's words in 1:15:

"If my sin appears to me to be in any way smaller or less reprehensible in comparison with the sins of others, then I am not yet recognizing my sin at all. My sin is of necessity the worst, the most serious, the most objectionable. Christian love will find any number of excuses for the sins of others; only for my sin is there no excuse whatsoever. That is why my sin is the worst. Those who would serve others in the community must descend all the way down to this depth of humility. How could I possibly serve other persons in unfeigned humility if their sins appear to me to be seriously worse than my own? If I am to have any hope for them, then I must not raise myself above them. Such service would be a sham."

- [Life Together, Bonhoeffer](#)

Spend some time praying about these things.

Study Two: 1 Timothy 2:1-7

Prayer

Discuss: What opportunities did COVID-19 bring for the Gospel?

Read 1 Timothy 2:1-7

1. In **2:1-4**, for whom and for what does Paul urge us to pray? Why does Paul urge this? (Consider also last week's study)

All those in authority (government) so that we might live quiet, peaceful and holy lives. Also, so that people might come to know the truth and be saved. Praying for people to know the truth is also a means God uses for those who are under false teaching (or even teaching it).

2. In **2:2**, how is praying for national leaders linked to living peaceful, quiet and godly lives?

God is sovereign over government and all those in authority. If those in authority rule well, Christians, and all other people are able to flourish under their power. We are also praying for their salvation, which, if it comes about, will in turn bless them and those under their care.

3. In **verse 3**, what is good and pleasing to God? Why is it?

Christians living quiet, peaceful and holy lives. There is a link between prayer, our lives and people being saved (see question 5.)

4. What things do we learn about God in **verses 3-6**?

5. What's the connection between people being saved (coming to a knowledge of the truth) and the way we pray and live (v7)?

God is the only one who can bring someone to salvation. Yet he uses our prayers and our godly example to bring it about. 2 errors often occur: 1. Praying but not living out holiness or seeking to reach out to others with the gospel. 2. Not praying and thinking people will be saved merely by my example and efforts in sharing the gospel. God is sovereign in salvation but includes us in his plans. See also Jeremiah 29:7

6. How should these verses challenge and affect the way you pray? What about the way our church or growth group prays?

7. Consider the different types of prayer in Paul's encouragement in **2:1**:

- **Requests/petitions** – *an urgent request to meet a need*
- **Prayers** – *literally “request” but can be a catch all for various types of prayer, relating with God personally.*
- **Intercession** – *prayer on behalf of another, including for salvation.*
- **Thanksgiving** – *Expressing gratitude to God for all he gives and allows.*

How do they differ? How frequently do each appear in your own prayers?
How might you need to alter your prayers to include all of these?

Spend some time praying about these things.

Study Three: 1 Timothy 2:8-15

Men and Women

Discuss: What aspects of our culture (good and bad) do you think the Church has accepted without realising?

Or

In what ways do you think Feminism has helped our society?)

Read 1 Timothy 2:8-15

1. Whenever a section starts with “Therefore” we always ask, what’s it there for? What is the context this section of teaching (vs8-15) is based on?

The last section highlighted God’s desire for people to be saved and our prayers and godly lives as a means of accomplishing that. This next section will go on to lay out further foundations for God’s Church to be a witness to the world.

2. In v8, what does Paul want the men to do and not do? What do you think might have been going on in the Church?

Pray and not quarrel. They may have been in constant disputes over teaching or disagreements about church organization. They may have also been setting a poor example in the way they were dealing with outsiders. Lifting holy hands does not mean they always had to raise their hands to pray, but “lifting hands” is an idiom for taking action.

3. In vv9-10, what does Paul want the women to do and not do? What message does each one send to an unbeliever who joins the gathering?

To adorn themselves with a life that demonstrates Jesus' worth. Not to be focused on outer beauty. (see also 1 Peter 3:1-6). One shows that God is worth living for, the other demonstrates investing in our earthly worth is more important than it is. It can fuel comparison, envy, discontent and an endless pursuit of a fleeting beauty.

4. Men and women, reflect personally on how these verses challenge you?
 - a) Men, are you quick to confront or grumble about something or someone before praying for it/them? What are the desires that drive this and how can you change it?
 - b) Women, what does your life reveal about where your identity is found? What things do you find yourself putting your energy into to satisfy your sense of significance/acceptance?

