

# Paul's First Epistle to Timothy

A New Rendition

*(prepublication version)*

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and  
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# About the Brigham Young University New Testament Commentary Series

Welcome to the BYU New Testament Commentary, a project by a group of Latter-day Saint specialists offering to readers a careful, new look at the biblical records that witness the life and ministry of Jesus Christ and the first generation of his church. The commentary series seeks to make the New Testament more accessible to Latter-day Saint general readers and scholars by employing much of current biblical scholarship while reflecting important LDS insights. At the same time, this effort may also be helpful to interested readers of other faiths who want to learn how a group of Latter-day Saint scholars understands the Bible. A fundamental article of faith for Latter-day Saints (Mormons) affirms the Bible “to be the word of God” while adding, understandably, that it needs to be “translated correctly” in order for it to be accurately comprehensible to modern language speakers.

These objectives have helped shape the purposes and parameters of this commentary series. Serious LDS readers of the Bible search the scriptures, looking for depth and breadth in passages whose meanings and mandates may ultimately be plain but not shallow. Such readers and interpreters are served by treatments that unite faith and research, reason and revelation, in prayerfully confronting profound and difficult issues that arise in the texts and affect one’s path of progression. The New Testament has served as an influential guide to western civilization for centuries. As such, its records have long been studied by lay people and scholars alike, resulting in a rich reservoir of information that illuminates the New Testament era culturally, historically, and linguistically. Selectively, the BYUNTC builds upon this vast body of knowledge, resting on the Greek texts of the New Testament and connecting helpful elements of linguistic, literary, historical, and cultural research and traditional scholarship together with LDS scriptures and doctrinal perspectives. The combination of all these

features distinguishes the BYUNTC from other commentaries, which are readily available elsewhere and which readers may also want to consult for more encyclopedic or specialized discussions.

The tone of the BYUNTC aims to be informative rather than hortatory, and suggestive rather than definitive in its interpretation. The opinions expressed in this series are the views of its contributors and should not necessarily be attributed to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; Brigham Young University, where many of those involved here are headquartered; or anyone else, though these works have benefitted from input and guidance from a number of colleagues, advisors, editors, and peer reviewers.

Each volume in this series contains a new working translation of the New Testament. Calling this a new “rendition” clarifies that it does not seek to replace the authorized KJV adopted by the LDS Church as its official English text. Rather, it aims to enhance readers’ understanding conceptually and spiritually by rendering the Greek texts into modern English with LDS sensitivities in mind. Comparing and explaining the New Rendition in light of the KJV then serves as one important purpose for each volume’s notes, comments, analyses, and summaries. This effort responds in modest ways to the desire President J. Reuben Clark Jr. expressed in his diary in 1956 that someday “qualified scholars [would provide] . . . a translation of the New Testament that will give us an accurate translation that shall be pregnant with the great principles of the Restored Gospel.”

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# Paul's First Epistle to Timothy

## Greeting (1:1–2)

1 Paul, an envoy of the Anointed Jesus, according to the command of God, our savior, and the Anointed Jesus, our hope, 2 to Timothy, a true son in faith: grace, mercy, and peace to you from God, our Father, and the Anointed Jesus, our Lord.

## Statement of the Problem (1:3–7)

3 As I entreated you to stay in Ephesus when I departed for Macedonia in order to exhort certain individuals not to spread false teachings 4 nor to give heed to myths and endless genealogies, which supply speculative debates rather than stewardship with God by faith. 5 The object of our charge is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and unfeigned faith. 6 Some, having missed the mark, have turned themselves aside from this course to useless talk, 7 wishing to be teachers of the law while understanding neither what they say nor what they confidently affirm.

## The Purpose of the Law (1:8–11)

8 We know that the law is good, if one uses it properly, because 9 we know this: that the law is not established for the righteous but for the lawless and insubordinate, for the impious and sinful, for the unhallowed and profane, for patricides and matricides, for murderers, 10 sexually immoral, men who lie with other men, slave-dealers, liars, perjurers, and whatever else is opposed to sound teaching 11 according to the good news of the glory of the blessed God, with which I have been entrusted.

## Thanksgiving Prayer: Jesus Transforms Paul's Life (1:12–17)

12 I am grateful to the one who has strengthened me, the Anointed Jesus, our Lord, because he considered me trustworthy, appointing me to minister, 13 who was formerly a slanderer and a persecutor and an

insolent man. However, I was shown mercy because I did so ignorantly through unbelief. 14 Our Master's grace overflows with the faith and love that is in the Anointed Jesus. 15 Trustworthy is the saying and worthy of full acceptance, that "the Anointed Jesus came into the universe to save sinners," of whom I am the foremost. 16 But for this purpose I was shown mercy: so that in me, the foremost sinner, the Anointed Jesus might demonstrate all possible forbearance as an example for those intending to place their faith in him for life eternal.

17 To the king of the ages—the immortal, not seen, the only God—honor and glory through the ages of the eternities. Amen.

