

The 2 Letters that Paul wrote to Timothy

The 1st letter that Paul wrote to Timothy

This page tells a bit more about Paul's 1st letter to Timothy

God sent Paul to many 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. At a place called Ephesus Paul told Timothy to stay and look after the church there while Paul went to other places. Timothy was the minister of the church in Ephesus.

At that time the Roman people were the bosses of many countries. 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, and he sent it to Timothy at Ephesus. He wrote this letter about 30 years after Jesus went back to heaven.

This letter has important messages for Christian ministers and pastors. It tells us the way to manage things in a church. It also has important messages for all Christians.

¹⁻² Dear Timothy

This letter is from me, Paul. God picked me out to be his special messenger to tell people about Jesus Christ. Those 2, God and Jesus, they told me to do this work. God is the one that will save us, and Jesus is the one we can be sure

about, that he will always look after us. They gave me this job, to tell everybody this message about them.

Timothy, at first 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, 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 Do you remember the time that we were in Ephesus, and I got up to go to Macedonia? At that time I wanted you to straighten out those people in Ephesus that teach the wrong message, so I told you to stay there. 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 family. Then from there they teach people lies. People that listen to them just get into useless arguments. People shouldn't do that, but 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 wrong things.

⁵ You see, you have to teach people to do what is right, and to believe in God properly, and to never think about bad things. Then they will properly love each other all the time. We want people to follow these things that we teach and to live that way. ⁶ But those lying teachers don't do this. 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, but they don't understand that law properly. They talk up strongly and tell people to do things, but 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 wrong, not the people that do the right thing. That law is there to stop crooks, and cheeky ones, and those that forget about God and everything that belongs to God. It is there to stop those that want to murder other people, and even murder their own father or mother. ¹⁰ That law is there to stop those people that just want to play around with anyone, and sleep with them, to do 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 those 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 kinds of bad things that people do if they don't listen to God's word. ¹¹ They do all kinds 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 reckoned 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 believe in Jesus at that time, so I didn't know the true story. But God was really good to me. He let me turn around and join up with Jesus Christ,

and Jesus helps me to really trust God properly and to love everyone properly.

¹⁵ You sometimes hear people say this, “Jesus Christ came into this world to save bad people, so as to make them into better people.” This 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 God wanted to show everybody that he will save anyone, even really bad people, if they believe in Jesus, so he picked me to be an example. Jesus waited for me, so everybody can know that he will wait for them too. They can believe in him too, and he will save them and they will live for ever.

¹⁷ This shows that God is so 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 for ever and ever. Amen.

¹⁸ You are like a son to me, Timothy, so I’m telling you to do these things. Do you remember, some time ago, the Holy Spirit told the Christians there a message about you? Well, you 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 yourself. 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, called Hymenaeus and Alexander, they are like that. So I asked God to let the boss of the bad spirits, called Satan, to punish those 2 men so that they will learn not to tell lies about God.

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 kinds of people. Ask God to help those that have problems. Tell him all about them and ask him to help them. Always thank God too for everything that he has done for everybody. ² Pray for the bosses of your country, both the big bosses and those other bosses that work for them. Ask God to help them run the country the right way so that we can all live well, follow God and praise him together, with no problems. ³ If we pray for everybody like this 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, like they kill an animal to give it to God. In that way he paid the cost for everybody, so that now God can save everybody. 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 go and tell everybody this true message. 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 tell them that God will save them too.

Which men have to pray?

⁸ So in your meetings at every place, who will pray? I just want those men to pray that live the kind of lives that make God happy. They are the ones that can pray. If somebody is angry, or if he wants to argue with others, he can't get up and pray.

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 to 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 him.

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 God will save them if they keep on believing in him, and loving people, and really respect God, and if they keep on being sensible.

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 one that leads God's people he wants to do a very important job." This is very true, so you have to be very careful about the person you pick to be a leader. ² A church leader has to be this kind 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 has to be true to her.
- He has to have good sense and do things properly.