This next little section can be the cause of much division and has at times been taught wrongly and misunderstood resulting in a poor treatment of women. It must be approached with much sensitivity and wisdom. As we do, we seek to hold the important biblical tension of celebrating the various gifts and wisdom of men and women in our churches, while preserving the goodness of their biblical distinctives (differing in role and responsibilities).

Below are some guiding principles:

- a) **The scriptures are God's authoritative word** on who he is and how his people are to live.
- b) **God is good!** What he lays out in his word for our lives is for our best and his glory. If, and when I read parts of scripture I don't like or find difficult, I must not do 2 things: **1.** I must not decide God is not good. **2.** I must not decide I don't need to listen to what he says in that part of scripture (or decide it's not scripture). One thing I must do is search my heart and my cultural expectations to better understand why what God says doesn't sit well with me. "We must refuse to believe the lie that we're wiser than God" – Ray Galea.
- c) **We must read all passages in context** (the context of the passage in its chapter, within that book, within that part of the bible, within the bible as a whole, along with where it sits in history). We ask, is there a bigger reason this little passage is here? What is this passage doing as part of the whole story of God's plan of salvation?
- d) **Giftedness does not trump Godliness, nor does it trump God's order.** There are particular roles that God in His eternal wisdom has distinctively given to men and women, inside and outside of the church, that neither giftedness nor desire should undermine.

In **verse 11**, we may easily miss it, but women learning together with the men was a very big cultural change. Paul is positively giving women a place in the congregation that previously was rarely practiced and in their culture was not the norm. This was a very progressive verse, affirming the value of women in the Church!

5. What is the manner in which Paul says women are to learn?

How different do you think it was to how the men were learning?

(Consider our current Church setting and how we learn during the sermons)

In quietness and full submission. Paul is calling for a non-argumentative, non-interruptive state of learning. This doesn't seem out of the ordinary, but a normal way of learning. It was also an expression of family dynamic, where the

men were called to oversee their families (wives and daughters) and so this silent submission during teaching time was also to preserve that family dynamic.

6. With the following definitions in view, what are women not permitted to do in **v12**?

“Teaching” here is shepherding God’s people through preaching and teaching God’s word to a mixed adult congregation. (1 Tim 3:1-2, 5:17, 1 Pet 5:1-4, Acts 20:25-31. Contrast with “teach” in Col 3:16)

“Authority” in the Church is primarily exercised through the preaching and teaching of the scriptures, by appointed elders/overseers (**1 Tim 3:1-7, 5:17**) bearing responsibility for setting theological foundation and godly living.

“Submission” here means submitting to God’s word as it is faithfully taught and applied through appointed (tested and approved) men (**1 Tim 3:1-7**).

“Silent” here does not mean at all times – as women were encouraged to speak in various ways in other Churches (**1 Cor 11:5, Eph 5:19, Col 3:16**).

(Feel free to read this explanation out to your group or summarise the ideas if it helps at this point).

Unpacking Teaching and Authority in 1 Tim 2:12 :

*Teaching here does not mean teaching of any and every kind. Paul does not mean a woman must not teach a man how to change the bin liners in the kitchen, or how to use an iPad for Church check in. Nor does it mean a wife cannot teach a husband how to change a nappy or drive a manual car. The particular context here is in the public Church gathering, when the main learning takes place (**v11**).*

We also know from passages such as **Colossians 3:16 & Ephesians 5:19** that Paul expected to see mutual teaching of one another with the Word. Women were also prophesying and praying in the public assembly in Corinth (**1 Cor 11**). Therefore, this teaching seems to be different from a one another ministry and from other practical things. This is a particular kind of teaching that happens in the Church. The teaching that Paul seems to be discussing here is a more foundational, authoritative teaching. A type of ship-steering, foundation-setting, shepherding-type teaching. The kind of teaching that would form the theological framework for the Church to function within (see **1 Tim 3:15**).

This foundational, ship-steering, biblical teaching is primarily exercised through the particular roles that Paul will lay out in the next chapter: Eldership (**3:1-7, 5:17, 1 Pet 3:1-4**). This Elder or Overseer role is reserved for particular appointed, tested and approved males, who exercise their authority primarily by teaching. This also explains why women are not only prohibited from teaching, but also from having authority over (or of) a man (**v12**).

