

# Bible Questions and Answers

(By Robert C. Veil, Jr.)

Question: Even today, Timothy is a popular name. Who was the Timothy of the Bible and what do we know about him?

Answer: Timothy was a young gospel preacher in the early church of the first century. There is considerable information revealed about him, a study of which is very encouraging.

Timothy was a native of Lystra, a Roman colony in Lycaonia, later incorporated into the province of Galatia. Lystra is today a part of modern Turkey, and is called “Klistra,” 19 miles south of Konya. Paul visited there on his first missionary journey, having been driven from Iconium by the Jewish persecution, (see Acts 14). Upon returning to that city on his second journey, Paul met the young Timothy (Acts 16:1-3).

Timothy had a good reputation throughout Lystra and Iconium. He benefitted from a godly upbringing, (2 Tim. 3:14-15). His God-fearing mother is identified as Eunice, and his faithful grandmother was named Lois, (2 Tim. 1:5). These women were Jews, although Timothy’s father was a Greek. To disarm prejudice against him, which might interfere with Paul’s preaching among the Jews, Timothy was circumcised as a young man.

He was regarded by Paul as his “child” in faith, (1 Tim. 1:2; 2 Tim. 2:2). Paul evidently was very influential to this godly young man, and was a role model and mentor for him. Paul regarded him very highly, and always spoke of him with great warmth and appreciation. It is commendable that Timothy was willing to leave his family and hometown to travel with Paul in the work of the Gospel.

Timothy became a trusted companion and assistant to Paul, who took him along, from Lystra, on his second missionary journey. He is often referred to as accompanying Paul and his other companions in travel, and he was entrusted with important visits and assignments to help strengthen early congregations. One example of this was at Thessalonica, where Timothy helped to strengthen the new Christians, (1 Thess. 3:1ff).

There is some indication in the text that Timothy did not enjoy good health. He evidently did not consume beverage alcohol, for Paul had to command him to use “a little” wine medicinally due to his stomach problems and frequent illnesses: “Be no longer a drinker of water, but use a little wine for thy stomach’s sake and thine often infirmities,” (1 Tim. 5:23).

Paul spoke warmly of Timothy to the church in Philippi: “But I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state. For I have no man likeminded, who will care truly for your state. For they all seek their own, not the things of Jesus Christ. But ye know the proof of him, that, as a child *serveth* a father, *so* he served with me in furtherance of the gospel,” (Phil. 2:19-22). In his last letter, Paul sent for Timothy and urged him to “come before winter,” (2 Tim. 4:9-21).

Although obviously no one is perfect, there is no mention in all the Bible of any failure of his faith, or defect in his godly character. He stands as a faithful example of a Christian man, who tirelessly preached the gospel of Jesus Christ. It would be difficult to find a better man to be named after than Timothy!

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