

1 Timothy

Group Discussion Questions

Created for Crossroads Church (crossroadsabc.com)

By Doug Schmidt (doug@dougschmidt.com)

~~~~~

### Session 1

#### 1 Timothy 1:1-2

1. Open with prayer. (2-5 min)
2. Share your story ... *Have you ever had an “adopted” parental figure? If so, tell us what this person was like. What impact did he or she have in your life?* (7-10 min)
3. Read 1 Timothy 1:1-2.
4. Discuss these questions with your group. (20-45 min)

[Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the command of God our Savior and of Christ Jesus our hope, \(1 Timothy 1:1a\)](#) During what part of Paul’s life story did he receive the command from God to be an apostle? How did he know that he had been called to this special role? Have you been commanded by God to take on a particular assignment in Christ’s kingdom? Explain.

[To Timothy my true son in the faith: \(vs. 2a\)](#) Who would come the closest to being one of your “children in the faith?” What is your relationship like with this person?

[Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord \(vs. 2b\)](#) Define *grace*, *mercy*, and then *peace*. Can you have one without the others? How are they dependent upon one another?

### Action Steps ...

To whom are you actively reaching out and discipling? What appears to be the next level in this person's spiritual development? How can you help him or her get there?

~~~~~

Session 2

1 Timothy 1:3-11

1. Open with prayer (2-5 min).
2. Share your story ... *Describe a time when you changed your mind about something significant* (7-10 min).
3. Read 1 Timothy 1:3-11.
4. Discuss these questions with your group (20-45 min).

“As I urged you when I was going to Macedonia, remain at Ephesus so that you may charge certain persons not to teach any different doctrine, nor to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies, which promote speculations rather than the stewardship from God that is by faith” (1 Timothy 1:3-4).

Name some theological issues over which godly, intelligent Christians hold diverse viewpoints. How are these perspectives different from false teaching? Where do you draw the line?

“The aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith. Certain persons, by swerving from these, have wandered away into vain discussion, desiring to be teachers of the law, without understanding either what they are saying or the things about which they make confident assertions” (vss. 5-7)

What is it about the charisma and confidence of some false teachers that make their assertions so compelling? How should we respond?

“Now we know that the law is good, if one uses it lawfully, understanding this, that the law is not laid down for the just but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who strike their fathers and mothers, for murderers, the sexually immoral, men who practice homosexuality, enslavers, liars, perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine, in accordance with the gospel of the glory of the blessed God with which I have been entrusted” (vss. 8-11)

What is the relationship between immoral behaviors and false doctrine? How can one lead to the other? Why does what you believe matter?

Action Steps ...

This week, articulate what you believe with someone in your life group about one of these topics: eschatology (what will happen in the last days); the role of music in worship (traditional or contemporary); or miraculous spiritual gifts (like healing). How does that belief shape your walk with Christ and your relationships with others?

~~~~~

### **Session 3**

#### **1 Timothy 1:12-20**

1. Open with prayer (2-5 min).
2. Share your story ... *What would you be like today if you had not experienced saving faith?* (7-10 min)
3. Read 1 Timothy 1:12-20.
4. Discuss these questions with your group (20-45 min).

I thank him who has given me strength, Christ Jesus our Lord, because he judged me faithful, appointing me to his service, though formerly I was a blasphemer, persecutor, and insolent opponent. But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief, and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus (1 Timothy 1:12-14)

To describe what he was like before he was saved, Paul said he was a *blasphemer*, a *persecutor*, and an *insolent opponent*. What three adjectives would you use to describe what you were like before you experienced saving faith?

The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost. But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life. To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen (vss. 15-17).

How do you think has God used you as an example for non-Christians, especially those who are “not far from the Kingdom?”

This charge I entrust to you, Timothy, my child, in accordance with the prophecies previously made about you, that by them you may wage the good warfare, holding faith and a good conscience. By rejecting this, some have made shipwreck of their faith, among whom are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme (vss. 18-20)

What does spiritual warfare look like to you? Give an example from your life. Without naming names, describe someone who, (humanly speaking), seems utterly beyond redemption. How powerful would that person’s testimony be if he or she were to experience saving faith? Explain.

### **Action Steps ...**

This week, start praying for someone who seems beyond redemption. This person may have even caused a significant loss in your life; pray for his or her repentance anyway. Ask God to be

merciful by opening that person's heart to the Gospel through the power of the Holy Spirit.