This also helps us understand authority more clearly. Authority in God's Church is not an abstract thing that anyone can have and use however they want, but it is guided by scripture and exercised through scripture (by the teaching of scripture). Therefore, submission to authority within the Church, by men and women, is functionally a submission to God's word as it is faithfully preached and taught by those who have been appointed to the task. And while that teaching is happening, Paul says, include the women, and, just as the men are called to submit to that authoritative word being taught, encourage the women to do the same, quietly. Remember not all men will be doing that teaching, so women here are called to submit to what is being taught by those in authority who are teaching it.

This particular prohibition on women teaching and having authority in Church is not applied directly into Growth Group settings (Growth Groups are not Church, they are an activity the Church does. They are also not a ship-steering activity, but a ship affirming and fueling activity. That is, we are not setting Church direction in our Growth Groups, but affirming the truths already confirmed and encouraged by our appointed Elders under the authority of the bible. We seek to model complementarian ministry in our groups, that is, we strive to see men and women doing ministry side by side. So we would ideally appoint a male and female leader, though women can teach studies within those groups.), it does not apply at morning tea or supper time at Church, it is not directly applied to one another ministries, or other Christian relationships, though there may be other

principles guiding those relationships (marriage roles etc). It is specifically applied to the authoritative role of theological (Scriptural) formation which in our context happens primarily through the public preaching ministry during Church.

This does not mean women are any less valued by God, or any less able to teach than men, it is a God ordained role and responsibility that has not been given to women in this area. Since the church is considered as a family (the family of God) it follows the pattern God has established for men and women in families as husband and wife. Ephesians 5:22-33 teaches that the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ is the head of the church which he loves and died for. He (the husband) is responsible for leading her (the wife) and she is called to submit to him as he seeks to nourish her with God's word. Just as wives have a crucial role in supporting and helping their husbands do this, women in the church also have an important part to play in Church teaching, as they encourage, support and feedback to their leaders, also exemplifying to others how to submit to and live out what God's word is calling for.

If there is angst about this verse and its application, it's good to hear out what people are feeling and let them speak.

If things get too technical, it's good to bring things back to basics and ask – something is being prohibited here... what do we think it is? There is clearly something Paul is not allowing and it is good to try to read the text plainly without seeking to find out “what might be behind the text”, since we don't have that exact story, and since the next few verses serve to ground this practice in a timeless principle/pattern from creation.

7. What are Paul's main points in this example from Genesis (vv13-14)?

v13 – order of creation – order of authority – chain of command - God > Adam > Eve > Creation. Adam was responsible for Eve, not Eve for Adam. Adam received the command from God and was to teach and guide Eve.

v14 – It is not that women are more gullible than men so shouldn't teach. We know there are many women much brighter and smarter, more able and gifted than men. Paul encourages women to teach other women in Titus 2:3-5. Women are heavily involved in ministry of various kinds throughout the bible and especially new testament. This is not about gifting or ability, but about a God ordained role and responsibility. Adam was responsible for teaching and protecting Eve but didn't exercise his responsibility in this area. Eve's deception resulted in her overturning the created order, leading Adam into sin, with Adam ultimately held responsible for the downfall of mankind. Adam had taught Eve what God said (Gen 3:3) but was a poor example of obedience, since Gen 3:6 says, "She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it". These verses highlight the overturning of God's order, which revealed the man's poor leadership, and in effect, the woman's transgression, leading to the curse. This section of Timothy is reaffirming the created order within God's church, the family of God.

8. How do verses 13-14 reveal that this is not merely a cultural principle, but a timeless one? (See also 3:14-15)

Paul going to God's order in creation before the fall sets a foundation for a timeless principle. If this was merely an Ephesus Church problem, Paul would not have needed to base his argument in God's order in creation, but might have just given some advice similar to what he does in 1 Cor 7 regarding marriage in certain scenarios. With other things like slavery, Paul will give circumstantial instructions and then say –but if you can have your freedom, go for it! But here regarding teaching and authority, Paul bases his point in creation, making this a timeless principle.

