

Book Study

Paul's Letters to People

A tool to help with reading the Bible.



Produced by XA Denton Chi Alpha | UNT & TWU

Paul's letters to people:

The Apostle Paul, a leader in the first century church, shares letters of Christian instruction, encouragement, and correction, with the Christian churches and young leaders. Among them are three letters written to two of his disciples, Timothy and Titus.

These letters were written to build up the individuals who had been appointed to pastor a church in a particular region. Keep in mind the pastors and churches looked different in first century Asia than it does today in American culture. A church was a regional community of believers who would typically gather in homes where they would worship, pray, hear teachings, and share in meals together. First century Christians received persecution and resistance from both the Romans and the Jews so much of how they gathered was done discretely.

Also, keep in mind that the first Christians were all brand new to their faith. The message of Jesus was so fresh that much of the theology that is agreed upon today hadn't been fully navigated yet. Therefore, it was very easy for young churches to wander from truth or to unemotionally blend the values of Jesus with their old Jewish values or even the values of the Roman religion. That's why Paul found it so important to care for and instruct the leaders of the day.

Reading Checklist:

1 Timothy 1:	___	2 Timothy 1 :	___
1 Timothy 2 :	___	2 Timothy 2:	___
1 Timothy 3:	___	2 Timothy 3:	___
1 Timothy 4:	___	2 Timothy 4:	___
1 Timothy 5:	___	Titus 1:	___
1 Timothy 6:	___	Titus 2:	___
		Titus 3:	___

1 Timothy:

Descriptions provided by Tyndale's New Living Translation Bible book preface

Content: Timothy is the first “second-generation” Christian leader mentioned in the New Testament. He became Paul’s protégé and a leader in the Ephesian church. As a young minister, Timothy faced all sorts of pressures, conflicts, and challenges from the church and the surrounding culture. Paul sent this personal letter to counsel and encourage Timothy. Paul spent the final years of his life in prison, but many scholars believe he enjoyed a period of freedom between A.D 62 and 64, before he was imprisoned again and executed. He probably wrote this letter during his period of freedom. In his letter, Paul warned against false teachers and encouraged Timothy to remain strong in the faith. Paul also gave several directives for worship and for the ordination of the church officers. The letter tends to be fairly personal, but many of its instructions are still helpful for church leaders today.

Author: Paul the apostle

Date: Around A.D. 64, probably just prior to Paul's final imprisonment in Rome

Purpose: To encourage and instruct Timothy, a young church leader

Themes: Sound doctrine, public worship, church leadership, personal discipline, a caring church

Milestones (Bibleproject.com)

- **Timothy's Commission:** Paul commissions Timothy to confront corrupt leaders and strange teachings. True Christian teaching is faithful to Jesus and results in genuine faith and loving actions.
- **Prayer for leaders:** During regular prayers gatherings, the Church should pray for governing leaders and peace so they can continue spreading the good news to the whole world.
- **Leadership Crisis:** Paul addresses false teachers, including women, and instructs Timothy to appoint elders and deacons with character and integrity who will lead God's family the Church.
- **Bad Religion:** 1 Timothy gives instructions about addressing bad theological teaching that corrupts widow care, allows older intemperate men and Christian slave rebellion and promotes wealthy selfishness.
- **Family Transformed:** While some Christian slaves demanded equality with their Christian masters, Paul exhorts a strategic household transformation that persuades others to join God's family and Church.

For a video overview, visit: <https://thebibleproject.com/explore/1-timothy>

1 Timothy chapters 1-3: Warnings about false doctrine, prayer, church leaders

What are two things that you noticed about God's character in this section?

From what you read, what is something that you feel like God is showing you at this moment?

What is something that you learned or were challenged by that you can apply to your life?

What is something you read in this passage that you did not previously know or understand?

Additional Notes:

1 Timothy 4-6: Exhortations and ministry, Paul's charge to Timothy

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Additional Notes:

2 Timothy:

Descriptions provided by Tyndale's New Living Translation Bible book preface

Content: We tend to pay special attention to the words of a person who is very near death because we believe that those words will contain important wisdom, reflection, and advice. Paul's second letter to Timothy expresses Paul's thoughts and reflections shortly before his death. This letter is very personal and is probably the last letter Paul ever wrote. It expressed Paul's deepest feelings and his assurance that, though his earthly life might end soon, God had eternal life waiting for him in heaven. Paul also reflected on God's faithfulness and exhorted Timothy to remain faithful, though the days were coming when Christians would be persecuted and some would depart from the truth.

