

1 & 2 Timothy choral reading

CHARACTERS: Paul (78), Timothy (66)

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 2 minutes/page

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: 1 & 2 Timothy, Acts 13 and 14 (HCSB)

If this is presented on stage, Paul appears to be writing the letter and Timothy reading a scroll.

B: Greetings from Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the command of God our Savior and of Christ Jesus our hope:

ALL: Appointed a herald, an apostle and a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

A: To Timothy, my true son in the faith.

ALL: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

A: Timothy, instruct people not to teach different doctrine or to pay attention to myths and endless genealogies.

B: These promote empty speculations rather than God's plan, which operates by faith.

A: Now the goal of our instruction is love that comes from a pure heart,

ALL: a good conscience, and a sincere faith.

A: I give thanks to Christ Jesus our Lord who has strengthened me, because He considered me faithful, appointing me to the ministry—

B: one who was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an arrogant man.

A: But I received mercy because I acted out of ignorance in unbelief.

ALL: The grace of our Lord overflowed, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.

B: This saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance:

ALL: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners

A: and I am the worst of them. But I received mercy for this reason, so that in me, the worst of them

ALL: Christ Jesus might demonstrate His extraordinary patience

B: as an example to those who would believe in Him for eternal life.

ALL: Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible,

B: the only God,

ALL: be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

Engage in Battle

A: Timothy, my son, I am giving you this instruction so that you may strongly engage in battle,

ALL: having faith and a good conscience.

B: First of all, then, I urge that petitions, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for everyone,

ALL: for kings and all those who are in authority,

A: so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity.

ALL: This is good, and it pleases God our Savior,

B: who wants everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

ALL: For there is one God and one mediator between God and humanity,

A: Christ Jesus, Himself human, who gave Himself

ALL: a ransom for all, a testimony at the proper time.

Instructions to Men, Women, Elders and Deacons

B: I want the men in every place to pray, lifting up holy hands without anger or argument.

A: Also, the women are to dress themselves in modest clothing,

ALL: with decency and good sense,

A: not with elaborate hairstyles, gold, pearls, or expensive apparel,

ALL: but with good works, as is proper for women who affirm that they worship God.

B: If anyone aspires to be an overseer, he desires a noble work

ALL: An overseer, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife,

A: self-controlled, sensible, respectable,

ALL: hospitable, an able teacher, not addicted to wine,

B: not a bully but gentle,

ALL: not quarrelsome, not greedy

A: one who manages his own household competently,

ALL: having his children under control with all dignity.

B: (*aside to audience*) If anyone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of God's church?

ALL: He must not be a new convert, or he might become conceited and fall into the condemnation of the Devil.

A: Furthermore, he must have a good reputation among outsiders,

ALL: so that he does not fall into disgrace and the Devil's trap.

B: The elders who are good leaders should be considered worthy of an ample honorarium,

ALL: especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching.

A: For the Scripture says:

ALL: Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain,

A: and the worker is worthy of his wages.

B: Don't accept an accusation against an elder unless it is supported by two or three witnesses.

ALL: Publicly rebuke those who sin, so that the rest will also be afraid.

A: Don't be too quick to appoint] anyone as an elder,

ALL: and don't share in the sins of others

B: Deacons, likewise, should be worthy of respect, not hypocritical, not drinking a lot of wine,

ALL: not greedy for money,

B: holding the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience.

A: And they must also be tested first;

ALL: if they prove blameless, then they can serve as deacons.

B: Wives, too, must be worthy of respect,

ALL: not slanderers, self-controlled, faithful in everything.

A: Deacons must be husbands of one wife, managing their children and their own households competently.

ALL: For those who have served well as deacons acquire a good standing for themselves,

B: and great boldness in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.

The Mystery of Godliness

A: Jesus was manifested in the flesh,

ALL: vindicated in the Spirit,

B: seen by angels,

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ALL: preached among the nations,
 A: believed on in the world,
 ALL: taken up in glory.

A: Everything created by God is good,

ALL: Including food and marriage

B: and nothing should be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving,

ALL: since it is sanctified by the word of God and by prayer.

A: Timothy, train yourself in godliness.

ALL: the training of the body has a limited benefit,

B: but godliness is beneficial in every way, since it holds promise for the present life

ALL: and also for the life to come.

A: We labor and strive because we have put our hope in the living God,

ALL: who is the Savior of everyone, especially of those who believe.

B: Command and teach these things.

ALL: Let no one despise your youth; instead, you should be an example to the believers in speech, in conduct

A: in love, in faith, in purity.

ALL: Give your attention to public reading, exhortation, and teaching.

