

NT Reading Plan 2020

Living Hope Fellowship

1 Timothy

The Word

God raises up pastors with the gift of teaching and preaching to edify the church by washing them in the word. How do people come to salvation? Through the word (2:1-7). How do saints get sanctified and grow in grace? Through the word (4:6-15). How do people discern false teaching? The true teaching of the word (1:3-7).

Throughout 1 Timothy, synonyms for the word abound: sound doctrine (1:10; cf 1:3; 6:3), the truth (2:4, 3:14; 4:3), the mystery of the faith (3:9), the faith (3:13; 4:1; 5:8; 6:10), the word of God (4:5), the words of the faith (4:6), good doctrine (4:6), Scripture (4:13; 5:17), the teaching (6:1), the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching that accords with godliness (4:3), trustworthy sayings (1:15; 3:1; 4:9).

Contrary to sound teaching, there are many false teachers and ways to wander away from the truth (1:3-7; 6:1-6, 20-21). Charlatans are very zealous for "myths," "endless genealogies," "vain discussion," misinterpreting the law, "controversy," and "quarrels". As the latter days draw to an end, "some will depart from the faith" (4:1). How do people make shipwreck of their faith? Rejecting the word (1:18-20).

In every healthy church, elders must be able to teach the word (3:2) and the ones who work hard at teaching it are worthy to be paid (5:17-18). Deacons must believe the faith with a clear conscience (3:9). The whole church itself is "a pillar and buttress of the truth" (3:15) so the church must emphasize the public reading and teaching of Scripture (4:11-16).

1. How much should a church ask its pastor to do? If his immersion in the word is connected to your salvation (4:11-16), how much of his time should be freed up for this purpose? 2 hours a week? 10, 20, 50?
2. One might say this book doesn't largely apply to them because they are not a pastor. What is the congregation's role in seeing preaching and teaching prioritized?
3. What is the congregation's role in facilitating the raising up of ministers from within?

Prayer

In the first church, the church in Jerusalem, the apostles needed to be able to devote their time to the word *and* prayer. Consequently, there was a great need for godly men to take up the responsibility to care for the Greek widows in order to take things off the apostles' plates (pun intended, Acts 6). The priorities of pastoral ministry have followed the apostles' lead to this day. Prayer is just as vital to the health of any church, ministry, or minister as preaching and teaching God's word. Multiple times in this letter, prayer links preaching the word, believing the word, and acting out the word in godliness (see 2:1-7, 2:8-10; 4:1-5; 5:3-8). The two ministries always go hand in hand.

4. A church will never be healthy without a priority placed on prayer alongside teaching. But is that where things end? Do you listen to a sermon to hear it or to do it? Do you pray requests

for God to fulfill himself or for him to fulfill through you doing something about it? We don't just preach, we apply. We don't just pray, we act.

Salvation

1 & 2 Timothy along with Titus (known as the Pastoral Epistles) have the highest concentration in the Bible of salvation words including savior, saved, save, etc. so you'll find plenty here.

Regarding salvation, 1 Timothy has a few curve balls thrown our way here, too, which puzzle us. **A.** What does it mean that "she will be saved through childbearing" (2:15), **B.** the living God is the "Savior of all people, especially of those who believe" (4:10) **C.** and in what way will Timothy "save [himself] and [his] hearers" (4:16)? A survey of notes here can't explore these details with any depth but I want you to spend some time in each of these respective contexts. Paul doesn't have amnesia. He knows that Christ saves us by faith, through the gospel (1:15-16).

A. Which historical figures does Paul mention in the immediate context of 2:15? Who does "she" refer to? Where would her savior come from if she didn't have children? Go back and look at Gen 3:15 for an old promise.

B. Looking at 4:10, the controversy surrounds the word "especially." For the sake of argument, I ask you to concede that especially always refers to a subset of a group in the NT. That is, the believers are a slice of the whole pizza called "all people." Let's start with something we know. Is everyone who has lived (all people) saved unto eternal life (also known as universalism)? No! Does this text say that God saved everyone (the action/verb of saving) or he is the Savior (the noun, the title)? Is there a sense where God can still be the savior without saving some people?

C. As for 4:16, does the word save always point to the initial time of conversion or can it mean the progression of being saved from sin (sanctification)? Is there ever a future tense use of salvation, we will be saved, in the Bible (see Rom 5:9)?

King

As Paul recounts how Christ saved him from his sin, he erupts in praise to God the Father: "To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen" (1:17). By the time Paul concludes urging Timothy on in the ministry of the gospel and the future coming of Christ whom the Father will reveal "at the proper time", he is drawn again to praise the Father: "he who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords who alone has immortality, who dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see. To him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen (6:15-16).

5. How is it that the Father can be called the King of kings here and Jesus is given the title in Revelation 17:14 and 19:16? While we might not give an easy or immediate answer to this, does the fact that the Father and Son are both given the this title prove their equality?

Bonus

Check out the key word "good" (1:5, 8, 18, 19; 2:3, 10; 2:13; 4:4, 6; 5:10, 25; 6:2, 13, 18, 19).