

Doctrine of Timothy

1. Timothy (venerating God) was a convert, and a friend of Paul the apostle.
2. Timothy was the son of a mixed marriage that, while unlawful, was frequent in the later periods of Jewish history. His mother was a Jewess, and his father, whose name is not known, was a Greek.
 - *Acts 16:1 Then came he to Derbe and Lystra: and, behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father was a Greek: 2 Which was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium. 3 Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and took and circumcised him because of the Jews which were in those quarters: for they knew all that his father was a Greek.*
3. The biblical portrait of Timothy's early life indicates a godly mother and grandmother, full of compassion and faith who carefully instructed him in the Scriptures, to place in his heart the hope for the Messiah of Israel.
 - *2 Timothy 1:5 When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also.*
 - *2 Timothy 3:15 And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.*
4. Because he lived in Lystra, Timothy was far removed from the larger colonies of Israelite families.
5. Nevertheless, he was brought up in a thoroughly Jewish environment, with the limitation being he had not been circumcised. According to Jewish belief, this meant he was not within the sphere of God's ancient covenant.
6. In the providence of the Lord Timothy came under the ministry of Paul when he made his first visit to that city.
 - *Acts 16:1 Then came he to Derbe and Lystra: and, behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father was a Greek:*
7. At that time Timothy was probably converted.
 - *Acts 14:6 They were ware of it, and fled unto Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and unto the region that lieth round about:*

- *2 Timothy 1:5 When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also.*
8. While no mention is made of Timothy until the time of Paul's second visit, it is probable that his spiritual life and growth in grace, and knowledge of Christ, took place under the care of the elders of the church.
- *Acts 14:23 And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed.*
9. The spiritual maturity of Timothy was openly recognized. He was considered to be especially suited for the work of the ministry, and was ordained to that end. .
- *1 Timothy 1:18 This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare;*
 - *1 Timothy 4:14 Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.*
10. So impressed was Paul with Timothy, he desired to have him as a traveling companion.
11. In an unusual act of social expediency, Paul circumcised Timothy in order to take away a point of controversy, and in order to have a more effective ministry
- *Acts 16:1 Then came he to Derbe and Lystra: and, behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father was a Greek:*
 - *Acts 16:3 Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and took and circumcised him because of the Jews which were in those quarters: for they knew all that his father was a Greek.*
12. The action of Paul, in circumcising Timothy, has been considered inconsistent with his principle, and conduct, in refusing to circumcise Titus.
- *Galatians 2:3 But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised: 4 And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage:*
13. Some Bible scholars see a difference. One author notes, "The two cases are, however, entirely different. In the latter there was an attempt to enforce circumcision as necessary to salvation; in the former it was performed as a voluntary act, and simply on prudential grounds" (Haley, *Alleged Discrepancies*).

14. Even if the act of circumcision was voluntary and for the sake of gospel expediency the question still arises whether or not the ritual should have been performed. The church has always struggled with cultural influences and how to respond in an appropriate manner.
15. Once Timothy united with Paul officially he became one of the apostle's most faithful companions.
16. Together, they, along with Silvanus, and probably Luke also, journeyed to Philippi.
- *Acts 16:12 And from thence to Philippi, which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a colony: and we were in that city abiding certain days.*
17. In the city of Philippi, the young evangelist was already conspicuous for his spirituality and religious fervor.
- *Philippians 2:19 But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state. 20 For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state. 21 For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's. 22 But ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel.*
18. Apparently Timothy remained at Philippi to guide the infant church.
19. Later Timothy will appear at Berea, where he remained with Silas, after Paul's departure, joining Paul at Athens.
- *Acts 17:14 And then immediately the brethren sent away Paul to go as it were to the sea: but Silas and Timotheus abode there still.*
20. From Athens, Timothy returned to Thessalonica because he had unusual gifts of compassion, and teaching.
- *1 Thessalonians 3:2 And sent Timotheus, our brother, and minister of God, and our fellowlabourer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith:*
21. After serving in Thessalonica, Timothy left for Corinth, for his name is united with Paul's in the opening words of both letters written from that city to the Thessalonians.
- *1 Thessalonians 1:1 Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.*
 - *2 Thessalonians 1:1 Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:*

