

**The 1st letter that Paul
wrote to Timothy
(The book in the Holy Bible
called 1 Timothy)
About this letter**

Paul wrote this letter to Timothy about 2,000 years ago, about 30 years after Jesus went back to heaven, and it is now in the Holy Bible.

God sent Paul to lots of countries to tell people about Jesus. Timothy was a young man in one of those countries. He heard what Paul said, and he believed in Jesus. After that, he went with Paul and helped him do his work (see Acts 16:1-3). At a town called Ephesus, Paul told Timothy to stay there and look after the church, while Paul went to other places. So Timothy was the pastor of the church in Ephesus.

At that time, the Roman people were the bosses over a lot of other nations. They didn't like Paul telling people about Jesus, so they grabbed him and put him in jail. Paul wrote this letter while he was in jail in the big city called Rome.

This is the 1st letter that Paul wrote to Timothy, and it has important messages for us Christians today, especially for ministers and pastors. It can help church leaders work out how to properly look after the people in their churches.

1-2 Dear Timothy,

I am Paul, and this letter is from me. God picked me to be Jesus Christ's special worker. Those 2, God and Jesus, they told me to do this work. God is the one that will save us, and we can be sure that Jesus will always look after us. They gave me this job, to tell everybody this message about them.

Timothy, I told you about Jesus, and you really believed in him, so now I love you like you are my own son. I pray to God our father, and to Jesus Christ our leader, that they will show you that they love you. I am asking them to be good to you, and to make you feel happy and quiet inside yourself.*

Some people teach the wrong message

³⁻⁴ Remember when we were in Ephesus, and I left that town to go to Macedonia country. At that time, I told you to stay there in Ephesus. There were some people there that were teaching the wrong message, and I wanted you to stay there and straighten them out. Those people think a lot about old time stories that are not true, and they think about the lists of names of people in their families, and then they use those stories and lists of names to teach lies to people. Anybody that listens to them just gets into useless arguments. People shouldn't do that, but instead they have to learn about God, and the way he works. They have to learn to believe in God and to do whatever he wants. So I want you to tell those lying teachers to stop teaching those lies.

* **1:1-2** Acts 16:1

⁵ You see, you have to teach people to do what is right, and to believe in God properly, and to never do bad things. Then they will properly love each other all the time. We want people to follow the things that we teach, so that they live that way. ⁶ But those lying teachers don't do that. They go all wrong. They just talk about useless things all the time. ⁷ They reckon they teach the law that God gave to Moses, and they want everybody to respect them. They talk strongly, like they know all about that law, and they think they are always right. But really, they are all mixed up. They don't understand that law properly, and they don't know what they are talking about.

⁸ We all know that the law that God gave to Moses is good, so long as people teach it the right way. ⁹ We have to remember that God gave that law to punish the people that do bad things, not the people that do good things. That law is there to stop bad people, and cheeky people, and people that forget about God and everything that belongs to God. It is there to stop people that want to kill their own father or mother, and people that want to murder other people. ¹⁰ That law is there to stop those people that just want to sleep with anybody, and do with them what married people do together. It is there to stop men that want to sleep with other men, as if they are women. It is there to stop people that grab other people to make them prisoners and force them to work for no pay. It is there to stop those people that trick other people by lying to them.

That law is there to stop all those sorts of bad things that people do if they don't listen to God's word. ¹¹ They do all sorts of bad things. But if we think about that good story about Jesus, we know all those things are wrong. And I go and tell that good story about Jesus to everybody. That's my job. Our wonderful God gave me this job.