9. How are women saved through childbearing (v. 15)? What do you think the purpose of this verse is in this section?

There are many options for what this verse could mean. The main positions that have been put forward are:

- a) Women, including Eve are able to be saved through the birth of the child descendent who was promised in Genesis 3:15. He would defeat Satan's work and ultimately redeem humanity. This was Jesus Christ, who through faith, saves us. (see **John 16:11, Col 2:15, Heb 2:14**)
- b) Women will be saved by having children. Or at least, by having children and being busy at home, they will be saved from the desire and availability to lead and teach the Church, especially as false teachers.
- c) Having children and bringing them up in the Lord, while it does not save a person, is a good and godly pursuit. It is one of the "good works which God has prepared" for those who have put their faith in Jesus for salvation (**Eph 2:8-10**). This verse encourages and affirms the ministry of raising a family (see also **4:3, 5:10 and 5:14**).
- d) Women, though they experience the effects of the curse (pain in childbearing), are not cut off from salvation due to Eve's transgression, but will also be saved along with men (who also experience aspects of the curse) if they continue in faith, love and holiness.

The consensus generally falls to position a) while c) and d) are also consistent with scripture. Position b) is generally less favored (even heretical!).

This review of options should help the general person see some of the difficulties in interpreting scripture but also give them a confidence to see that even the tricky bits can be understood in light of the whole picture of the bible. Feel free here to discuss these views and why it might or might not be each one. For example, with position b) not all women can have children, and many don't marry so this verse cannot fit with scripture (or reality). There is no absolute consensus on this verse, so don't feel the pressure to have to figure it all out. Encourage the group to keep this verse consistent with the rest of scripture. Help the group explore the options with a biblical filter (if there's time).

*It's verses like this that urge us to agree with Peter when he wrote **2 Peter 3:16** – “His [Paul’s] letters contain some things that are hard to understand...”
Whatever the case, the truth remains – salvation comes through faith in Jesus Christ and His work alone (**Acts 4:12**).*

10. Considering the context these verses appear in (**1:3-5, 15-17, 2:1-7**), how can we seek to honour and support each other as we celebrate and exercise our different roles and gifts within the Church?

How can you?

Keep the discussion focused on the purpose of the letter and what God is seeking to achieve through these instructions (The foundation of Church for the sake of the salvation of the world). It may sit uneasy with some people to hear there are restrictions placed on them just because of their gender. Encourage them to remember God’s goodness and that his plans are always better than our plans even when we can’t see why he has decided to work that way.

Spend some time praying about these things.

Study Four: 1 Timothy 3

Leading with Integrity

Discuss: What do you think makes for a good leader?

Read 1 Timothy 3

1. What qualities are required of an overseer? What qualities are required of a deacon? Take note of what Paul says about their character, general reputation and abilities.

Overseers (vv. 1-7)	Deacons (vv. 8-13)

2. What are the similarities and differences emphasised here? Why?

3. Why does Paul put such emphasis on the personal life of a Christian leader? What are the effects or consequences of bad leadership?

Just as Timothy, a leader in the church, is to set an example for the believers “in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity” (4:12) the life of a Christian leader is to be one of example. The other members of the church watch the leaders for guidance on how to live as a Christian in their context. Christian leaders are representatives of Christ and the gospel, and so their lives should be glorifying him and shouldn’t bring the gospel into disrepute.

4. What is the danger of appointing someone to church leadership too quickly (v. 6)?

They can fall into sin, affecting not just their own reputation and relationship with God, but also others who were under their care. They may also have faulty teaching/understanding of God and his word, and may be leading others in an unhelpful direction while they are still working things out for themselves. (v6, 7 & 10). If they fall, they can bring the gospel’s reputation down too.

5. Why is it important for church leaders to have a good reputation with outsiders (v. 7)?

Paul obviously sees this as a public office requiring public esteem as well as esteem from within the church. If he is not thought of well by outsiders he may fall into disgrace and into a snare of the devil (v. 7). His disgrace also brings the gospel into disgrace, so it is important that he has a good reputation with outsiders.

6. How can we encourage our leaders in the standards set in this chapter?

In **verse 11** Paul is either referring to wives of the deacons, or women who were counted as deacons themselves. The early church certainly had female leadership such as Lydia (**Acts 16:14, 20**) and Priscilla (**Acts 18:18; Rom. 16:3; 1 Cor. 16:19**). There is no mention that Lydia was married, and she managed her own household, so these standards can be applied to single women as well.

7. What are the expectations for these women in **verse 11**?

Not gossips, respectful, trustworthy. One word would be women of Integrity!

8. Most of the qualifications in this chapter are qualities we would want to see in any mature Christian, not just our leaders. How is God growing these qualities in your life? Is there anything on the list that you find particularly challenging? How can you encourage each other in this type of godly living?

9. **Verse 15** is a little summary of what this letter is all about. How does Paul describe the church in **verse 15**? How does that description differ from how you view the Church? What effect ought these truths have on our lives?