~~~~~

Session 4

1 Timothy 2:1-7

1. Open with prayer (2-5 min).
2. Share your story ... *If you were in a position of political power, how would you want Christians to pray for you?* (7-10 min)
3. Read 1 Timothy 2:1-7.
4. Discuss these questions with your group (20-45 min).

“First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way” (1 Timothy 2:1-7). What does a quiet & peaceful life look like to you? How can people in authority keep our lives from being peaceful & quiet? Why should we pray for people in political positions of power—even those for whom we didn't vote?

“This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth” (vss. 3-4). What are some ways that the Holy Spirit can make people more receptive to the Gospel? How can we participate with the Holy Spirit in building bridges for the Gospel?

“For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time” (vss. 5-6). How can you find out what non-Christians (ones you know) are putting their hope in (besides Jesus)? If and when they ask you what you believe, how could you use their invitation to share the Gospel?

Action Steps ...

This week offer up supplications, prayers, intercessions, & thanksgiving for: (1) three people in authority over you; (2) three non-Christians in your circle of influence. Ask one of those non-Christians what he or she believes about how to find meaning, purpose, or peace in this life.

~~~~~

## **Session 5**

### **1 Timothy 2:8**

1. Open with prayer (2-5 min).
2. Share your story ... *What is the most common position you take while you are praying? How does this position affect your prayers?* (7-10 min)
3. Read 1 Timothy 2:8.
4. Discuss these questions with your group (20-45 min).

*“I desire then that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands without anger or quarreling” (1 Timothy 2:8).*

The Apostle Paul wanted many things for the churches he planted. What does he say that he desires in every church? Why do you think Paul put such a high priority on prayer?

Paul says to lift up holy hands while praying. Does the position in prayer a person chooses impact how that prayer affects that individual? If so, how?

What is it about lifting our hands in worship that seems to open us up to God’s blessing?

How can being angry with someone affect your ability to worship? Why is our spiritual well-being so tied into the health of our relationships, even the ones that aren’t going so well?

## **Action Steps ...**

If you're angry or arguing with someone, try saying this to him or her: "When you said, or did, [fill in the blank], it made an impact on me. Can you tell me your perspective on what happened?" And then listen to what the person says. Do your best to understand his or her point of view. If the person is open to hearing from you, tell your story. Doing this might open the door to restoration in your relationship. Even if it doesn't, you will at least taken the first step.

This week when you're praying for someone, picture the person in your mind and offer up a one-word prayer request for him or her (For example: "Wisdom" or "Courage") ... and then let the Holy Spirit fill in all the gaps (See Romans 8:26-27).

~~~~~

Session 6

1 Timothy 2:8-15

1. Open with prayer (2-5 min).
2. Share your story ... *Who have been some influential teachers in your spiritual formation (from childhood until today)?* (7-10 min)
3. Read 1 Timothy 2:8-15
4. Discuss these questions with your group (20-45 min).

I desire then that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands without anger or quarreling; likewise also that women should adorn themselves in respectable apparel, with modesty and self-control, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly attire, but with what is proper for women who profess godliness—with good works (1 Timothy 2:8-10)

What cultural words do you associate with the idea of *feminine*? *masculine*? What are the biblical definitions of these words?

Let a woman learn quietly with all submissiveness. I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet. For Adam was formed first, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. Yet she will be saved through childbearing—if they continue in faith and love and holiness, with self-control (vss. 11-15).

Why is it important to understand the cultural context of a Scriptural passage before trying to grasp the (timeless) biblical principle that resides in those verses?

Give an example where “cultural context” can be misused to excuse or justify questionable behavior.

Action Steps ...