### **Timothy's First Charge (1:18–20)**

18 This charge I commit to you, my son, Timothy, in keeping with the revelations you previously received. That by these you might wage the good battle, 19 possessing faith and a good conscience. After rejecting these things, some have shipwrecked their faith, 20 among whom are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan so that they might be trained not to slander.

### **Pray for a Peaceful Life (2:1–7)**

1 Therefore I entreat you, first of all, to supplicate, pray, petition, and express gratitude to God on behalf of all men—2 on behalf of kings and all those who are in high places of government—so that we Christians may lead an undisturbed and tranquil life in all reverence and dignity. 3 This is good and pleasing in the sight of God, our Savior, 4 who wishes for all people to be saved and to come into a knowledge of truth. 5 There is indeed one God; there is also one mediator between God and humanity, a human, the Anointed Jesus. 6 He gave himself as a ransom on behalf of all. This is the witness for our own appointed time, 7 for which I was made a herald and an apostle (I speak truly; I do not lie), a teacher of the nations in faith and truth. 8 Therefore, I wish for the men to offer prayers in every place, lifting up holy hands without anger and argument.

### **Counsel to Women (2:9–15)**

9 In like manner, I wish for the women to adorn themselves in well-ordered apparel with a sense of decorum and self-control. Not in braids



and gold or pearls or expensive clothing <sup>10</sup> but with what is suited for women professing to revere God—through good deeds. <sup>11</sup> Let a woman learn through a quiet demeanor and through complete humility. <sup>12</sup> I do not permit a woman to teach nor to exercise authority over a man but to be nondisruptive. <sup>13</sup> For Adam was formed first, then Eve, <sup>14</sup> and Adam was not deceived, but the woman after having been deceived completely entered into transgression. <sup>15</sup> However, she will be saved through childbearing, if with self-control her posterity remains in faith and love and holiness.

### **Qualifications of an Overseer (3:1–7)**

<sup>1</sup> Trustworthy is the saying, “If someone yearns for the office of an overseer, he desires a noble undertaking.” <sup>2</sup> Therefore he should be an overseer beyond reproach—a man of one wife, sober, self-controlled, dignified, hospitable, and a good teacher. <sup>3</sup> He must be neither a drunk nor a quarrelsome person but gracious, peaceful, and not money loving. <sup>4</sup> He must preside over his own household well, keeping children in obedience with all venerability. <sup>5</sup> (For if someone does not know how to direct his own household, how will he take care of God’s congregation?) <sup>6</sup> He must not be a new convert, so that he might not be puffed up with pride and fall into the devil’s condemnation. <sup>7</sup> He must also have a noble reputation with individuals outside of the faith so that he won’t fall into reproach and the devil’s snare.

### **Qualifications of Ministers (3:8–13)**

<sup>8</sup> Ministers likewise should be venerable, not two-faced nor addicted to much wine nor shamefully greedy. <sup>9</sup> They must hold to the mystery of the faith with a clean conscience. <sup>10</sup> Furthermore, let these men be evaluated first, then let them serve after they are found blameless. <sup>11</sup> Their wives likewise must be venerable, not slanderers but sober and faithful in all things. <sup>12</sup> Ministers must be husbands of one wife, presiding over their children and their own households well. <sup>13</sup> For those who have served well acquire a noble standing for themselves and much confidence in the faith that is in Anointed Jesus.

### **The Mystery of Godliness (3:14–16)**

<sup>14</sup> Although I hope to come to you quickly, I write these things to you <sup>15</sup> so that if I should delay, you may know how one ought to conduct

oneself among the household of God, which is the congregation of the living God, the pillar and support of truth. 16 Likewise undeniably great is the mystery of godliness:

He was made known in the flesh,  
judged righteous by the Spirit,  
seen by messengers,  
proclaimed among the nations,  
believed upon in the world,  
and taken up in glory.

### **False Teachings (4:1–5)**

1 But the spirit distinctly says that in a later period, after giving heed to deceiving spirits and the teachings of evil powers, some will rebel from the faith 2 through the hypocrisy of false-speaking individuals who have branded their own consciences, 3 preventing taking a wife, abstaining from foods which God created to be received with gratitude by the faithful and those who have recognized the truth. 4 For every creation of God is good and not unclean, if it is received with gratitude, 5 for it is made holy through the word of God and prayer.

### **Timothy as Example (4:6–16)**

6 While presenting these things to the brothers and sisters, you will be a good minister of the Anointed Jesus because you are nourished by the words of faith and good teachings that you have followed closely. 7 However, reject the profane fables and old wives' tales. Rather, discipline yourself in reverence to God. 8 "For physical training is of little benefit, but godliness is altogether beneficial, as it holds the promise of life now and of life soon to be." 9 Trustworthy is the saying and worthy of full acceptance.

10 For this reason we toil and contend because we place our hope in the living God, who is the savior of all humanity, especially of the faithful. 11 Declare and teach these principles. 12 Let no one despise your youth but become a model of the faithful in word, in conduct, in love, in faith, and in purity. 13 Until I come, devote yourself to reading, exhortation, and teaching. 14 Do not neglect the gift of grace that is in you, which was given to you by revelation with the laying on of hands by the council of elders. 15 Practice these activities. Abide in them, so

that your progress may be visible to all. 16 Give attention to yourself and your teaching. Persevere in this for in doing this you will save both yourself and those harkening to you.

