



DISCIPLES & THE EARLY CHURCH

Unit 9 • Timothy

UNIT DESCRIPTION

"First Timothy, Titus, and Second Timothy—probably written in that order and commonly called the pastoral Epistles—form a rather closely knit unity. They are somewhat distinct from Paul's other ten Epistles..."[1]

"Paul begins his First Epistle to Timothy by warning him against false teachers, who seem to have been Judaizers (1:3-11). He thanks 'Christ Jesus our Lord' for his amazing grace to him, 'the worst of sinners' (1:12-20)...

"The second Epistle is much more personal, written near the close of Paul's life. He talks more directly to Timothy than in the first letter, urging him to maintain the spiritual glow (1:1-7) and to be a faithful partner of his in suffering for the gospel (1:8-2:13). Again the apostle warns against the false teachers (2:14-19) and urges Timothy to be a noble servant of Christ (2:20-26). ...Then the aged apostle gives his final charge to his son in the faith (3:10-4:5) and his own testimony (4:6-8)...

"Because these two letters were written primarily to an individual whom Paul loved dearly, they provide us with some valuable insights into his life and character. Yet, through his associate Timothy, Paul is speaking to the entire church at Ephesus, and indeed to the whole church of Jesus Christ today...

"The divine inspiration of the Scriptures is stated in the Pastorals more forcefully than anywhere else in the NT. We read, 'All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in doing what is right' (2 Tim 3:16).

"The pastoral Epistles are primarily practical rather than theological. The emphasis lies rather on the defense of doctrine than on its explication or elaboration. The distinctively doctrinal passages comprise only a small part of the whole; Timothy and Titus had already been instructed."[2]

[1] Frank E. Gaebelin, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, Volume 11, © 1978 by the Zondervan Corporation, p. 341.

[2] *Ibid*, pp. 344-345.



Concept

God is truth and love.

Goal

Students will learn how they can learn to love like God does, as well as what it means to have a pure heart, good conscience, and sincere faith.

Passage

1Timothy 1:2-5

Key Verse: "The goal of our instruction is love, which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith." 1 Timothy 1:5 (NASB)

Planning Ahead

Lesson Supplies	Craft Supplies
<p>Instruction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Drawing – "Pure Heart"</i> • <i>Drawing – "Divided Heart"</i> • <i>Drawing – "Guilty Conscience"</i> • <i>Drawing – "Good Conscience"</i> • <i>Drawing – "Sincere Faith"</i> • <i>Drawing – "Pretend Faith"</i> <p>Learning Activity #2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Game spinner</i> • <i>Velcro for starting line</i> • <i>16 laminated, Velcro-backed sheets, printed on different colored paper with:</i> • <i>Love from a GOOD CONSCIENCE...</i> • <i>or... Love from a PURE HEART...</i> • <i>or... Love from a SINCERE FAITH...</i> 	<p>Activity Stations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Children's Encyclopedia of Bible Books by Mark Water</i> • "Timothy Who?" worksheet, 1/student • 4 copies of "Bible Promises" • Half sheets of copy paper, 2/student • Crayons, markers • Blank cardstock, 1 sheet/student • Half sheets of cardstock w/title "God's Promises", 1/student • Various shape hole punches • 6 sheets of different colors of construction paper

***TEACHERS PLEASE NOTE**

For clarity, the italicized areas in the Planning Ahead section indicate supplies that are in—and should be returned to—your classroom SHARED SUPPLY bag.

Background Information (for the teacher)

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"Having given the occasion for writing (v. 3), plus some reaction to what the erring elders are doing (v. 4), Paul now returns to his command that they stop (v. 3). The goal of this command, he says, is love. This is probably not a general statement about the gospel, in contrast to the errors; rather, Paul is specifically giving the reason for Timothy's involvement, namely, to arouse the love which comes from a pure heart. The false teachers are involved in speculations (v. 4) and meaningless talk (v. 6) that are full of deception (4:1-2) and lead to quarrels and suspicions (6:4-5). The purpose of ordering them to stop is to bring the church back to the proper result of 'God's work, based on faith,' namely, their loving one another...

"The Christian grace of love springs from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith. These motivations to love stand in stark contrast to those of the false teachers, who are deceived and deceitful (4:1-2; 5:24; 2 Tim. 2:26; 3:13; cf. 1 Tim. 2:14; 5:15; 2 Tim. 3:5-7), have 'seared' consciences (4:2), ' and have shipwrecked their faith' (1:19).

