

## Introduction to 1 Timothy

### Author, Date and Recipients

The apostle Paul probably wrote this letter to Timothy in the mid-60s AD, after his first release from imprisonment. Timothy was a pastor in Ephesus.

### The Gospel in 1 Timothy

The thrust of [1 Timothy](#) is that godliness is central to the Christian's continuing in the gospel and the church's proclamation of the gospel. Words relating to "godliness" occur ten times in this short book ([2:2, 10; 3:16; 4:7, 8; 5:4; 6:3, 5, 6, 11](#)), and throughout the letter Paul grounds godly behavior in Christ's gospel. Sadly, those whose behavior is contrary to the gospel of Christ deny the reality of their faith ([1:6, 19-20; 4:1; 5:6, 8, 11-12; 6:9-10](#)). Indeed, personal godliness (Christ-infused godliness) is not only indispensable to perseverance in faithfulness, but absolutely essential to the proclamation of the gospel to the lost world. In a nutshell, the theme of [1 Timothy](#) is *Christ-centered godliness for the sake of the gospel*.

This gospel theme is explicit in [2:1-7](#), where Paul urges that prayers be made for all people so that believers may lead godly lives. He comments, "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" ([2:3-4](#)). Paul follows this declaration of God's gospel heart with consecutive detailed directives for godliness to three groups: women ([2:9-15](#)), overseers ([3:1-7](#)), and deacons ([3:8-13](#)). These instructions are followed by what are the universally acknowledged key verses of the letter ([3:14-16](#)), calling the church to conduct that is radically Christ-centered and Christ-generated—which is to say, gospel-centered godliness.

Chapter [4](#) begins with a warning against pursuing godliness through man-centered asceticism, which Paul terms the "teaching of demons" ([4:1-5](#)). This is followed by the famous non-ascetic command to Timothy to "train yourself for godliness" and its accompanying array of applications and benefits ([4:7-16](#)). Chapter [5](#) flows into chapter [6](#) with directives regarding how the treatment of various groups in the church must be shaped by godliness: older men and women, younger men and women ([5:1-2](#)), widows ([5:3-16](#)), elders ([5:17-25](#)), and masters ([6:1-2](#)). In chapter [6](#) Paul warns against those who teach a different doctrine that "does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching that accords with godliness" ([6:3-5](#)). Godliness and greed are juxtaposed ([6:6-10](#)). Paul closes by exhorting Timothy, "Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness." And, in this Christlike spirit, "Fight the good fight of the faith" ([6:11-16](#)).

So we see that [1 Timothy](#) is not simply a moralistic manual for church conduct. It is rather a call to Christ-centered, gospel-centered godliness for the sake of the church—and a lost world.

### Outline

- Greeting ([1:1-2](#))
- Confronting the False Teaching ([1:3-20](#))
- Descriptions of Gospel-Shaped Living ([2:1-3:13](#))
- Purpose of Writing: Behavior in the Church ([3:14-16](#))
- Identifying the False Teaching ([4:1-5](#))
- How Timothy Should Be Shaped by the Gospel ([4:6-16](#))
- How Specific Groups in the Church Should Be Shaped by the Gospel ([5:1-6:2](#))
- Confronting the False Teaching Again ([6:3-21](#))

## Introduction to 2 Timothy

### Author, Date and Recipients

Paul wrote this second letter to Timothy during his second imprisonment in Rome, shortly before his death. This imprisonment was after the one recorded in [Acts 28](#). He probably wrote the letter in AD 64–65.

### The Gospel in 2 Timothy

Paul's second letter to Timothy is a call to endurance amid opposition and suffering for the sake of the gospel. The theme of endurance is present throughout the letter through the use of Greek words that variously express the idea ([2:10, 12, 24; 3:11; 4:5](#)). Suffering for the gospel is explicitly stated in [1:8, 12](#) (cf. [2:3; 3:10–11](#)).

Paul's exhortation to endure has shaped the very structure of the letter. After expressing his affectionate greetings to Timothy, his "beloved child," and recounting his fond remembrance of the young man's spiritual beginnings ([1:1–5](#)), Paul issues an extended exhortation to endurance ([1:6–2:13](#)). This exhortation begins with a powerful call to gospel-centered endurance ([1:6–14](#)), followed by contrasting real-life examples of two who failed to endure and one who did ([1:15–18](#)). Paul then resumes his call to gospel endurance ([2:1–13](#)), with directives to be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus ([2:1–2](#)), to share in suffering as a good soldier ([2:3–7](#)), to remember Jesus Christ as preached in Paul's gospel ([2:8–9](#)), and to endure through the work of Christ ([2:10–13](#)).

In the next section ([2:14–3:9](#)) Paul provides wisdom for enduring false teachers. Timothy is charged to rightly handle the word ([2:14–19](#)), remain an honorable vessel, be ready for every good work ([2:20–21](#)), avoid ignorant controversies ([2:23](#)), and correct opponents with gentleness ([2:24–26](#)). As Paul moves to the end of his letter ([3:10–4:8](#)), he issues a mounting, ascending call to endure for the gospel. Paul encourages Timothy to follow his own astonishing example of endurance ([3:10–13](#)), continuing in the God-breathed Scriptures that make souls wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus ([3:14–17](#)) and taking up the stunning call to preach the word ([4:1–8](#)).