Author: Paul the apostle

Date: Around A.D. 66 or 67, from prison in Rome shortly before his execution

Purpose: To give final instructions and encouragement to Timothy, a young church leader.

Themes: Faithfulness, boldness in preaching, the coming rebellion against God.

Milestones (Bibleproject.com)

- **Accept the Call:** Paul encourages Timothy to accept his calling. It involves committing to something bigger than himself, willingly sacrificing and enduring challenges to accomplish a greater good.
- **Corrupt Teachers:** 2 Timothy mentions corrupt teachers who abandoned the hope of Jesus' resurrection and new creation for a hyper-spiritualized Christianity that is disconnected from daily life.
- **Raise Faithful Leaders:** Paul calls Timothy to raise faithful leaders who will teach the good news about Jesus and focus on the Scriptures' core story line and message.
- **Nature of Scripture:** Divinely inspired and breathed, Scripture is useful for teaching, challenging, correcting and training so that God's people would be saved and prepared to do good.
- **Paul experiences Jesus:** Imprisoned and abandoned by almost everyone, Paul experiences the personal presence of Jesus who stands with him and will deliver him even if he dies.

For a video overview, visit: <https://thebibleproject.com/explore/2-timothy>

2 Timothy chapters 1-2: Paul's thanksgiving and charge to Timothy

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Additional Notes:

2 Timothy chapters 3-4: The coming rebellion against God, Paul's final words

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Additional Notes:

Titus:

Descriptions provided by Tyndale's New Living Translation Bible book preface

Content: Like Timothy, Titus was one of Paul's trusted assistants who was commissioned to help lead a church. Paul wrote this letter to instruct Titus in his pastoral duties on the island of Crete. Paul advised Titus regarding the ordination of elders and the teaching of the basic doctrines of the faith. He went into some detail regarding the qualifications for the office of elder and gave instructions for others in the church, as well. Paul directed Titus to encourage the people to be submissive to the governing authorities whenever possible. Paul also addressed problems that church leaders often faced and instructed Titus in how to solve them.

Author: Paul the apostle

Date: Around A.D. 64 about the same time 1 Timothy was written

Purpose: To instruct Titus in his duties as a leader of the church in Crete

Themes: Church leadership, godly behavior in the church and in society.

Milestones (Bibleproject.com)

- **Introduction:** Paul opens the book of Titus by stating that the God revealed through Jesus is faithful, true and a total departure from typical Cretan culture.
- **Titus's Tasks:** Paul assigns Titus to appoint new leaders who live a life totally different from Cretan culture and to confront corrupt leaders who exemplify Cretan life.
- **The New Household:** The ideal Cretan household will transform society. Its members will demonstrate the redemptive power of the gospel when they live daily by God's value system.
- **Christian Value System:** The value system driving Christian life is based on God's generous grace and love, which appeared in the person of Jesus and transforms daily life.
- **The New Humanity:** God's love and grace are powerful and can produce new Spirit-empowered people who are faithful to Jesus's teachings in their homes, community and the world.

For a video overview, visit:

<https://thebibleproject.com/explore/titus>

Titus chapters 1-3:

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Additional Notes:

Next, pick up one of these booklets from the XA store.

1. *Genesis* - 50 chapters
2. *The Torah* (Exodus - Deuteronomy) - 133 chapters
3. *Joshua and Judges* - 45 chapters
4. *Ruth and Esther* - 14 chapters
5. *The Kings* (1 Sam - 2 Chronicles) - 177 chapters
6. *After Babylon* (Ezra, Nehemiah, Daniel) - 35 chapters
7. *Psalms* - 150 Psalms
8. *Poetry* (Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs) - 93 chapters
9. *Isaiah & Ezekiel* - 110 chapters
10. *Jeremiah and Lamentations* - 57 chapters
11. *Minor Prophets, Pre-Exile* - 43 chapters
 - (Hosea, Joel, Amos, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk)
12. *Minor Prophets, Post-Exile* - 24 chapters
 - (Zephaniah, Obadiah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi)
13. *Synoptic Gospels* (Matthew, Mark, Luke) - 68 chapters
14. *John* - 21 chapters
15. *Acts* - 28 chapters
16. *Paul's Letters to churches* - 59 chapters
 - (Romans, 1 & 2 Cor., Galatians, 1 & 2 Thes.)
17. *Paul's Prison Epistles* - 15 chapters
 - (Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Philemon)
18. *Paul's Letters to people* (1 & 2 Timothy, Titus) - 13 chapters
19. *Apostle's Letters* (Hebrews, James, 1 & 2 Peter, 1 2 3 John, Jude) - 34 chapters
20. *Revelation* - 22 chapters