22. Of the five following years of his life, there is no record.
23. Timothy is next mentioned, as being sent forward to do advance work, when the apostle was considering a long journey that was to include Macedonia, Achaia, Jerusalem, and Rome.
- *Acts 19:22 So he sent into Macedonia two of them that ministered unto him, Timotheus and Erastus; but he himself stayed in Asia for a season.*
24. It is probable that Timothy returned by the same route, and met Paul according to a previous arrangement.
- *1 Corinthians 16:10 Now if Timotheus come, see that he may be with you without fear: for he worketh the work of the Lord, as I also do.*
25. If Timothy united with Paul at Rome, then he was with the apostle when the second epistle was written to the church of Corinth.
- *2 Corinthians 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, unto the church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints which are in all Achaia:*
26. Timothy then returned with the apostle to Corinth, from which place he sent greetings to the disciples whom he had known personally at Corinth, but who had since gone to Rome. So the letters crossed back and forth.
- *Romans 16:21 Timotheus my workfellow, and Lucius, and Jason, and Sosipater, my kinsmen, salute you.*
27. When Paul decided to visit Philippi, Timothy went ahead with some friends, to wait for the apostle's arrival on a different ship.
- *Acts 20:3 And there abode three months. And when the Jews laid wait for him, as he was about to sail into Syria, he purposed to return through Macedonia. 4 And there accompanied him into Asia Sopater of Berea; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timotheus; and of Asia, Tychicus and Trophimus. 5 These going before tarried for us at Troas. 6 And we sailed away from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread, and came unto them to Troas in five days; where we abode seven days.*
28. No further mention is made of Timothy until he reunited with the apostle, probably soon after his arrival in Rome.
29. Timothy was with Paul when the epistles to the Philippians, the Colossians, and Philemon were written.
- *Philippians 1:1 Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons:*

- *Philippians 2:19 But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state.*
 - *Colossians 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timotheus our brother,*
 - *Philemon 1 Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ, and Timothy our brother, unto Philemon our dearly beloved, and fellow-labourer,*
30. It appears from 1 Timothy 1:3, that Timothy and Paul, after the release of the apostle from his imprisonment, revisited the pro-consular of Asia.
- *1 Timothy 1:3 As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine,*
31. Then, the apostle continued his journey to Macedonia while Timothy remained, half-reluctantly, even weeping at the separation at Ephesus, to stop if possible the outgrowth of heresy and licentiousness that had sprung up there.
- *2 Timothy 1:4 Greatly desiring to see thee, being mindful of thy tears, that I may be filled with joy;*
32. In the church of Ephesus, Timothy had to perform the following pastoral duties.
- Timothy had to exercise rule over presbyters, some older than himself. *1 Timothy 4:12 Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.*
 - Timothy also had to give righteous judgments. *1 Timothy 5:1 Rebuke not an elder, but intreat him as a father; and the younger men as brethren; 1 Timothy 5:19 Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses. 20 Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear.*
 - Timothy had to regulate the giving of alms, and the treatment of certain women. *1 Timothy 5:3 Honour widows that are widows indeed. 4 But if any widow have children or nephews, let them learn first to shew piety at home, and to requite their parents: for that is good and acceptable before God. 5 Now she that is a widow indeed, and desolate, trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day. 6 But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth. 7 And these things give in charge, that they may be blameless. 8 But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel. 9 Let not a widow be taken into the number under threescore years old, having been the wife of one man, 10 Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work.*

- Timothy had to ordain overseers, or bishops, and deacons. *1 Timothy 3:1 This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. 2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; 3 Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; 4 One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; 5 (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) 6 Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. 7 Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. 8 Likewise must the deacons be grave, not double tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; 9 Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. 10 And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless. 11 Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. 12 Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. 13 For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.*

33. Because these pastoral responsibilities were of grave consequences, Paul was anxious that Timothy remain loyal to the cause of Christ. Paul expressed his desire to see him again.

- *2 Timothy 4:9 Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me:*
- *2 Timothy 4:21 Do thy diligence to come before winter. Eubulus greeteth thee, and Pudens, and Linus, and Claudia, and all the brethren.*

34. It is not clear whether Timothy was able to fulfill the apostle's last request.

35. According to an old tradition, Timothy continued to act as bishop of Ephesus and suffered martyrdom under Domitian, the Roman emperor, AD 81 – 96, or Nerva, the Roman emperor from AD 96–98.

Special Note.

- Domitian is a reference to Titus Flavius Domitianus (AD 51 – 96).
- Nerva is a reference to Marcus Cocceius Nerva (AD 35 – 98).