A pure heart reflects Paul's biblical background (Ps. 24:4; 51:10; cf. Jesus' beatitude, Matt. 5:8). ...the term conscience is often, as here, accompanied by a descriptive adjective (good, pure, seared), implying the seat of moral decision-making to have been 'purified' by Christ or 'seared' or 'defiled' by Satan...

The qualification of faith as sincere is comparable to his qualifying love in the same way in Romans 12:9. ... Either you have faith, or love, or you do not.... Here sincere faith refers to the Christian virtue, meaning trust in God that is truly there, in contrast to the deceptive nature of the errorists' 'faith.'"[1]

"Certainly for the Christian the goal of all exhortations in practical affairs is love (charity) which was in all probability conspicuously lacking in these speculative reasoners, whose main purpose was their own intellectual satisfaction.

"This Christian triad has clearly been neglected by certain people. They have swerved and turned aside. The two vivid verbs imply that having missed the mark (astocheo), they inevitably turned off their course (ektrepo). By losing their Christian bearings they drifted into a trackless waste, for life without this triad of virtues not only lacks love, but produces no more than meaningless chatter. The word vain jangling (mataiologia) sums up the irrelevance which formed one of the main features of the false teaching."[2]

[1] Gordon D. Fee, *New International Biblical Commentary*, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, © 1984, 198 by Gordon D. Fee. Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., pp. 42, 43.

[2] Donald Guthrie, *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries: The Pastoral Epistles*, © 1984, The Tyndale Press, pp. 58, 60.

Activity Stations:

- **Research – "Timothy Who?" worksheet**
 - **Instructions:** Give each student a worksheet and have them follow the instructions.
- **Bible Promise Cards**
 - Over the next 3 weeks the students will make "God's Promises" Bible promise cards. This week the students will illustrate promises about love. The next 2 weeks students will illustrate promises relating to God's truth and God's provision in difficulties to take home and put in their promise card holder.
 - **Instructions:** Put the copies of printed Bible promises out for the students to reference. Select a promise from the sheet or use their own favorites, write the verse on the bottom of the half sheet of paper and draw/color a picture to illustrate it. To make the holder for the promise cards, place the half sheet of cardstock with the printed "God's Promises" over the bottom half of the sheet of blank cardstock. Staple, glue or tape the two together around the sides and bottom leaving the top open to put the cards in. Punch shapes out of the colored construction paper. Use the hole punch shapes, markers, and crayons to decorate the holder. Put the cards in the holder to take home.

Instructions: Use the 6 pictures as visuals for the pure/divided heart, guilty/good conscience and sincere/pretend faith.

For the next four weeks we are going to talk about the letters Paul wrote to his very young friend Timothy. What did you learn about Timothy from your research?

Paul had trained Timothy to be a leader and helped Timothy establish the church in the city of Ephesus (show Ephesus on the map). Paul was very concerned about some false teachers who were creating confusion and chaos. To add to the problems, Timothy was a pretty laid-back, unemotional type of guy who hated conflict. Paul wrote the two letters to Timothy to encourage him to take a bold stand with these false teachers and to instruct Timothy about how to disciple others who would be faithful.

Let's read **1 Timothy 1:2-5**. We read that Paul considered Timothy a son. Paul was Timothy's spiritual father. He was very concerned that some false teachers were turning Christians' thoughts away from the truth of the Bible to "strange doctrines" that cause conflict and confusion. Look at verse 5. What does Paul say is the goal of his instruction? Our key verse this week is, "The goal of our instruction is love, which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith" (1 Timothy 1:5). The problem in the church was that these false teachers were interested in stirring up arguments and getting people off track. It isn't clear what their motives were, but what is clear is that the goal of their instruction was not love.

To learn about how we develop this love from a pure heart, a good conscience and a sincere faith we begin with God. First, we must know God and His love. We can only get to know God by having a relationship with Him. Who can tell me how we begin a relationship with God? (We admit that we sin, can never be good enough to have a relationship with Him and ask Him to accept us because Jesus died to pay for our sin.) When we tell Him we know we need His forgiveness, He forgives us and we become His children. How do we receive His forgiveness? (He forgives us because Jesus died on the cross to take the punishment we deserve for our sins.) 1 John 3:16 says, "We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." If we spend any time thinking about Jesus' sacrifice for us, we realize the depth of His love. The more we understand His love, the more we want to be like Him and want others to know His love. However, for the rest of our lives we will always be tempted to walk away from loving God.

