

Lesson No. (41)

## TIMOTHY

### References:

### Notes for Servants:

### Objectives:

**General:** Serving God in young age

**Specific:**

1. Serving God is the duty of every Christian
2. The advantage of serving God in young age
3. How can we serve?

### Instructions:

1. Review last week's lesson.
2. Give a brief description about the church occasion(s) for the coming week.

### Bible Verse:

*“Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.”*  
(1 Tim 4:12)

### Lesson:

## TIMOTHY

TIM'OTHY (tim'o-thi; "venerating God").

### *The convert and friend of Paul*

Timothy was the son of one of those mixed marriages that, though unlawful, were frequent in the later periods of Jewish history. His mother was a Jewess, whereas his father (name unknown) was a Greek (Acts 16:1-3).

### Early Life

The picture of Timothy's early life, as described by the apostle Paul, portrays a mother and grandmother, full of tenderness and faith, piously instructing him in the Scriptures and training him to hope for the Messiah of Israel (2 Tim 1:5; 3:15). Thus, though far removed from the larger colonies of Israelite families, he was brought up in a thoroughly Jewish atmosphere; however he could hardly be called a Jewish boy, having never been admitted by circumcision within the pale of God's ancient covenant.

## **Conversion**

Timothy was probably living at Lystra when Paul made his first visit to that city (Acts 16:1), and he appears to have been converted at that time (14:6; cf. 2 Tim 1:5). No mention is made of Timothy until the time of Paul's second visit, but it is safe to assume that his spiritual life and education were under the care of the elders of the church (Acts 14:23).

## **Circumcision**

Those who had the deepest insight into character and spoke with a prophetic utterance pointed to Timothy (1 Tim 1:18; 4:14) as specially fit for missionary work; and Paul desired to have him as a companion. The apostle circumcised him (Acts 16:3), and Timothy was set apart as an evangelist by the laying on of hands (1 Tim 4:14; 2 Tim 4:5). "He took him and circumcised him" (Acts 16:1,3). Paul's conduct in circumcising Timothy has been considered inconsistent with his principle and conduct in refusing to circumcise Titus (Gal 2:3-4). "The two cases are, however, entirely different. In the latter there was an attempt to enforce circumcision as necessary to salvation; in the former it was performed as a voluntary act, and simply on prudential grounds" (Haley, *Alleged Discrepancies*, p. 260).

## **PAUL'S COMPANION**

Henceforth Timothy was one of Paul's most constant companions. They and Silvanus, and probably Luke also, journeyed to Philippi (Acts 16:12), and there the young evangelist was already conspicuous for his filial devotion and zeal (Phil 2:19-22). He seems to have been left behind at Philippi to watch over the infant church. He appeared at Berea, where he remained with Silas after Paul's departure (Acts 17:14), joining Paul at Athens. From Athens he was sent back to Thessalonica (1 Thess 3:2), since he had special gifts for comforting and teaching. He left Thessalonica, not for Athens, but for Corinth, and his name is united with Paul's in the opening words of both letters written from that city to the Thessalonians (1:1; 1:1). Of the five following years of his life we have no record. He is next mentioned as being sent on in advance when the apostle was contemplating the long journey that was to include Macedonia, Achaia, Jerusalem, and Rome (Acts 19:22).

It is probable that he returned by the same route and met Paul according to a previous arrangement (1 Cor 16:10) and was thus with him when the second epistle was written to the church of Corinth (2 Cor 1:1). He returned with the apostle to that city and joined in messages of greeting to the disciples whom he had known personally at Corinth and who had since gone to Rome (Rom 16:21). He formed one of the company of friends who went with Paul to Philippi and then sailed by themselves, waiting for his arrival by a different ship (Acts 20:3-6). No further mention is made of him until he rejoined the apostle, probably soon after his arrival in Rome. He was with Paul when the epistles to the Philippians, the Colossians, and Philemon were written (Phil 1:1; 2:19; Col 1:1; Philem 1).

It follows from 1 Tim 1:3 that he and Paul, after the release of the latter from his imprisonment, revisited proconsular Asia, that the apostle then continued his journey to Macedonia, while Timothy remained, half-reluctantly, even weeping at the separation (2 Tim 1:4), at Ephesus to check if possible the outgrowth of heresy and licentiousness that had sprung up there. He had to exercise rule over presbyters, some older than himself (1 Tim 4:12); to render judgments (5:1,19-20); to regulate the almsgiving and sisterhood of the church (vv. 3-10); and to ordain overseers and deacons (3:1-13). These duties, together with the danger of being entangled in the disputes of rival sects, made Paul anxious for the steadfastness of his disciple.

Among his last recorded words Paul expressed his desire to see him again (2 Tim 4:9,21). It is uncertain whether Timothy was able to fulfill these last requests of the apostle, or that he reached Rome before Paul's death, although some have seen in Heb 13:23 an indication that he shared Paul's imprisonment.

According to an old tradition, Timothy continued to act as bishop of Ephesus and suffered martyrdom under Domitian or Nerva.

## **Conclusion**