



# BIBLE IN A YEAR 2020

## 1 TIMOTHY



**PRACTICAL  
LEADERSHIP**

# Saturday October 31: 1 Timothy 1-3

## What leadership looks like

Every day we're reading or listening to part of the Bible together and sharing thoughts with you. Today it's Owen Lynch:

## What did I like about today's reading?

It's easy to think that Paul was a one-man band but, in reality, Paul was one of a number of travelling evangelists and church planters and worked with a team of church leaders, one of whom was called Timothy. Timothy's family lived in Lystra in Southern Turkey and they accepted Jesus as the Jewish Messiah when Paul came to town. You can read about this in Acts 14.

Lystra didn't hold good memories for Paul, because a crowd stoned him to within an inch of his life! Just think about that for a moment - just imagine the injuries that Paul would have sustained - bruises, broken bones, severe concussion, perhaps a fractured skull, broken nose and cheek bones. Some scholars think he may have actually died and been resurrected - whatever happened it was hugely traumatic.

For twenty years Paul faced repeated sectarian violence from Jews who rejected his claim that Jesus was the Messiah promised throughout the history of Israel. Many of his letters contain firm rebuttals of the arguments that Jesus isn't the Messiah.

Paul's first letter to Timothy starts with another of these rebuttals urging Timothy to oppose these Jews who are teaching that Jesus isn't the Messiah. Paul uses really strong language and urges Timothy to use strong discipline.

See, here's the thing - the Jews who Paul is in conflict with are the same group that Paul himself was part of. Paul can completely identify with them. He understands their anger and violence, he understands their passionate conviction. He says of himself in 1 Timothy 1:12-13: *I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength, that he considered me trustworthy, appointing me to his service. Even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief.*

In the next verse, he calls himself the "worst of sinners". Paul was once the same violent persecutor of Jews who claimed Jesus was the Messiah. His emotional testimony ends with an extravagant cry of thanksgiving: *Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

## What did it show me about Father God, Jesus or the Holy Spirit?

It shows me that an encounter with Jesus is life changing. It shows me that no-one is beyond redemption.

## What am I going to do differently as a result?

It gives me faith that nothing or no one is beyond redemption, it will change the way I pray for redemption wherever I encounter brokenness in my own life and in my city.

## Who am I going to share this with?

My friends and colleagues.

# Wednesday November 4: 1 Timothy 4-6

## What makes a great leader?

Every day we're reading or listening to part of the Bible together and sharing thoughts with you. Today it's Owen Lynch:

## What did I like about today's reading?

I like the encouragement that Paul gives to Timothy as a leader. Timothy is a young man in a society where older males dominate and so Paul tells him in 4:12, don't look down on you because you are young, but set an example in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity.

If you are reading this on Wednesday 4th November, you may be absorbing the news that either Joe Biden or Donald Trump will be the President of the USA for the next four years.

Whatever the outcome of the election - the character of the two nominees will have been a factor in who Americans have chosen to be their next president. No matter how competent a leader is, their character matters, because trust matters!

Paul tells Timothy to be an example in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity. This description of a leader has echoes of Paul's history as a Jewish Pharisee - these are the qualities of a good Pharisee, but these traits also echo Jesus' example as a leader.

## What did it show me about Father God, Jesus or the Holy Spirit?

I am reminded of Luke's description of Jesus in Luke 22:25-26,

*Jesus said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who exercise authority over them call themselves Benefactors. But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves.*

Jesus challenged the hierarchical model of leadership that shaped his contemporary Greco-Roman society. He turned it on its head and said that the greatest should be like the youngest and the one who rules like the one who serves.

Jesus isn't the only leader to have advocated such an attitude to leadership, but he is one of the few who have lived that principle to the point of death.

We all have some influence over other people - we all lead others in one way or another. So the question for us all is, will we lead like Jesus and serve those who we influence, or will we lord it over them?

## What am I going to do differently as a result?

I'm going to allow this principle of servant leadership to be at the forefront of my mind as I lead. I'm going to pray for our leaders especially at this time of crisis, that they too would exercise their authority with a servant heart - including Trump or Biden - whoever wins the election.

## Who am I going to share this with?

I want to encourage you today to pray for the next President of the USA - let's pray together!