B: Do not neglect the gift that is in you; it was given to you through prophecy,

ALL: with the laying on of hands by the council of elders.

A: Practice these things; be committed to them,

ALL: so that your progress may be evident to all.

B: Pay close attention to your life and your teaching; persevere in these things,

ALL: for by doing this you will save both yourself and your hearers.

A: Do not rebuke an older man, but exhort him as a father,

ALL: younger men as brothers, older women as mothers,

B: and with all propriety, the younger women as sisters.

ALL: Support widows who are genuinely widows.

A: But if any widow has children or grandchildren, they must learn to practice godliness toward their own family first

ALL: and to repay their parents, for this pleases God.

B: The real widow, left all alone, has put her hope in God

ALL: and continues night and day in her petitions and prayers,

A: Widows who are self-indulgent are dead even while they live.

ALL: Command this also, so they won't be blamed.

B: But if anyone does not provide for his own, that is his own household,

ALL: he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

A: If any believing woman has widows in her family, she should help them,

ALL: and the church should not be burdened, so that it can help those who are genuinely widows.

A: I solemnly charge you before God and Christ Jesus and the elect angels to observe these things without prejudice,

ALL: doing nothing out of favoritism.

B: Keep yourself pure. Some people's sins are obvious,

ALL: going before them to judgment,

B: but the sins of others surface later.

ALL: Likewise, good works are obvious, and those that are not obvious cannot remain hidden.

A: Teach and encourage these things. If anyone teaches other doctrine

ALL: and does not agree with the sound teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ

B: and with the teaching that promotes godliness,

ALL: he is conceited, understanding nothing,

A: but has a sick interest in disputes and arguments over words.

ALL: From these come envy, quarreling, slander,

B: evil suspicions, and constant disagreement among people whose minds are depraved and deprived of the truth,

ALL: who imagine that godliness is a way to material gain.

A: But godliness with contentment is a great gain.

ALL: For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out.

B: But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with these.

ALL: But those who want to be rich fall into temptation, a trap

A: and many foolish and harmful desires, which plunge people into ruin and destruction.

ALL: For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil,

B: and by craving it, some have wandered away from the faith

ALL: and pierced themselves with many pains.

Fight the Good Fight

A: But you, man of God, run from these things, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith,

ALL: love, endurance, and gentleness.

B: Fight the good fight for the faith; take hold of eternal life that you were called to

ALL: and have made a good confession about in the presence of many witnesses. in the presence of God,

A: who gives life to all, and of Christ Jesus,

ALL: who gave a good confession before Pontius Pilate,

A: I charge you to keep the command without fault or failure

ALL: until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.

B: God will bring this about in His own time. He is

ALL: the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings, and the Lord of lords,

A: the only One who has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light;

ALL: no one has seen or can see Him,

B: to Him be honor and eternal might.

ALL: Amen.

Instructions to the Rich

A: Instruct those who are rich in the present age not to be arrogant

ALL: or to set their hope on the uncertainty of wealth,

A: but on God, who richly provides us with all things to enjoy.

B: Instruct them to do what is good, to be rich in good works,

ALL: to be generous, willing to share,

B: storing up for themselves a good reserve for the age to come,

ALL: so that they may take hold of life that is real.

A: Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you, avoiding irreverent, empty speech

ALL: and contradictions from the “knowledge” that falsely bears that name.

A: By professing it, some people have deviated from the faith.

ALL: Grace be with all of you.

2 Timothy

A: Greetings from Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by God’s will,

B: for the promise of life in Christ Jesus:

A: To Timothy, my dearly loved son.

ALL: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

A: I thank God, whom I serve with a clear conscience as my ancestors did,

ALL: when I constantly remember you in my prayers night and day.

A: Remembering your tears, I long to see you so that I may be filled with joy, clearly recalling your sincere faith

ALL: that first lived in your grandmother Lois,

B: then in your mother Eunice,

A: and that I am convinced is in you also. Therefore, I remind you to keep ablaze the gift of God that is in you through the laying on of my hands.

ALL: For God has not given us a spirit of fearfulness, but one of power, love, and sound judgment.

A: So don’t be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, or of me His prisoner.

B: Instead, share in suffering for the gospel, relying on the power of God.

ALL: He has saved us and called us with a holy calling,

B: not according to our works,

ALL: but according to His own purpose and grace,

B: which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began.

A: This has now been made evident through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus,

ALL: who has abolished death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

A: For this gospel I was appointed a herald, apostle, and teacher,

ALL: and that is why I suffer these things.

B: But I am not ashamed, because I know the One I have believed in

ALL: and am persuaded that He is able to guard what has been entrusted to me until that day.