Jesus picked Paul to be an example

¹² I really want to thank our leader Jesus Christ. He makes me strong enough to do this job. He thought I will do this work properly, so he picked me out to do it for him, and I thank him for that. ¹³⁻¹⁴ I used to be really cheeky to Jesus Christ before I ever believed in him. I used to say bad things about Jesus, and I used to make trouble for anybody that believed in Jesus. I didn't know the true story about Jesus at that time, so I didn't believe in him. But God felt sorry for me, and he was really good to me. He let me turn around and join up with Jesus Christ, and now Jesus helps me to trust God, and he helps me to love everybody.*

¹⁵ You sometimes hear people say this, "Jesus Christ came into this world to save bad people, to make them into better people." That is very true, and everybody has to believe it. And it tells the story about me too. I was really bad. I was worse than anybody else. ¹⁶ But Jesus wanted to show everybody that he will wait for people, and he will save anyone that believes in him, even really bad people. So he picked me to be an

* **1:13-14** Acts 8:3; 9:4-5

example. I was really bad, but he felt sorry for me, and he waited for me to believe in him. So now everybody can know that Jesus is waiting, and he wants everybody to believe in him, no matter if they are really bad. If they believe in him, he will save them, and they will live with him for ever.

¹⁷ That shows that God is really great. He is the biggest boss, and he lives for ever, even though nobody can see him. He is the only one that is God. Everybody has to really praise him and say he is great, and they have to do that for ever and ever. That's right.

¹⁸ Timothy, you are like a son to me, so I'm telling you to do these things. Remember that the Holy Spirit told the Christians there a message about you, some time ago. Well, you have to think about that message, so that you can stand up against things that are wrong, like a soldier that stands up and fights against an enemy.

¹⁹ You have to keep on believing God's word and keep on doing the right thing, so that you will never feel bad about the things you do. Some people heard about God, but they didn't try to go the right way, and now they don't believe in God any more. ²⁰ Those 2 men, Hymenayus and Alexander, they are like that. So I asked God to let Satan punish those 2 men. Satan is the boss over the bad spirits, and I asked God to let him punish those 2 men so that they will learn not to tell lies about God.

Church meetings

¹ I'm writing now about your church meetings. The first thing I want to tell you is that you have to pray for all sorts of people. Ask God to help people that have problems. Tell him all about them, and ask him to help them. Always thank God too, for everything that he does for people. ² Pray for the bosses over your nation, both the big bosses and those other bosses that work for them. Ask God to help them run the nation the right way, so that we can live happy and quiet lives, and so that we can respect God properly, and live his way. ³ If we pray for everybody like that, we make God happy. He is the one that saves us, ⁴ and he wants to save everybody. He wants everybody to know the true message about Jesus.

⁵ You see, there is only one God, and there is only one man that can stand between God and us people, to bring us back to God and ask him not to punish us. That man is Jesus Christ. ⁶ He let people kill him. When he died, he took the payback for everybody, so that now God can save anybody. He died like that at just the right time to show everybody that God really wants to save them. ⁷ And God has picked me to be Jesus's special worker, to go and tell people his word. What I'm saying now is really true. I'm not lying. He picked me to go to those people that are not Jewish, and to tell them that God will save them too.*

* **2:7** 2 Timothy 1:11

Men that pray

⁸ So in your meetings at every place, I want this sort of men to pray, men that always want to make God happy. I don't want them to be angry, or argue with others.

Women in church meetings

⁹ And in your meetings, I want the women to dress properly and sensibly. They can't dress in a way that makes men look at them. They can't think about the fancy clothes they will wear, or their fancy hairdo, or the jewels that they want to wear, like gold or pearls. Those things are not important.* ¹⁰ This is more important. They have to do good things for other people, so that everyone will see that they are women that really know God. ¹¹ Women have to listen to the teacher in a meeting, and not argue with the teacher.

¹² I don't let women teach men or be men's bosses in spiritual things. They just have to be quiet. ¹³ You see, God made people a long time ago, and he made the man first. His name was Adam. After that, he made the woman. Her name was Eve.* ¹⁴ And then that snake came to trick them, but he didn't trick Adam. He tricked Eve, and she went wrong first.* ¹⁵ But God will save women from big trouble. He worked it out for them to become mothers, and that makes them important. So if they keep on believing in him, and loving people, and if they really respect

* **2:9** 1 Peter 3:3 * **2:13** Genesis 2:7, 21-22 * **2:14** Genesis 3:1-6

God, and if they keep on being sensible, God will save them.