God's household, church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth.

The church is where God's fountain of truth is proclaimed and displayed. This reality should encourage us to guard the truth of God's word and to strive to live it out that not only would the church remain a foundation for God's people to live in, but would show the world the glory and worthiness of God.

Verse 16 was most likely a common creed and summary of the Gospel.

10. a) What are the main aspects and why do you think they are?
b) If anything, what would you have added or taken away?
c) What would a creed or summary of the Gospel for people in our day sound like?

Spend some time praying about these things.

Study Five: 1 Timothy 4

Reading the Times

Discuss: “Do as I say, not as I do.” Is there anything wrong with this statement? If so, what?

Read 1 Timothy 4

1. In **4:1–5**, where does Paul say the false teaching will come from? By what kind of people is it taught?

The false teaching will come from deceitful spirits, and demons and is spread by liars whose consciences are seared (as in cauterised with a hot iron and rendered insensitive). See also 1:19–20, the example of Hymenaeus and Alexander. You may want to stress the importance of knowing God’s word here to tell the difference.

2. According to **verses 3-5**, why is what the false teachers were saying false?

Marriage is not forbidden, there are no foods that we need to abstain from. All things that God makes are good (v. 4) and both marriage and food were created by God “to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth” (v. 3). How can anyone despise or forbid marriage when God instituted it? How can anyone require abstinence from certain foods when God created them to be received with thanksgiving? Marriage should be held in honour by all (Heb 13:4) and the attitude of thanksgiving and honouring the Lord is what is important when eating (Rom 14:2, 3, 6b).

3. From **verse 6 to 16**, make a list of all the things Timothy is told to do and to avoid in order to become a ‘good minister of Christ Jesus’.

To do	Not to do

4. From your list, which things concern Timothy’s personal life and which concern his public ministry? What can we learn about the connection of these two?

Personal life: train for godliness, keep close watch on self, being an example in speech, conduct, love, faith, and purity

Public ministry: all the other things! Looking at the lists it can feel hard to separate the personal and the public, and you may disagree with what I’ve separated above. But that’s kind of the point. The two are linked closely that they influence each other. Particularly the personal life can flow out and influence the public ministry, which may be why Paul tells Timothy to keep a close watch on himself first, and then the teaching. A Moore College preacher at chapel once said that your life will go off track first, and then your doctrine will follow as you use it to justify yourself.

5. How valuable is godliness compared with physical training? (**vv. 7-8**)? How are you currently training in godliness? Is anyone helping you? Does your training program need to change/be altered?

6. What do **verses 9-10** add to this section? Why are they here?

It contrasts the false teaching with the true. They are very different! It also affirms the strive for holiness and effort on Timothy's (and other leaders) part for the gospel.

7. How are you setting an example to other believers in speech, conduct, love, faith or purity (**v. 12**)? What might need to change to do this?

8. What are Timothy's ministry (Church) priorities to be (**v. 13**)? Why are these important? How can we ensure that these stay as priorities in our own church?

9. From **v16**, how is having our life and teaching closely aligned linked with us and others being saved?

Studies have shown that the biggest barrier to the gospel for non-believers is hypocritical Christians (Christians saying one thing and living another). God has been calling his people, from the Old Testament to the New to be his witnesses to the world by living holy lives. That's the privilege and responsibility we have as God's people. But an inconsistent life also reveals an inconsistent heart. Salvation is not a thing we say we have, it's an actual relationship with God. An unholy life due to not listening closely to God's word reveals that we may not actually have that relationship.

Spend some time praying about these things.

Study Six: 1 Timothy 5:1–16

Honouring the Powerless

Discuss: Where (or to whom) do you usually turn when you're in need?

Read 1 Timothy 5:1–16

1. How are we to view other people in the Church and how does that affect the way we minister to them (**v1-2**)?

We are to see them as family. Treating them with the respectful family dynamics we normally would in our very own families.

2. From **verses 3-4 and 16**, how are the elderly (e.g. widows) expected to be cared for? What other ways are they cared for in our society?

*By their own families. If not, then the Church should assist (if entitled). In our context, our government has shouldered much of that burden for the Church. Other organisations such as Anglicare have also devoted themselves to being the care arm of the Anglican church so our churches can focus more intensely on preaching the gospel (**4:13**).*

3. Paul says in **verse 8** that if anyone doesn't provide for their relatives they are worse than an unbeliever. Why do you think Paul uses such strong language? How does this verse impact you?