Pure Heart / Divided Heart

What's our key verse? Let's look at what it means to have a pure heart. (Show picture of pure heart.) This is a picture of a pure heart. God is at the center. This person has many interests and God is at the center of all of these interests.

Look at this picture. (Show picture of divided heart.) This heart is full of all kinds of things but God is just a small part in the corner of his heart. This is a picture of all the things that promise us happiness. But rather than giving us happiness, they make us more and more empty inside. Why do you think that happens? Things don't give us the satisfaction they promise, we think we need more. Before we know it, we are completely focused on our things and the desire to get more. We call this heart a divided heart because so many things are so important that there is little room for God.

You can see that the pure heart and the divided heart like the same things. But God is the center of the pure heart. God is at the center of all the things in the life of the person. For example, these people both have families. The person with the pure heart is so grateful for the love Jesus has given him that he wants to serve his family while the person with the divided heart will look for ways to be served.

Guilty Conscience / Good Conscience

Let's say our key verse again. (Show picture.) This is a picture of a guilty conscience. This boy is thinking, "I did something wrong. God is mad at me and doesn't like me. I hope no one finds out." Or maybe he's thinking, "I don't care what God or anyone thinks. I'm going to do it my way even if it is wrong. This is what I want." Sometimes when we feel guilty, we try to do something to make up for it.

For example, if you told someone a secret that you promised you wouldn't repeat, you might try to cover it up by being extra nice to that person rather than admit what you did and ask that friend to forgive you. What are some things you do to relieve a guilty conscience? (Do things to make up for the sin, run away from God, rebel, act like don't care.) None of these things work, do they? God doesn't want us to deal with a guilty conscience by hiding our sin, trying to be good, trying to keep a bunch of rules or pretending we don't care. Jesus died for our sin. When we ask that His death count for us, God forgives us for all of our sin—past, present and those we have not yet committed.

(Show picture.) We can have a good conscience when we honestly admit our guilt. We believe God's truth and thank Him for His forgiveness. When our conscience is cleared by God's forgiveness, we are free to take responsibility for our sin and to accept God's grace.

Then we are free to forgive and extend grace and love to others.

Sincere Faith / Pretend Faith

Let's repeat our key verse. Faith is belief in someone or something: e.g., I have faith that this chair will hold me when I sit down. The Bible tells us sincere faith in God, knows God's promises and believes even though we can't see how He is going to do it. Look at this girl. (Show picture.) She thinks, "God will keep His promises to me."

What are some things God promises to Christians? (forgiveness, the Holy Spirit, to be with us, hear our prayers, help us when we're afraid, take us to Heaven, give us life forever with Him...) Do you know how to find these in the Bible? When we know the promises God makes in the Bible, choose to believe that He will keep His promises and act on those promises our faith grows more and more sincere.

Have you ever faked your faith? Your faith is fake if you think you can be good enough to be God's child. It's fake if you think you can figure out who God. It's fake if you don't believe that God can or will keep His promises. It's fake because you really believe in yourself rather than God. (Show picture and point out that the promises of God are crossed out.)

Let's get into small groups to talk some more about the goal of love.

- What's our key verse? What does it mean?
- Why do you think Paul had that goal? Is it a goal you'd like to have? Why?
- Is it hard for you to believe God? What gets in the way?
- What kinds of things do you feel guilty about? God doesn't want us to feel guilty so how can you get rid of your guilt?
- What would help/helps you to decide to take scary steps of faith?

Transition

Learning Activity#1 Sm. Groups

Learning Activity#1 Continued

Transition

Learning Activity#2 Lg. Group

Missions Prayer: Talk about and pray for the Oasis Giving Campaign.

Let's pray together that God will show those who don't know Him how much He loves them. And pray that God will help those of us who do know Him to grow in God's love and truth so that we can have this goal of love for Him and others.

Let's play a game that helps us remember our key verse.

Game -- "Goal of Our Instruction"

Goal: Fun and learn the verse.

- **Instructions:** This game is similar to the commercial game of Twister. Lay out the 16 rectangles with "Love from a PURE HEART," Love from a GOOD CONSCIENCE" and "Love from a SINCERE FAITH" in four rows of four as shown in attached diagram. Choose 4 players to play at a time. Each player spins the spinner and places the named body part on the named rectangle. They continue to spin and take turns. A player is out of the game when he falls or can't reach the designated rectangle. Continue until only one player remains. Select four new students and play again.