3

The leaders of God's people

¹ I'm writing about church leaders now. You sometimes hear people say, "If anybody wants to be the person that leads God's people, that's a very important job that they want to do." And that's right. So you have to be very careful about the person you pick to be a leader. ² A church leader has to be this sort of man,

- He has to be a really good man, so that nobody can ever say that he does bad things.
- He can only have one wife, and he can't sleep with any other woman, like a husband sleeps with his wife.
- He has to have good sense and do things properly.
- He can't be the sort of man that lets himself go and then does wild things.
- He has to be friendly to other people, even if he doesn't know them.
- He has to be good at teaching people.
- ³ He can't be a drunken man, or a man that gets into fights.
- He has to be a quiet man that is not hard on people.
- He can't be a man that loves money.
- ⁴⁻⁵ He has to look after his own family properly, then you will know that he can look after God's people too. If his kids respect him, and if they do whatever he tells

them to do, that shows that he is the right sort of man.

- ⁶ He has to be a man that has been a Christian for a long time, not a new Christian. A new Christian might start to think he is smart, and God might have to throw him out, like he threw the devil out after the devil thought he was smart. That devil is now the boss over the bad spirits.
- ⁷ He has to be a man that everybody says is a good man. Even people that are not Christians have to say that he is good. If they know that he is a good man, they will respect him. The devil always tries to make Christian leaders go wrong so that he can shame them. It is like the devil has a trap and tries to catch them in it, but he can't catch a man that is always good.

The people that help the leaders

⁸ It is the same too for the people that are helpers in the church.

- They have to be really good honest people.
- They can't be people that get drunk.
- They can't be greedy, wanting lots of money and things.
- ⁹ They have to really believe the things that God has shown us. And they have to always do the right thing, so that they will not feel bad about what they do.
- ¹⁰ You need to try them out before you make them church helpers, so first give them some little jobs to do, and if they do them properly,

and if nobody complains about them, then you can make them helpers in the church.

- ¹¹ Their wives have to be like them, good women that nobody complains about.
- Their wives can't be the sort of women that say bad things about other people.
- Their wives can't be the sort of women that let themselves go and then do wild things.
- Their wives have to be honest about everything.
- ¹² A church helper can only have one wife, and he can't sleep with any other woman, like a man sleeps with his wife.
- He has to be the sort of man that looks after his wife and kids properly, as well as all the people that live in his house.

¹³ If church helpers do their job properly, everybody will say that they are good people, and God will be happy with them too. Then they will not be too frightened to tell anybody that they believe in Jesus Christ.

God's true word

¹⁴ I want to come and see you soon, but I'm writing this letter to you now ¹⁵ so that you will know the way we have to do things in the church. You know, we are God's family, and his family is his church. God is always alive, and the people in his church always have to keep on teaching his true word. You know how a house is held up by the big posts that are set in concrete. Well, we people in God's church, we are like those posts. We are holding up God's true word, so we have to teach it properly.

¹⁶ God shows us something about Jesus that is really true, and nobody can argue with it. He shows us that Jesus is really great, He came in a man's body for people to see, but the Holy Spirit showed us that he was really from God. And God's angel messengers saw him too. The people that believed in him told other people everywhere about him. They even went to other countries to tell people about him, and people all over the world believed in him. And God took him up into heaven.

4

Some people teach lies

¹ The Holy Spirit tells us clearly about things that will happen in the last days of this world. He says that some people will stop believing the true word from God. Instead, they will believe lies that come from bad spirits. Those bad spirits will trick them, and they will believe those lies. ² And some of them will teach those lies to other people. They tell everybody they are good people, but really, they are bad. And they never feel bad about the bad things they do. ³⁻⁵ They tell people, "You can't marry anyone. It is wrong." And they tell people, "There are some sorts of food you can't eat. You just have to leave it alone." Those things that they say are not true. God tells us in his book that he made everything good. That means that he made all food good. We believe that word and know it is

true, so we don't have to leave any sort of food alone. Instead, we can just thank him for it and eat it. God's word says that all food is good, so we pray to him and thank him for it, and then it is all right for us to eat it.