4. In **verses 5-6**, Paul discerns the widows who are really in need from those who aren't. How do these differences express themselves, and how might we see this today in our elderly/retired generation?

Those in need have a genuine trust in God to provide for them and are devoted in prayer for God to answer that need. Those who aren't in need don't approach God, but devote themselves to comfort. By doing this they reveal their dire need for Jesus, since they trust in riches and think they don't need God. Discuss what today's elderly generation might do with their life and time and what that might reveal about where they're at with God (recognising we can only assess from external observation but only God knows the heart).

5. Scan over **verses 9-16**, what enables or disqualifies someone for Church support? What is good and what is difficult about these requirements?

It's good that they discern genuine Christians from non. It's difficult because it seems like there is a lack of care for those who haven't "worked" hard enough in the faith. Good to open up discussion about expectations of the Christian life.

6. Why does Paul advise against giving Church support to younger widows in **verse 11-15**? What might have been happening at that time to cause Paul to write this? How would it look in our day and what can/should we do about it?

From what Paul says about the younger widows it sounds like they were idle, gossipers and busybodies. They are young enough to remarry, have children, and manage their households, which would prevent them from the idleness that brought slander upon them. Paul's instruction for young widows to remarry again refutes the false teaching of 4:3. These women were perhaps victims of this false teaching that forbid them to remarry and they led unproductive lives and some even fell away from the faith.

7. Our government, and Christian organisations like Anglicare currently offer great support/care for our elderly population. What should the Church's role be in caring for those "in need"? From **verse 16**, how can we ensure the Church is not over-burdened, yet is a solid support network?

Good to discuss keeping the main task of the church the main task and not turning into a social justice organization where our focus has been taken off preaching the gospel and seeing people saved into eternal dwellings. Yet, we can always do better as a community to care for our own and those struggling in our community. Discuss practical/realistic ways we could make good steps towards being a solid supporting community.

8. Did you know we have frozen meals in our Church Kitchen Freezer ready to hand to people who are in need? If you'd like to find out more, please contact Mel Potter (MBM Kitchen Manager) melanipotter@gmail.com

Spend some time praying about these things.

Study Seven: 1 Timothy 5:17–6:2

Honouring those with Authority

Discuss: Australians are well known for “tall poppy syndrome”, where we seek to bring high achievers and those in authority down to everyone else’s level. What is good and bad about this cultural trait?

Read 1 Timothy 5:17-6:2

1. **Verse 17** develops our understanding of the role of an overseer from **3:1-7**. What is their role and how are they to be supported in it (**v17-18**)?

Directing the affairs of the church, teaching and preaching. They are supported by the church as they honour them. Double honour is more than simply being respected for their hard work. The word ‘honour’ may have financial connotations (as in 5:3 and 6:1, 2). So here double honour may reflect both respect and a financial element. Perhaps Paul also mentions double honour because of the dishonour that was brought upon the role of elder by the activity and behaviour of the false teachers (see 1:3–7, 6:3–5).

2. In **verses 19-21**, why would an accusation against a leader need good evidence? And when discipline is required, why is it so severe?

Paul states that accusations against church leaders need to be backed up by more than one witness. This was likely in order to prevent false accusations from damaging the leader’s reputation. (However, in light of child safety, and the horrible reality of child abuse that happens in the world, and in the church, it is right to accept accusations from a child who claims they have been abused, even if they are the only witness. You don’t necessarily need to raise this with your group, but note that it may come up.)

The severity was to serve as a warning to others who would be tempted to the same, or had been a follower of the particular leader. Also since God's holiness is at stake, action it is to be taken with absolute seriousness. For, Christ did not die for nothing, nor is his sacrifice to be trampled under foot (Heb 10:29-31).

3. How does question 2 help us understand the importance of **v. 22**? What are the possible consequences of appointing too early?

Appointing too early may result in that scenario (Qu 2). Also being aware/sensitive to what other leaders might be doing and watching ourselves that we are following God before others.

4. What warnings against sin does Paul give to Timothy (**see verses 22, 24**)?

Don't share in the sins of others. (Rom 14:22b). Some sins are obvious but others may not show up as easily, yet their consequences don't disappear. The important thing is not to live in comparison with others, but keep ourselves pure according to God.