Anyone who volunteers, teaches, or leads a group at Crossroads does so, (either directly or indirectly), through the delegated authority of the church council. Ask someone on our church council to explain his or her role in this group, to whom we are all accountable.

~~~~~

## **Session 7**

### **1 Timothy 3:1-13**

1. Open with prayer (2-5 min).
2. Share your story ... *What influential leader (outside of our church) would you would follow without hesitation? Explain why. (7-10 min)*
3. Read 1 Timothy 3:1-13
4. Discuss these questions with your group (20-45 min).

An overseer must be above reproach (1 Timothy 3:2).

Should there be a higher standard of accountability for leaders than followers? Why or why not?

[An overseer] must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church? (vss. 4-5)

How can church leaders set a good example for us when it comes to effectively dealing with family conflicts (in a way that's honoring to God and others)? What are some unique challenges church leaders face when it comes to maintaining healthy marriages and families? What are some practical ways we can help them keep their family relationships strong?

Deacons likewise must be dignified, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain. They must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience (vs. 9).

What can happen to servants who do not follow these guidelines? Why is a clear conscience important when serving "the flock" or the people in our spheres of influence ?

### **Action Steps ...**

What might be keeping you from fully participating in the church as a leader or servant? Is there a qualification you aren't currently meeting? Is it a lack of willingness to give up the time required? Is it a sense of inability or unworthiness? This week, ask God to reveal your next steps as a member of the family of God and to give you the wisdom and strength to live out that role well."

~~~~~

Session 8

1 Timothy 3:14-4:5

1. Open with prayer (2-5 min).
2. Share your possibility ... *What would you be tempted to do if there were no earthly or eternal consequences?* (7-10 min)
3. Read 1 Timothy 3:14–4:5
4. Discuss these questions with your group (20-45 min).

“I hope to come to you soon, but I am writing these things to you so that, if I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth.” (1 Timothy 3:14-15)

What was Paul’s purpose for writing this letter to Timothy? What are some behaviors that mature Christians should consistently exhibit in the church?

“Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons, through the insincerity of liars whose consciences are seared” (1 Timothy 4:1-2).

In what ways does the world try to seduce Christians away from the faith? Why are some of these empty promises so compelling?

“For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, for it is made holy by the word of God and prayer” (1 Timothy 4:4).

How can something that God has created be made unholy or profane? Give some examples. How can we redeem those things?

Action Steps ...

This week, confess to a mature believer (who you trust) the temptation that is most likely to pull you away from the faith. Come clean about the ways you might be rationalizing this behavior.

~~~~~

## **Session 9**

### **1 Timothy 4:6-10**

1. Open with prayer (2-5 min).
2. Share your story ... *What have you been trained to do? How has that training paid off for you?* (7-10 min)
3. Read 1 Timothy 4:6-10
4. Discuss these questions with your group (20-45 min).

“If you put these things before the brothers, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, being trained in the words of the faith and of the good doctrine that you have followed” (1 Timothy 4:6).

What is the difference between *the words of the faith* and *good doctrine*? Can you have one without the other? Explain. Is it possible to know the Bible and to embrace strong doctrine, and still feel like something’s missing? Explain.

“Have nothing to do with irreverent, silly myths. Rather train yourself for godliness; for while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come. The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance” (vss. 7-9).

React to the following statement: *Life is a dress rehearsal*. How do you think God will use your earthly experience in the eternal kingdom? Your successes? Your failures?

“For to this end we toil and strive, because we have our hope set on the living God, who is the Savior of all people, especially of those who believe” (vs. 10).

To what end do you toil and strive? What will eventually make it all worth it? What role will the *hope* we have (that is, the hope of Easter!) play in getting you across the finish line?

### **Action Steps ...**

Take some time to meditate on the impact that hope (in Christ) has had in your life. (Picture what hopelessness apart from Jesus might feel like). This week, look for someone in your circle of influence into whom you can instill a spark of hope.

~~~~~

Session 10

1 Timothy 4:11-16

1. Open with prayer (2-5 min).
2. Share your story ... *What are your blind spots that only others (who know you well) can see clearly?* (7-10 min)
3. Read 1 Timothy 4:11-16
4. Discuss these questions with your group (20-45 min).

“Command and teach these things. Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching.” (1 Timothy 4:11-12).

About what do people (most likely) judge you? What freedom(s) would you experience if this no longer mattered to you? How can you get to that point (if you aren't already)?

“Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophecy when the council of elders laid their hands on you. Practice these things, immerse yourself in them, so that all may see your progress” (vss. 13-14)

What is your spiritual gift? How would Crossroads lose out if you weren't practicing and developing your spiritual gift(s)?

“Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers” (vs. 15).

In what area of life are you most likely to get off track? Who would make a good “accountabilibuddy” to keep you on the right path?

Action Steps ...