You have to be a good worker for Jesus

⁶ So teach those things to all the Christians. If you do that, you will be a good worker for Jesus Christ. You believe God's word and follow the things it says, and when you do that, you feed your spirit with God's word to make yourself strong. ⁷ Don't take any notice of those silly stories that are not true, stories that lie about God. But instead, train yourself to respect God and take notice of him. ⁸⁻⁹ You sometimes hear people say, "If we train our bodies, we will get fit so that we can play sport and live better lives, and that is good for us now. But if we train our spirits to respect God and take notice of him, we will not only live better lives now, but we will live a lot better in the life that will come after we die, just like God promised us. That is a lot better for us." Well, those words are true, and everybody has to follow that message. ¹⁰ We know it is true, so we work hard for God, and we are sure that he will give us a better life after we die. We are sure about God. He is alive, and he wants to save everybody, and he really will save all the people that believe in him.

¹¹ So teach everybody these things, and tell them that they have to follow these words. ¹² If some people think you are too young to be their leader, don't worry. You live the right way

yourself, and that will show them that you are a good leader. Then they will see the way a Christian has to live. So talk in the right way, and talk about the right things. And do everything the right way. And love people. And believe strongly in Jesus. And always do what is right. Then everyone will see that you live right, and they will not think you are too young. ¹³ So keep going until I get there. Make sure you read God's book in your meetings. Teach them that true message, and tell them how to do what it says.

¹⁴ Always remember that God gave you special power at the time when the church leaders laid their hands on you and prayed for you. The Holy Spirit gave them a special word about you at that time. So keep on using the power that God gave you.

¹⁵ Think hard about these things that I am telling you, and always do them, so that everybody will see that you are getting better all the time. ¹⁶ Be careful to live properly, and to teach the right things. You have to keep on doing those things, so that God will save both you and the people that listen to you.

5

Treat church people with respect

¹ If ever people in the church there go wrong, and if you have to straighten them out, be careful to respect them while you do it. If you talk to an old man, don't talk to him in an angry way, but talk easy to him, like he is your father. If it is a

young man, talk to him like he is your brother.
² Or if it is an old woman, talk to her like she is your mother. Or if it is a young woman, respect her and talk to her like she is your sister.

Look after widows that haven't got anybody to help them

³ If there are any widows in the church that haven't got any family to look after them, then the church has to look after them. ⁴ But if a widow has family, that is, if she has some kids or grand-kids that are old enough to look after her, then they have to do that. It is not the church's job. Those younger people have to remember that they were kids once, and the woman that looked after them at that time is now a widow, so now it is their job to look after her. If we do that, God is happy with us.

⁵ But some widows are all alone and haven't got any family to look after them. Some of those widows trust God to take care of them. They keep on praying and asking God for whatever they need. ⁶ But other widows don't think about God. They only want to have fun. They might think they are alive, but really, their spirits are dead.

⁷⁻⁸ If people don't take care of their own family or their own relatives, they are not doing the thing that Jesus wants us to do. They are worse than the people that say they don't believe in Jesus at all. Tell everybody in the church this message so that other people will not try to blame them.

⁹ So you can make up a list. Write down the names of all the widows that the church has to help. But only put a widow on the list if she is over 60 years old, and only if she always stayed with her husband and never went off with another man. ¹⁰ She has to be the sort of woman that everybody respects because she always did good things for people. She has to be a woman that brought her kids up properly. She has to be a woman that always gave strangers food and a place to sleep. She has to be a woman that did all sorts of things to help God's people. She has to be a woman that always helped people in trouble and was always ready to do good things.