5. How does **verse 23** relate to **verse 22** here, particularly in light of the false teaching in **4:3** and instructions to leaders in **3:3 & 3:8**?

Leaders were called not to be addicted to much wine (drunkards). Paul is not condemning all drinking, but teaching that it has its purposes within the bounds of God's good purposes. To drink alcohol/wine is not a sin, but drinking too much is. Just as Jesus said, it's not what goes into a person that defiles him, but what comes out of them. The case is that too much drink flips the lid off a tamed heart. It is wise/important to keep the heart tamed.

6. Share an example of someone's good deeds that were obvious/unable to be hidden (v25)

7. How is the instruction to Christian slaves/servants consistent with the overall purpose of Paul's letter and this section on leaders? (see also 2:1-7, 3:15, 4:10, 4:15-16)

Our lives are to be subservient/submissive to the gospel for God's sake. It's not up to us to come up with a new plan for how God will bring about the salvation of the world. We are to live upright and holy lives in light of God's grace in the context we're in, trusting that God will bring about his purposes as he calls us to work with him, his way. The way slaves are encouraged to submit to their believing masters is very similar to the way the church is called to submit to their leaders (slaves considering their masters as dear to them, and masters desiring the welfare of the slaves).

8. What does 6:2-3 tell us about the relationship between Christian slaves and Christian masters? Why do you think Paul addresses slaves and not masters?

There remains a professional relational dynamic between them, though they are family in Christ and equal in his sight. They are both called to see and treat one another through the lens of their Christian values.

9. Why might it be tempting not to work hard for a non-Christian boss? Or for a Christian boss?

Spend some time praying about these things.

Study Eight: 1 Timothy 6:3–21

Great Gains

Discuss: What areas of your life would be easier if you had more money?

Read 1 Timothy 6:3–21

1. How does Paul describe the false teachers here (6:3-5, 20-21) and what are the causes of these errors?

Conceited, understand nothing. These behaviors seem to stem from a rejection of sound teaching (v3) and an unhealthy, over-interests in minor things (remember 1:3-6). They also have a desire for financial gain and are either thinking godliness results in it or can be used for it.

2. What reason does Paul give for being content and what are the marks of contentedness (vs7-8)?

We brought nothing into the world and can't take anything out of it. The satisfaction of our basic needs (food, clothing) is enough to be content. The prosperity gospel is one danger (thinking if we're being godly or having enough faith God will financially/physically bless us), but there is another type of this which is the "Entitlement Gospel" which says I "deserve" this or that from God. It's the thinking that I am entitled to a number of things from God, for example – safety, health, knowledge, flourishing relationships, no suffering etc. This misunderstands sin and grace and has put us in a higher status than we really are. We are loved and cared for in the midst of those struggles, not taken out of them. Our entitlements are based on God's promises to us, not our demands or wrong expectations of Him.

3. What stops you from being content?

4. From **verses 6–10, 17–19**, what are the dangers for those who are rich, or want to be rich? What instead should our desires, hopes and pursuits be fixed on?

The love of money is the root of all kinds of evil. The rich are in danger of being haughty and trusting in their riches to look after them, rather than God. They may also be less willing to share their riches. The desire for riches can bring destruction and ruin (v. 10).

Our desires and hopes should instead be fixed on God who provides for us.

5. What is Timothy called to focus on instead of financial gain (**vs11-16**)? How can we encourage each other to do the same?

Righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, gentleness. Eternal life. Spotlessness and blamelessness before God at his appearing.

6. In your experience, what are some reasons people wander from the faith? What are some of the reasons Paul gives here (**6:10, 20–21**)? (see also **1:5-7, 18-20 & 5:11-15**)

7. How does Paul describe God in **verses 14-16**? Why do you think Paul chose these descriptors in this particular context?