A: Hold on to the pattern of sound teaching that you have heard from me,

ALL: in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.

B: Guard, through the Holy Spirit who lives in us, that good thing entrusted to you.

ALL: Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

A: And what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses,

ALL: commit to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

B: Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.

ALL: No one serving as a soldier gets entangled in the concerns of civilian life; he seeks to please the recruiter.

A: Also, if anyone competes as an athlete, he is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules.

ALL: The hardworking farmer ought to be the first to get a share of the crops.

A: Consider what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything.

ALL: Keep your attention on Jesus Christ as risen from the dead.

B: God's message is not bound.

A: This is why I endure all things for the elect: so that they also may obtain salvation,

ALL: which is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory.

B: This saying is trustworthy:

ALL: For if we have died with Him, we will also live with Him;

A: if we endure, we will also reign with Him;

ALL: if we deny Him, He will also deny us;

B: if we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself.

An Approved Worker

A: Do not to fight about words; this is in no way profitable

ALL: and leads to the ruin of the hearers.

B: Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who doesn't need to be ashamed,

ALL: correctly teaching the word of truth.

A: But avoid irreverent, empty speech, for this will produce an even greater measure of godlessness.

B: God's solid foundation stands firm, having this inscription:

ALL: The Lord knows those who are His,

B: and

ALL: Everyone who names the name of the Lord must turn away from unrighteousness.

A: If anyone purifies himself from anything dishonorable, he will be a special instrument,

ALL: set apart, useful to the Master, prepared for every good work.

B: Flee from youthful passions, and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace,

ALL: along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.

A: But reject foolish and ignorant disputes, knowing that they breed quarrels.

ALL: The Lord's slave must not quarrel, but must be gentle to everyone,

B: able to teach, and patient, instructing his opponents with gentleness.

ALL: Perhaps God will grant them repentance leading them to the knowledge of the truth.

A: Then they may come to their senses and escape the Devil's trap,

ALL: having been captured by him to do his will.

Difficult Times Ahead

B: Know this: Difficult times will come in the last days.

ALL: For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, proud,

A: blasphemers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy,

ALL: unloving, irreconcilable, slanderers, without self-control,

B: brutal, without love for what is good, traitors,

ALL: reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God,

A: holding to the form of godliness but denying its power.

ALL: Avoid these people!

B: They worm their way into households and capture idle women burdened down with sins,
 ALL: led along by a variety of passions, always learning and never able to come to a knowledge of the truth.
 A: These also resist the truth, men who are corrupt in mind,
 ALL: worthless in regard to the faith.
 B: But you have followed my teaching, conduct, purpose,
 ALL: faith, patience, love, and endurance,
 A: along with the persecutions and sufferings that came to me in Antioch,
 ALL: Where the Jews incited the prominent women, who worshiped God, and the leading men of the city. B:
 They stirred up persecution against you and Barnabas and expelled them from their district.
 A: Iconium,
 ALL: Where an attempt was made by both the Gentiles and Jews, with their rulers, to assault and stone you
 A: and Lystra, where I was stoned and dragged out of the city because they thought I was dead.
 ALL: What persecutions Paul endured!
 A: Yet the Lord rescued me from them all.
 ALL: In fact, all those who want to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.
 B: Evil people and impostors will become worse, deceiving and being deceived.
 A: But as for you, Timothy, continue in what you have learned and firmly believed.
 ALL: You know those who taught you, Timothy,
 B: and you know that from childhood you have known the sacred Scriptures,
 ALL: which are able to give you wisdom for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.
 A: All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for rebuking,
 ALL: for correcting, for training in righteousness,
 B: so that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

Fulfill Your Ministry

A: I solemnly charge you before God and Christ Jesus,
 ALL: who is going to judge the living and the dead,
 B: and because of His appearing and His kingdom:
 ALL: Proclaim the message.
 A: Persist in it whether convenient or not;
 ALL: rebuke, correct, and encourage with great patience and teaching.
 B: For the time will come when they will not tolerate sound doctrine, but according to their own desires,
 ALL: will multiply teachers for themselves because they have an itch to hear something new.
 A: They will turn away from hearing the truth and will turn aside to myths.
 ALL: But as for you, be serious about everything, endure hardship,
 B: do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

A: For I am already being poured out as a drink offering,
 ALL: and the time for your departure is close, Paul.
 A: I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.
 ALL: There is reserved for you in the future the crown of righteousness,
 A: which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me on that day, and not only to me,
 ALL: but to all those who have loved His appearing.
 A: The Lord will rescue me from every evil work and will bring me safely into His heavenly kingdom.

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ALL: To Him be the glory forever and ever! Amen.

B: The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you.

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