Take the survey featured at crossroadsabc.com/gifts to see what your spiritual gifts might be. Come up with a plan to take your spiritual gifts to the next level, either in practice or development. Find a mature believer you trust to help you out with this.

~~~~~

## **Session 11**

### **1 Timothy 5:1-25**

1. Open with prayer (2-5 min).
2. Share your experience ... *How do you relate differently to family members than you do to friends? Why the difference, if any?* (7-10 min)

3. Read 1 Timothy 5:1-25

4. Discuss these questions with your group (20-45 min).

“Do not rebuke an older man but encourage him as you would a father, younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, younger women as sisters, in all purity” (1 Timothy 5:2). Why does Paul want us to relate to each other as members of the same healthy family, rather than just as friends or acquaintances? What responsibilities do we have to one another as *family members* that are not required or even expected in other types of relationships?

“If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever” (vs. 8). What are our culture’s expectations when it comes to how the physical needs of aging people are met? How does our society’s obsessive preoccupation with retirement shape those expectations? How do these differ from the biblical guidelines Paul describes here?

“The sins of some people are conspicuous, going before them to judgment, but the sins of others appear later. So also good works are conspicuous, and even those that are not cannot remain hidden” (vs. 24-25). How do some hidden sins manifest themselves over time, sometimes years? How do some “behind-the-scenes” virtues manifest themselves over time, sometimes years? Give specific examples of both.

### **Action Steps ...**

If you have never received a blessing from your father or mother, seek out a mature believer with white hair and ask for one. Promote one of your relationships with another believer from “friend” to “sibling” — do something for that person only a healthy family member would do.

~~~~~

Session 12

1 Timothy 6:1-10

1. Open with prayer (2-5 min).
2. Share your experience ... *Without naming anyone, describe how you've seen chronic discontent impact a person's relationships and spiritual growth* (7-10 min).
3. Read 1 Timothy 6:1-10
4. Discuss these questions with your group (20-45 min).

Those who have believing masters must not be disrespectful on the ground that they are brothers; rather they must serve all the better since those who benefit by their good service are believers and beloved (1 Timothy 6:2). Have you ever had a Christian supervisor? If so, how did your mutual faith impact your relationship as boss & subordinate? If not, talk about what it was like to work for your best non-Christian manager.

He has an unhealthy craving for controversy and for quarrels about words, which produce envy, dissension, slander, [and] evil suspicions (vs. 4). What are some favorite things Christians like to argue about? How can these conflicts distract us from our primary mission? How can we best avoid this kind of dissension?

Godliness with contentment is great gain (vs. 6). Are there any areas of life where you are currently experiencing discontent? Describe them. Can you be content and still desire to grow? If so, explain how contentment & growth are not necessarily mutually-exclusive.

For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils (vs. 10). What best describes your *metaphorical* relationship with money: like it was a spouse, friend, boss, employee, co-worker, or adversary? Explain.

Action Steps ...

On a sheet of paper, list the following categories: *Relationships; Finances; Vocation; Spiritual Gifts; Fun*. Rank each of these on a scale of 1-to-10, with 1 representing “Destructively Discontent” and 10 representing “Happily Content.” Pick one of these areas in which you would like to experience growth, and describe a small step you can take to head in that direction this week.

~~~~~

## **Session 13**

### **1 Timothy 6:11-16**

1. Open with prayer (2-5 min).
2. Share your experience ... *Describe a battle you've been through that resulted in something to be celebrated* (7-10 min).
3. Read 1 Timothy 6:11-16
4. Discuss these questions with your group (20-45 min).

“But as for you ... pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness” (1 Timothy 6:11). Give an example of each of these things in the life of a Christian. What does growth in each of these areas of life look like?

**Fight the good fight of the faith (vs. 12).** Why should a battle-free life be a concern for the follower of Christ? Can you fight a faith-related battle *badly*? If so, explain how.

**Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called (vs. 12).** Describe what it would mean for you to “take hold” of something that was meaningful or valuable to you. Is it possible to take eternal life for granted? If so, how could you prevent this from happening?

Keep the commandment unstained and free from reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ (vs. 14). How does the prospect of being held accountable to God (*from whom you can hide nothing*) impact the way you make decisions—especially in the context of your relationships?

### **Action Steps ...**

Pick your (faith-related) battles this week. Where do you need to put yourself on the front lines? Who do you want by your side as you enter into this battle?

Identify a believer in your circle of influence and begin to pray for that person. Do something tangible and meaningful for him or her in their pursuit to become more like Jesus.

“Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved. May not copy or download more than 500 consecutive verses of the ESV Bible or more than one half of any book of the ESV Bible.”