- He can't be the kind of man that lets himself go and 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 drunk, or a man that gets into fights.
- He has to be a quiet man that is not rough 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 do whatever he tells them to do, that shows that he is the right kind of man.
- ⁶ He has to be a man that has been a Christian for a long time, not a new Christian, or he might get too proud, and God might have to throw him out, like he threw the devil out after he got too proud.
- 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 decide to do the

right thing, and from that they will be happy with themselves.

- 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 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 kind of women that say bad things about other people,
- Their wives can't be the kind 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 has to be true to her.
- He has to be the kind 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 afraid to tell anybody that they believe in Jesus Christ.

God's true word

¹⁴ I want to come to see you soon, but I'm writing this now anyway to send it to you ¹⁵ so that you will know the way we have to do things in the church. God picked you out to be his family, and his family is his church. God is always alive and his people in his church always have to keep on teaching his true word. His people are just like posts set in concrete that keep on holding a house up properly. They have to teach his true word properly.

¹⁶ God shows us something now 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 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 these last days. He says that some people will stop believing the true word from God. Instead they will believe those words that come from bad spirits. Those devils will trick them so that they will believe those lies.
² These people say those devil's words, but they are liars. They tell everybody they are good, 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 kinds of food you can't eat. You just have to leave it alone." These things 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 kind of food alone. Instead, we can just thank him for it and eat it. God's word says that the 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 workman for Jesus

⁶ So teach these things to all the Christians. In that way you will be a good worker for Jesus Christ. You believe God's word and follow the things it says, and this is like 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 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 to play sport and we will live better lives now, and that is a little bit good for us. 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." If people tell this message they tell a true story, and everybody has to follow that word. 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 is sure to save those that believe in him.

¹¹ So teach everybody these things and tell them that they have to follow these words. ¹² Don't worry if some people think you are too young to be their leader. You live the right way yourself and this 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 don't do wrong with women. Everyone will see that you live right like this and they will not think you are too young. ¹³ So keep going till I get there. Make sure you read God's book in the church services. Teach them that true message and tell them how to do what it says.

¹⁴ Do you remember that time the church leaders laid their hands on you and prayed for you, and the Holy Spirit gave them a special word about you? Don't forget that God gave you special power at that time. It is his special present to you. So keep on using that power from God.

¹⁵ Think hard about these things and always do them, so that everybody will see that you get better all the time.

¹⁶ Be careful to live properly and to teach the right things. You have to keep on doing these 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 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 roughly to him but talk easy to him like as if he is your father. If it is a young man, talk to him like as if he is your brother. ² Or if it is an old woman, talk to her like as if she is your mother. Or if it is a young woman, respect her and talk to her like as if she is your sister.

Look after widows that have nobody to help them

³ If there are any widows in the church that have no family to look after them, the church has to look after them. ⁴ But if a widow has family, like big children or grand-children, these are the ones that have to look after her, not the church. These younger people have to remember that they were kids once, and that old woman looked after them at that time, so now it is their job to look after her. If we do this, God is happy with us.

⁵ But if a widow is all alone, and has no family to look after her, she keeps praying and asking God for whatever

she needs. She keeps on praying all the time, and she expects God to take care of her. ⁶ But a widow that doesn't think about God but only wants to have fun, she might think she is alive, but really, her spirit is 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. 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 and write down the names of all the widows that the church has to help, and if they get their names on the list they will promise to work for the church. But only put a widow on the list if she is over 60 years old, and if she always stayed with her husband and never cheated on him. ¹⁰ She has to be the kind of woman that always did good things for people, so now everybody respects her. 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 things for God's people, even the dirty jobs. She has to be a woman that always helped people in trouble and did all kinds of good things.

¹¹ But if a widow is still a young woman, later she might want to go off and marry somebody, so she will stop doing things for the Jesus. So don't write her name on that list.

