

A Devotional for Kids

# WORDS TO A YOUNG LEADER

Walking Through 1 Timothy Part 1



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# Words to a Young Leader Part I for Kids

## 1 Timothy 1:1-3:16

### Introduction

Paul, the Apostle, wrote long letters of encouragement to many churches and leaders back when people first started becoming Christians. One of these letters is 1 Timothy, written to a young guy named Timothy, who Paul mentored. In it there are lots of confusing parts and some clearer parts, but overall, it is about how to be a good leader in the church, even if you are young!

Some of you may think that you have to be a grown-up to be a leader, but that is not what the Bible says at all! Paul encourages Timothy to lead well, even as a young person! Throughout the book of 1 Timothy, Paul gives lots of pieces of advice to Timothy on leadership. Read along and learn ways to become a young leader yourself!

## **1 Timothy 1:1-1:11**

*From Paul. God our Savior and Christ Jesus commanded me to be an apostle of Christ Jesus, who gives us hope.*

*<sup>2</sup> Timothy, because of our faith, you are like a son to me. I pray that God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ will be kind and merciful to you. May they bless you with peace!*

*<sup>3</sup> When I was leaving for Macedonia, I asked you to stay on in Ephesus and warn certain people there to stop spreading their false teachings. <sup>4</sup> You needed to warn them to stop wasting their time on senseless stories and endless lists of ancestors. Such things only cause arguments. They don't help anyone to do God's work that can only be done by faith.*

*<sup>5</sup> You must teach people to have genuine love, as well as a good conscience and true faith. <sup>6</sup> There are some who have given up these for nothing but empty talk. <sup>7</sup> They want to be teachers of the Law of Moses. But they don't know what they are talking about, even though they think they do.*

*<sup>8</sup> We know that the Law is good, if it is used in the right way. <sup>9</sup> We also understand that it wasn't given to control people who please God, but to control lawbreakers, criminals, godless people, and sinners. It is for wicked and evil people, and for murderers, who would even kill their own parents. <sup>10</sup> The Law was written for people who are sexual perverts or who live as homosexuals or are kidnappers or liars or won't tell the truth in court. It is for anything else that opposes the correct teaching <sup>11</sup> of the good news that the glorious and wonderful God has given me.*



## Week One: I'm Done Playing Games

Has a parent ever said to you, “I’m done playing games!”? What they really mean is that they want you to listen and stop messing around or stop doing something you are not supposed to be doing. In the first section of 1 Timothy, Paul is writing that he is done playing games, not with Timothy, but with the people that Timothy is leading. Paul is teaching Timothy that sometimes, good leadership means not fooling around—in this case with false teaching. Some people in Timothy’s church wanted to become teachers of the law (ie: pastors, religious leaders), but totally for the wrong reasons! They wanted it for their own gain.

But Paul tells Timothy, that as their leader he needs to help them understand what it means to follow the One true law—the Gospel of Jesus, and live their lives in ways that reflect that belief. So, how do you know if someone actually is teaching the truth? You can tell by how they live their lives. If someone is telling you one thing, but doing another, they don’t have much integrity. But if they are teaching the Bible, and living in a way that shows they practice what they believe, that is sincere faith.

### Questions:

1. How does Paul define love (vs. 1:5)?
2. How can you tell between true and false teaching?
3. What is one way that you practice what you say you will do?  
(example: If you tell your little brother or sister that they shouldn’t be messy, but you have the dirtiest room in the house, how will they believe you?)

## 1 Timothy 1:12-17

<sup>12</sup> I thank Christ Jesus our Lord. He has given me the strength for my work because he knew that he could trust me. <sup>13</sup> I used to say terrible and insulting things about him, and I was cruel. But he had mercy on me because I didn't know what I was doing, and I had not yet put my faith in him.



<sup>14</sup> Christ Jesus our Lord was very kind to me. He has greatly blessed my life with faith and love just like his own.

<sup>15</sup> "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." This saying is true, and it can be trusted. I was the worst sinner of all! <sup>16</sup> But since I was worse than anyone else, God had mercy on me and let me be an example of the endless patience of Christ Jesus. He did this so that others would put their faith in Christ and have eternal life.

<sup>17</sup> I pray that honor and glory will always be given to the only God, who lives forever and is the invisible and eternal King! Amen.

## Week Two: Practice Grace!

Have you ever done something wrong, but were forgiven anyway? I was talking with a friend who said that whenever they did something wrong that they knew was wrong, their parents forgave them. It didn't mean the parents let them do it over and over again; but they knew that their parents still loved them, and showed that they belonged in the family no matter what. Because they were forgiven for the things that they had done wrong, they felt all the more willing to give that grace to others as well.