¹¹ But if a widow is still a young woman, she still really wants to have a husband, so later she will want to stop doing things for Jesus, and she will want to marry somebody. So don't write her name on that list. ¹² You know, when she asked the church to help her, she promised to work for the church, so if she stops working for the church, it means that she is breaking that promise, and God might punish her for that. ¹³ Even if she doesn't marry again, she still might get lazy. Instead of doing good things, she might just go around to people's houses and talk to them about other people, and she might talk about things that she shouldn't talk about.

¹⁴ So I'm saying this to young widows. Don't try to get on to the church's list, but instead, go ahead and marry somebody, and have kids, and look after your family. If you do that, our enemy will not have any reason to say bad things about

us. ¹⁵ You see, some young widows already went away from God, and now they follow Satan, the boss over the bad spirits.

¹⁶ And, you know, some widows have relatives that can look after them. If a Christian woman has a relative that is a widow, she has to do that for her. She can't ask the church to do it. Then the church can look after those other widows that haven't got any family. They are the widows that really need help.

Church leaders are important

¹⁷ Everybody has to respect those people that lead the church properly, and the church has to pay them properly, especially the people that work hard to teach God's word to other people.

¹⁸ God says this in his book,

"If you get an animal to work for you, you have to let that animal eat something while it works."*

And he also says,

"It is right for workers to get their pay."*

Well, it is like that too with the church leaders. They work for the church, so the church has to pay them properly.

¹⁹ And you know, church leaders can go wrong too. But if somebody blames a church leader for something, don't believe them unless there are 2 or 3 people that tell the same story about that leader. Then you have to find out if that story is true.* ²⁰ If that leader really did do something

* **5:18** Deuteronomy 25:4 * **5:18** Leviticus 19:13; Deuteronomy 24:15; Matthew 10:10; Luke 10:7 * **5:19** Deuteronomy 17:6; 19:15

bad, then you have to shame him. You have to talk to him to try to straighten him out, and do it in front of everybody in the church. Then everyone will take notice and be too frightened to do bad things themselves. ²¹ And as you do that, you have to treat everybody the same way. You know, God sees everything I'm writing here, and so does Jesus Christ, and so do God's angel messengers. They know everything that I am telling you now. I'm saying that you can't treat your family and friends any better than anybody else.

²² If ever you need to pick somebody to be a church leader, pick somebody that has been a Christian for a long time, not somebody that is a new Christian. It is like this. If the person you pick starts to go wrong, everyone will blame you as well as blaming that person. So pick somebody that you know is really good, so that you don't get yourself mixed up with something that is wrong.

²³ By the way, I know that you are often sick in the belly, so you have to mix a little bit of wine into the water you drink. Don't just drink water on its own.

²⁴⁻²⁵ If you need to pick a new leader, remember this. There are some people that do bad things out in the open so that we soon hear about them, and we all know that they are no good before we even meet them. But there are also other people that hide the bad things they do so that nobody can see them, and it takes some time before we find out that they are bad people. In

the same way, some people do good things out in the open so that everybody sees them, while other people hide the good things they do so that nobody can see them. But it doesn't matter. Sooner or later everybody will find out about them, and everybody will know that they are good people.

6

Workers and bosses

¹ I'm writing now about Christians that have to work all the time for somebody else. They have to really respect their bosses. If they don't, people that are not Christians will rubbish God and say that he gets us to teach things that are wrong. ² If a worker's boss is a Christian, that worker can't think like this, "My boss is my Christian brother so I can be lazy." No, that boss believes in Jesus, and that boss loves Jesus too, so the worker has to work harder for that boss.

You have to teach people those things, and tell them to live that way.