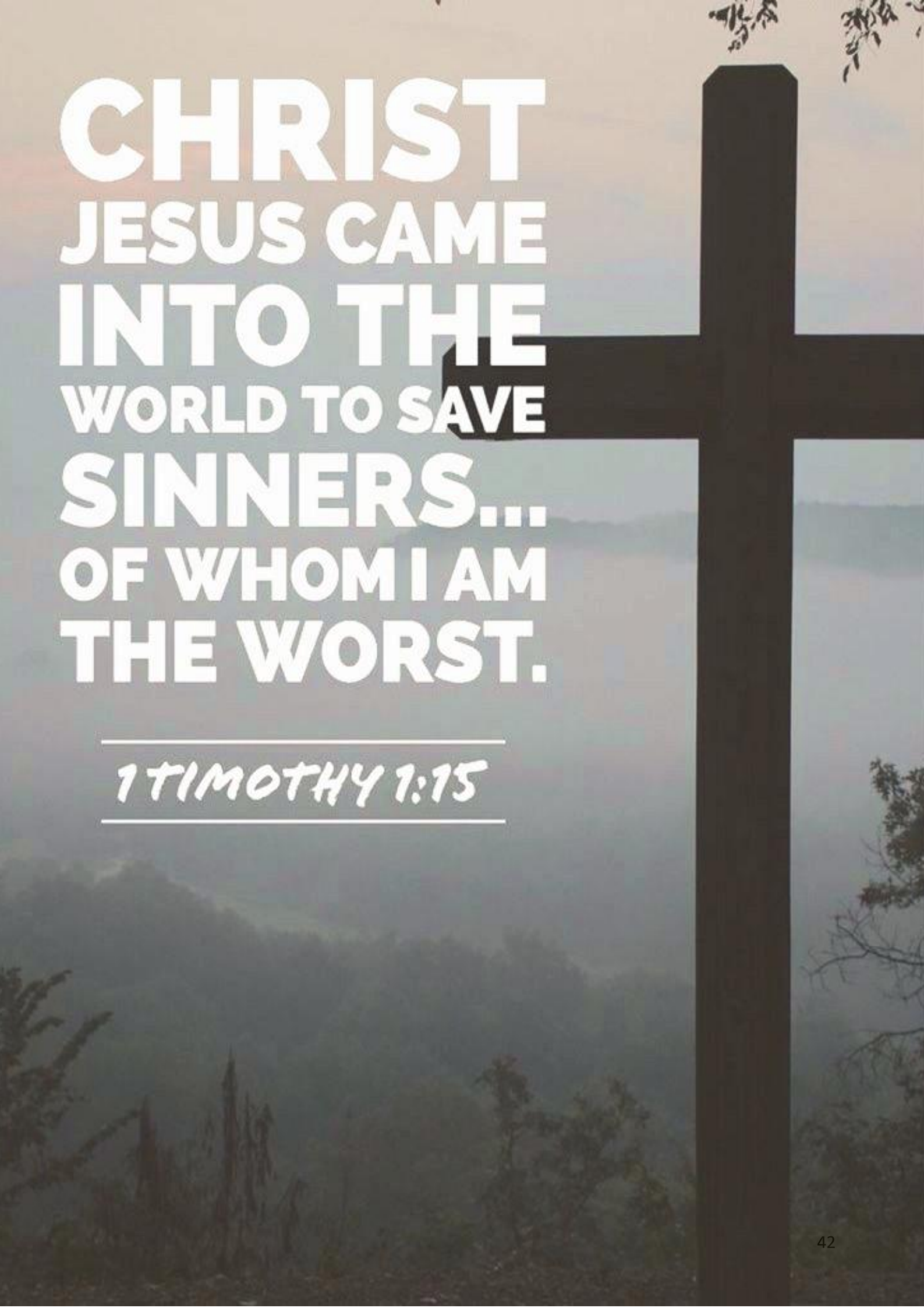
The Lord Jesus Christ. God – blessed and only ruler, King of kings and Lord of lords, immortal, lives in unapproachable light, no one has ever seen or can see. Honour and might belong to Him forever.

Paul is seeking to take people's eyes off the fading beauty of money and wealth and for them to see the worth of God more clearly. He is the only one worth pursuing, the only one who can give all we need, the only one worthy of our money and time and efforts, for all eternity.

8. After a heavy letter with lots of commands and practical application, how do Paul's final words tie this letter together (**v21**)?

It can feel like unless we get all these things right, we will not make the cut. Paul's final words re-focus us on Jesus and God's grace. We finish up the Christian life the same way we start out – by God's mercy and grace. It is only by his gift of life through Jesus that we have the power and motivation to keep living out all these commands and ways of life for His glory. The false teachers had strayed from grace and turned to law. Paul wants Timothy (and anyone else who will read this letter) to be captured and captivated by grace.

Spend some time praying about these things.



**CHRIST
JESUS CAME
INTO THE
WORLD TO SAVE
SINNERS...
OF WHOM I AM
THE WORST.**

1TIMOTHY 1:15