**Treat Everyone with Purity (5:1–2)**

1 Do not rebuke an older man but encourage him as your father. Treat younger men as brothers, 2 older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters—with all purity.

**Supporting Widows (5:3–16)**

3 Honor widows, who are truly bereft. 4 However, if any widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show godliness to their own household and give back a due recompense to their ancestors. For this action is agreeable in the eyes of God. 5 But she who is truly a widow and is abandoned places her hope in God and perseveres in entreaties and prayers night and day. 6 However, she who lives self-indulgently is dead while living. 7 Moreover, commend these teachings, so that the members should not be open to reproach. 8 If anyone does not provide for his own, and especially his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

9 Let a widow be enrolled if she is at least sixty years old, was the wife of one man, 10 and has born testimony through good works: if she has brought up children, if she has welcomed strangers, if she has washed the feet of the saints, if she has given aid to the afflicted, and if she has followed after every good work.

11 However, refuse younger widows. For when their unfaithful desires to live indulgently lead them away from the Anointed One, they desire to marry, 12 incurring judgment because they have rejected their first faith. 13 At the same time, they learn to be idle, wandering from house to house. Not only are they idle, but they are also babblers and busybodies, speaking things which are not proper. 14 I wish then for the younger widows to marry, to bear children, to manage their households, and not to give even one opportunity for slander to the adversary. 15 For already some have turned away after Satan. 16 If any faithful woman provides support to widows, let her continue to assist them, and let her not burden the church with their support so that the church may provide aid to those who are truly bereft.

### **Dealing with Elders (5:17–22)**

17 Let the elders who lead well rightly be thought worthy of twofold honor, especially those toiling in speaking and teaching. 18 For the scripture says, “You shall not muzzle a threshing ox” and “The worker is worthy of his wages.” 19 Do not entertain an accusation against an elder except upon the testimony of two or three witnesses. 20 Rebuke those elders who sin before all so that the rest might be afraid.

21 I solemnly charge you before God and the Anointed Jesus and the elect angels that you should observe these principles without prejudice, doing nothing with partiality. 22 Do not hastily lay your hands on anyone or become a partner in another’s sins. Keep yourself pure.

### **Good Works Cannot Be Hidden (5:23–25)**

23 No longer drink only water, but use a little wine on account of your stomach and your frequent ailments. 24 The sins of some men are evident, preceding them to judgment, while the sins of others follow after them. 25 In like manner are noble works manifest, and those not evident are not able to be hidden.

### **Slaves and Masters (6:1–2a)**

1 All who are slaves under a yoke, let them consider their own masters worthy of all honor, so that the name and the teachings of God are not disparaged. 2 Those who have faithful masters should not despise them since they are brothers. But rather let them serve because those whom they help toward good deeds are faithful and beloved.

### **Contending with False Teachers (6:2b–10)**

2b Teach and encourage these things. 3 If anyone teaches other things and does not accept the sound words of our Lord Jesus the Anointed and the teachings concerning reverence to God, 4 he is conceited. He knows nothing, save for his sick obsession concerning the debates and wars of words from which comes envy, strife, slander, evil suspicions, 5 and the constant contention of men corrupted in mind and defrauded of truth, who consider reverence to God to be a means of gain.

6 Rather reverence to God along with contentment is a great gain. 7 For we brought nothing into this world, neither are we able to carry anything out of it. 8 Therefore, since we have food and clothing, we

will be content. 9 Yet those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a trap and desire many foolish and harmful things, which plunge men into ruin and destruction. 10 For the love of money is a root of all manner of evils, and in reaching after riches, some have been led away from the faith and pierced themselves with many sorrows.

### **Strengthening Timothy (6:11–16)**

11 But you, O man of God, flee these things! Instead, pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, and gentleness. 12 Contend for a prize in the good contest of faith. Take hold of eternal life to which you were called and about which you have professed the good confession before many witnesses. 13 I charge you before God, who maintains all life, and the Anointed Jesus, who testified before Pontius Pilate the good confession, 14 to keep this commandment without stain and without reproach until the appearance of our Lord Jesus the Anointed, 15 which he will manifest in his own time. He is the blessed and solitary sovereign—the king of kings and lord of lords. 16 He alone is deathless, dwelling in unapproachable light, which no human has seen nor is able to see. To him be honor and eternal dominion, amen.

### **Charge to the Rich (6:17–19)**

17 To the wealthy in the present age, instruct them neither to be high-minded nor to trust in the uncertainty of riches but rather in God, who abundantly provides all things for enjoyment. 18 Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, to be generous and ready to share, 19 treasuring up for themselves a good foundation for the future so that they may lay hold of what is truly life.

### **Final Charge to Timothy (6:20–21)**

20 Oh Timothy, guard the things entrusted to you, turning aside from the profane, empty discussions and conflicting theories of what is falsely called knowledge. 21 Some individuals in proclaiming these false teachings miss the mark concerning the faith. Grace be with you all.