The apostle closes with a moving example of enduring to the end in gospel ministry ([4:9–22](#)). [Second Timothy](#) is, so to speak, Paul's last will and testament and, as such, it bears power and soul-moving piquancy—all rooted in the beauty of the gospel of grace ([1:8–11](#)).



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## Q4 | Week 10: December 5-10 Weekly Overview

### Outline

- Opening ([1:1-2](#))
- Enduring for the Gospel ([1:3-2:13](#))
- Dealing with False Teachers ([2:14-3:9](#))
- Contrasting Timothy with False Teachers ([3:10-4:8](#))
- Conclusion ([4:9-22](#))

## Introduction to Hebrews

### Author, Date and Recipients

It is not clear who wrote [Hebrews](#). The author knew Timothy ([13:23](#)). He also knew his readers and wanted to see them again ([13:19](#)). The letter was probably written before AD 70.

### The Gospel in Hebrews

The book of [Hebrews](#) unfolds the gospel in at least five ways: it shows the connection between Christ's person and his work, shows his superiority to Old Testament persons and institutions, underscores humanity's need for redemption, warns of apostasy, and exhorts professed believers to persevere.

First, [Hebrews](#) remarkably combines the person and work of Christ. Chapter [1](#) teaches the deity of Christ as powerfully as any place in Scripture. Chapter [2](#) highlights Christ's humanity. Chapters [7-9](#) constitute the most extensive teaching on Christ's priesthood and atoning sacrifice. What is the point? The person of Christ as God and man constitutes the basis for his saving work. His identity undergirds his performing the unique saving deeds of dying for sinners and rising from the dead. Because he is God, *he is able* to save us, for only God can save. Because he became a man of flesh and blood, he is able *to save us*, for one of our human race died in our place and overcame death and the Devil in his resurrection.

Second, [Hebrews](#) shows Christ's superiority to Old Testament persons and institutions. He is the great and final Prophet, far surpassing Old Testament mediators of revelation—prophets and angels (ch. [1](#)). Therefore, the gospel that he brought is even more important than the law that was given to Moses through angels ([2:1-4](#); [Acts 7:53](#); [Gal. 3:19](#)). He is superior to Moses, Aaron, and all Israel's subsequent high priests ([Heb. 3:6](#); chs. [5; 7](#)). This is because Jesus is a priest according to the order of Melchizedek who, unlike the sons of Aaron, lives forever and thus has a perpetual priesthood. He is the Great High Priest who presents himself as the final offering, bringing the end to sacrifice and saving to the uttermost those who come to God through him (chs. [9-10](#)).

Third, [Hebrews](#) underscores humanity's need for redemption. As children of Adam we are fallen, and we do not exercise proper dominion over creation ([2:8](#)). We are held in bondage by the fear of death and by him who had the power of death, the Devil ([2:14-15](#)). Left to ourselves, like Israel of old, our hearts are unbelieving and rebellious (chs. [3-4](#)). We are unclean and need Christ's purifying blood, his violent death, to be cleansed to serve the living God ([9:14, 23; 10:22](#)). Even as believers we are prone to wander from our first love and thus we need God's warnings, exhortations, and grace to persevere. In a word, we are needy sinners in need of a gracious and mighty Savior. And that is just what God has provided in his incarnate Son, Jesus Christ.

## Q4 | Week 10: December 5-10

### Weekly Overview

Fourth, as strongly as any place in the Bible, [Hebrews](#) warns of the danger of apostasy—in five passages: [2:1–4](#); [3:7–4:13](#); [5:11–6:12](#); [10:19–39](#); and [12:1–29](#). Plainly, the original readers of [Hebrews](#) were in danger of turning from the faith they had formerly professed. However, [Hebrews](#) also asserts that God not only saves his people from their sins but also keeps them saved to the end ([6:13–20](#); [7:23–25](#)). And one of the means that God employs to keep us is to warn of the folly of deserting him who saves us freely by his grace. There is nowhere else to turn.

Fifth, [Hebrews](#) exhorts professed believers to persevere ([2:1](#); [4:14](#); [6:1–3](#); [10:23, 36](#); [12:1–2](#)). It is true that God saves us once and for all. But that salvation is not static but dynamic. It is as dynamic as the living relationship between God and his people (made formal in the new covenant; ch. [8](#)). The covenant is God’s pledge to be God to us and to make us his own. Because he loves us, he not only assures us of his love with both promise and oath but also exhorts us to keep on living obediently in the faith, to keep on gathering with other believers for worship, and not to harden our hearts against him in rebellion.

While [Hebrews](#) clearly makes its own unique contribution, it joins other New Testament books in exulting in the same amazing grace in Jesus that forms the Bible’s main message. The message of [Hebrews](#) is, at its core, the gospel: the good news of redemption for struggling sinners.

### Outline

- Jesus Is Superior to Angelic Beings ([1:1–2:18](#))
- Jesus Is Superior to the Mosaic Law ([3:1–10:18](#))
- Call to Faith and Endurance ([10:19–12:29](#))
- Concluding Encouragements and Remarks ([13:1–25](#))