The second passage we are looking at in 1 Timothy is just that. Paul wants Timothy to understand that any healthy church must be based first of all in the grace of Jesus. We all have done things wrong in life that separate us from God. But because Jesus died on the cross for our sins, we can again be with God. Paul had done some really bad things in his life before he met Jesus. That is what he is talking about with Timothy. God showed him huge grace! He forgave him for everything he had ever done wrong, and was able to be in relationship with him again.

Paul tells Timothy that once we have received the grace of God, we must give that grace to others, we must forgive others, just as God has forgiven us. In leadership, it is very important to show grace to others, so that they may see God at work in our lives. So, when a friend does something wrong to you, forgive them! This doesn't mean saying, "It's okay," because what they did really wasn't okay. It means saying, "I forgive you," because this says that you will not hold it against them in the future. You are giving grace, even where it isn't deserved.

### Questions:

1. When have you received grace/forgiveness in your life? Was it from a parent, teacher, friend, sibling, etc.?
2. What did it feel like to receive grace?
3. How can you show grace to others this week?

## 1 Timothy 1:18-20

*<sup>18</sup> Timothy, my son, the instructions I am giving you are based on what some prophets<sup>[a]</sup> once said about you. If you follow these instructions, you will fight like a good soldier.*

*<sup>19</sup> You will be faithful and have a clear conscience. Some people have made a mess of their faith because they didn't listen to their consciences.*

*<sup>20</sup> Two of them are Hymenaeus and Alexander. I have given these men over to the power of Satan, so they will learn not to oppose God.*





## Week 3: This Won't be Easy!

Leadership isn't a piece of cake. It is hard work! And Paul knows that from being a leader. In this week's passage, Paul tells Timothy to obey the teaching and instructions he has given so that he may be a good leader himself.

At some point in Timothy's childhood/early life, some of the leaders of the church told him that he would make a good leader someday. And Paul reminds Timothy of this (vs. 1:18), and then gives him some practical advice on how to be a good leader. He says it definitely won't be easy, but that Timothy must keep following Jesus, even when it is hard! Paul also says that he should have faith and follow his conscience.

Sometimes in life we get feelings about whether we should or shouldn't do something, and if we are following Jesus, we can know whether we should or shouldn't be doing something. That is having a good conscience and a strong faith. Paul warns young leaders that sometimes we get caught up in temptations that will lead us away from God, but to stand firm in what we know is true.

### Questions:

1. Have you ever been tempted to do something you know you shouldn't do?
2. What did you end up doing? Why?
3. Who in your life is a good role model (like Paul) that you can look up to for a good example of faith in action?
4. What are some ways that you can stay strong in your faith even when it is hard?

## 1 Timothy 2:1-8

First of all, I ask you to pray for everyone. Ask God to help and bless them all, and tell God how thankful you are for each of them. <sup>2</sup> Pray for kings and others in power, so that we may live quiet and peaceful lives as we worship and honor God. <sup>3</sup> This kind of prayer is good, and it pleases God our Savior. <sup>4</sup> God wants everyone to be saved and to know the whole truth, which is,

<sup>5</sup> There is only one God, and Christ Jesus is the only one who can bring us to God.

Jesus was truly human, and he gave himself to rescue all of us.

<sup>6</sup> God showed us this at the right time.



<sup>7</sup> This is why God chose me to be a preacher and an apostle of the good news. I am telling the truth. I am not lying. God sent me to teach the Gentiles about faith and truth.

<sup>8</sup> I want everyone everywhere to lift innocent hands toward heaven and pray, without being angry or arguing with each other.

## Week 4: Prayer is the best weapon

Has there ever been a time in your life when you prayed for something and God answered your prayers? Sometimes we pray for people who are sick. Other times we pray for those who don't have enough food or warm clothing. We even pray to God when we are grateful for everything He has done for us. But how often do you pray for your leaders?

Paul tells Timothy in this section that one of our best weapons to staying strong in our faith is praying for the leaders who are above you, especially if you yourself are a leader. God can use those prayers for leaders to lead better! Who in your life is your spiritual leader? Maybe a parent, your KidZone leader, a pastor, or a mentor help lead you spiritually (much like Paul helped Timothy). Pray for those people that they will be strong in their faith. Pray that they may not lose faith, so that they can continue to build you up in faith.

Prayer is our lifeline to God, where we can talk to Him and ask Him for anything that we need. When we go to God in prayer, it is a reminder that He is bigger and more powerful than us and can do anything! This is the best weapon we can use against walking down the wrong path, especially if you are praying for your leaders. That way, they can keep leading you down a good path.

### Questions:

1. What kinds of things do you pray for?
2. Do you pray for your leaders now? If not, who are some leaders in your life you should pray for?
3. Take some time to pray to God for those people who are leading you.

## 1 Timothy 2:8-15

<sup>8</sup> I want everyone everywhere to lift innocent hands toward heaven and pray, without being angry or arguing with each other.