Some people teach the wrong things

³ Some people teach things that are wrong. They teach things that are different from the good things that our leader, Jesus Christ, taught. He taught things that help people live in a way that makes God happy. ⁴ But the people that teach something different are wrong. Those people don't really understand anything. They just want everyone to think they are important. They want to make trouble and get people to

have arguments about words. If people start to argue, then they start to get jealous of each other. They think bad things, and they say bad things about each other. ⁵ Then they keep on arguing with each other. You see, they listened to those wrong teachers and those teachers tricked them. Those wrong teachers made them think the wrong way, so they don't really know the true message. They think that if they follow God's way they will get a lot of money, but they are wrong.

Don't be greedy for money

⁶⁻⁸ It is like this. At the time we were born, we didn't bring any money with us into this life. And when we die, we can't take any money with us. So while we live in this life, if we have enough food and clothes, we can be really happy. So now, if you follow God's way, and if you don't try to get a lot of money for yourself, you will be very happy, and you will get a lot out of life. ⁹ But people that try to get lots of money, they let the devil trick them. The devil is the boss over the bad spirits. He gets those people to want things so much that they will do anything to get them. That's how they fall into the devil's trap. They do silly things, and bad things too. The devil really wrecks them. ¹⁰ If you love money a lot, you will do all sorts of bad things to get it. Some people went wrong like that. They wanted a lot of money, so they stopped believing in Jesus, and they got themselves into lots of trouble, and now they are really sad.

Live the right way

¹¹ But Timothy, you belong to God. So you've got to keep away from all those bad things that I just told you about. Instead, you've got to try to do the right thing all the time, and try to do things that make God happy, and try to trust him more, and try to love people better, and try to keep going when things are tough, and try to be easy on other people, not hard on them. Those are the things you have to try to do all the time. ¹² It's like we are in a big fight against the devil and all his bad spirit mob. He wants us to go wrong and stop believing in Jesus. But Jesus gives us really good life that goes on for ever, so we have to keep on trusting Jesus for that life, and then we will win the fight against that bad spirit mob. Remember the time that you first believed in Jesus, and you told a lot of people about it. That was the time he called you to follow him, and to get that life that goes on for ever. So now keep on believing in Jesus, and keep on following him so that you keep on living that good life for ever.

Paul wanted Timothy to do everything in this letter

¹³⁻¹⁴ You know about God. He makes things live. And you know about Jesus. People took him to Pontius Pilate, and he told that boss the true story about himself.* Well, God is watching us now, and Jesus is listening to us. So I want you to promise me this one thing with both of

* **6:13-14** John 18:37

them listening to you. I want you to promise me that you will do everything that I'm telling you to do in this letter. Promise me that you will do it all properly, so that nobody can say you did it wrong. And keep on doing it until we see Jesus Christ come back again.

¹⁵ God will bring Jesus back at the right time. God is the only really big boss. He is the really big boss over everybody. He is the really big boss over all other big bosses. He is the biggest boss over every other boss. ¹⁶ He is the only one that never dies, but he goes on and on for ever. He lives in light that is so bright that nobody can go near him. Nobody ever saw him, and nobody can see him now. We have to really respect him all the time, and we have to remember that he is really powerful. Yes, that's right.

¹⁷ There are some people that have a lot of money and a lot of things. You have to tell them that they can't think that they are smart just because they are rich. They still have to pray to God, and they have to trust him for everything they really need. They can't trust their money. But they have to trust God. He gives us everything we need to be happy. So we have to trust him, not trust money. ¹⁸ So tell them to use their money to do good things for other people. Tell them to be ready to give it to people that need it. ¹⁹ If they do that, they will really be giving it to God, and he will keep it for them for later on, after they die. In that way, they will get a good start in their new life. That is the really good life.

²⁰ All right, Timothy, God gave you his good message, so you have to look after it properly. Make sure nobody changes it around. There are some people that talk a lot in a stupid way, and they say bad things about God. Don't listen to them. They might reckon they know all about it, and they might say that you are wrong, but really, they are the ones that are wrong. ²¹ Some people followed them, and now those people have stopped believing in Jesus.

That's all for now. I'm asking God to be really good to all you mob there.

From Paul

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Version translation for Australian Aboriginal people
who speak English as a second language

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