¹² If she stops working for the church it means that she is breaking her promise to the church, and God might punish her for that. ¹³ Even if she doesn't marry again she still might get lazy, and just go around from house to house and talk about people, and meddle in things that are none of her business.

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, have children, 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 the wrong way. They went away from God and now they follow the boss of the bad spirits, called Satan.

¹⁶ So if a Christian woman has relatives that are widows, she has to look after them herself. She can't ask the church to do it. The church can look after those other widows that have no family. They are the ones 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 those that work hard to teach God's word and explain it to people. ¹⁸ God says, "You have to pay the worker for his work." God gives us an example of this in his law. We read in God's book, "If you get an animal to work for you, you have to let that animal eat something when it works." Well, it is like that too with the church leaders. They work for the church, so the church has to pay them properly.

¹⁹ Don't forget that church leaders can go wrong too. But if somebody blames a church leader for something, don't believe him 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 he really did do something 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 afraid to do bad things themselves.

²¹ Listen, Timothy, God sees everything I'm writing here, and so does Jesus Christ, and so do God's angel messengers. They are witnesses. So you have to do all

these things that I'm telling you now, and while you do them you have to treat everybody the same. 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 one you pick starts to go wrong, everyone will blame you as well as him. 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 you are often sick in the stomach, 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 it, so 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 know that they are good people.

6

Workmen 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 the things we teach and worse than that,

they will rubbish God too. ² If that workman's boss is a Christian, that man can't think like this, "My boss is my Christian brother so I can be lazy." No, that boss believes in Jesus and he loves him too so that workman has to work harder for him. You have to teach people this kind of thing and tell them to behave this 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 If anybody teaches different things that are not true, those people are wrong. They don't really understand anything. They just want people to think they are important. They want to make trouble and get people to have arguments about words. Once people start to do this they start to get jealous of each other. They think bad things and they say bad things about each other. ⁵ They always argue with each other. They listened to that wrong teacher and he tricked them, and he 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

⁶⁻⁷ 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 will not take any money with us out of this life. ⁸ 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 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 gets them to want things so badly that they will do anything to get them. That is the way they fall into the devil's trap. They do silly things and bad things too. The devil really spoils them. ¹⁰ If you love money a lot you will do all kinds of bad things to get it. Some people went wrong like that. They wanted a lot of money, so they quit 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 these 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 gentle. These 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. He wants us to go wrong and quit believing in Jesus. But Jesus gives us life that goes on for ever. We have to keep trusting Jesus so that we will beat the devil. Do you remember the time that you first believed in him and you told a lot of people about it? That was the time He called you to follow him and to get that really good life that goes on for ever. So now keep on believing in Jesus and keep following him so that you keep living that good life for ever.

God and Jesus are witnesses

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

with both of them as witnesses. I want you to promise me that you will do everything that I'm telling you to do in this letter. Promise that you will do it all properly, so that nobody can say you did it wrong. And keep doing it till 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. And he is boss over every other boss too. ¹⁶ He is the only one that never dies but goes on and on for ever. He is really bright, and he lives in light that is so bright that nobody can go near him. Nobody ever really saw him, and nobody can see him now. We have to really respect him all the time and think about his power. That's right.

¹⁷ There are some people that have a lot of money and a lot of things. You tell them that they shouldn't think they are smart just because they are rich. They still have to pray to God and believe that he will give them everything they really need. They can't get it with their money, so they shouldn't think they can. But they just 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 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 saving that money for themselves in heaven. This will give them a good start in that new life. In that way they will have a very good life.

²⁰ All right, Timothy, God gave you his good news, so you have to look after it properly. Make sure nobody changes it around. There are some people that have big discussions but 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 did follow them and now those people too 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

Plain English Version
Portions of the Holy Bible in the Plain English Version translation
for Australian Aboriginal people who speak English as a second
language

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