<sup>9</sup> I would like for women to wear modest and sensible clothes. They should not have fancy hairdos, or wear expensive clothes, or put on jewelry made of gold or pearls. <sup>10</sup> Women who claim to love God should do helpful things for others, <sup>11</sup> and they should learn by being quiet and paying attention. <sup>12</sup> They should be silent and not be allowed to teach or to tell men what to do.

<sup>13</sup> After all, Adam was created before Eve, <sup>14</sup> and the man Adam wasn't the one who was fooled. It was the woman Eve who was completely fooled and sinned. <sup>15</sup> But women will be saved by having children,<sup>[a]</sup> if they stay faithful, loving, holy, and modest.



## Week 5: WHAT?

When you read this section in 1 Timothy, some of you might be thinking it sounds kind of crazy. We no longer do some of the cultural things talked about here with men and women. But there are still a lot of good things we can learn from it!

Paul tells Timothy a couple of things that you should remember: 1-pray, and 2-it's the inside, not the outside that counts. The first thing in this passage that Paul teaches Timothy is that prayer is of the greatest importance in leadership. Good leaders don't first get angry with their people when there is disagreement, they first pray. Anytime in life that there is hardship in leadership, the first place you should go is on your knees in prayer.

The second thing that Paul teaches Timothy in this passage, is that good leadership comes from the heart, not from looking good. This doesn't just apply to ladies, but to men too! It's not about how we look, what jewelry or makeup we wear, or even if we have the nicest perfume/cologne. Good leadership comes from our hearts being turned toward God and remembering that He is more powerful than any of us.

### Questions:

1. When you find yourself in disagreement with someone, what is the first thing you do? (ie: fight back, argue, avoid them, get angry, talk to them, pray, etc).
2. In what ways do you try to focus on your outside (looks) more than your inside (character/heart)?
3. How could you better focus on what is important?

## 1 Timothy 3:1-16

It is true that<sup>[a]</sup> anyone who desires to be a church official<sup>[b]</sup> wants to be something worthwhile. <sup>2</sup> That's why officials must have a good reputation and be faithful in marriage.<sup>[c]</sup> They must be self-controlled, sensible, well-behaved, friendly to strangers, and able to teach. <sup>3</sup> They must not be heavy drinkers or troublemakers. Instead, they must be kind and gentle and not love money.

<sup>4</sup> Church officials must be in control of their own families, and they must see that their children are obedient and always respectful. <sup>5</sup> If they don't know how to control their own families, how can they look after God's people? <sup>6</sup> They must not be new followers of the Lord. If they are, they might become proud and be doomed along with the devil. <sup>7</sup> Finally, they must be well-respected by people who are not followers. Then they won't be trapped and disgraced by the devil.

<sup>8</sup> Church officers<sup>[d]</sup> should be serious. They must not be liars, heavy drinkers, or greedy for money. <sup>9</sup> And they must have a clear conscience and hold firmly to what God has shown us about our faith. <sup>10</sup> They must first prove themselves. Then if no one has anything against them, they can serve as officers.<sup>11</sup> Women<sup>[e]</sup> must also be serious. They must not gossip or be heavy drinkers, and they must be faithful in everything they do.

<sup>12</sup> Church officers must be faithful in marriage.<sup>[f]</sup> They must be in full control of their children and everyone else in their home. <sup>13</sup> Those who serve well as officers will earn a good reputation and will be highly respected for their faith in Christ Jesus.

<sup>14</sup> I hope to visit you soon. But I am writing these instructions, <sup>15</sup> so that if I am delayed, you will know how everyone who belongs to God's family ought to behave. After all, the church of the living God is the strong foundation of truth.

<sup>16</sup> Here is the great mystery of our religion:

*Christ<sup>[a]</sup> came as a human.  
The Spirit proved that he pleased God,  
and he was seen by angels.  
Christ was preached to the nations.  
People in this world put their faith in him,  
and he was taken up to glory.*

## Week 6: Share the Load

This week in Timothy we are looking at the different positions of leadership in the church, what they do, and what gifts you must have in order to be in that position. Paul is outlining the importance of spreading out the leadership load. One person can't do it all, good leaders share the load with others!

How many of you have tried to carry in a load of groceries into the house for your mom or dad? How much easier is it when your brothers and sisters help out too? So much! The work goes faster, and sometimes it is even more fun.

In the church, it is just the same. If one person has to lead everything, like Timothy initially did, he will grow tired and burn out. But if he surrounds himself with other leaders, like Paul says to do, much more can be done, and it will be a healthier church.

### Questions:

1. Have you ever tried to do something big on your own? How did it work out?
2. Who are some people in your life who you work really with? Why?
3. Do they have certain strengths that you don't have? Do you have some strengths that they don't have?
4. Why is it better to share the load with others?