

**Titus and Timothy**

Passages: 2 Cor 7; 8; 12; 1 Cor 4:17; Acts 16:2; 17:11; 19:22; 20:4; 1 Thess 3:2; Phil 2:19; 1 Tim 4; 2 Tim 2; Titus

*Memory Verse*

“Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity.” (1 Timothy 4:12)

<b>Knowledge of God’s Will [God’s Word]</b>	<b>Knowledge of God [God’s Divine Nature]</b>	<b>Good Work [Behavior]</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Those who desire to serve God must be an example in word, conduct, love, spirit, faith, and purity.</li><li>2. An admirable Christian defends the truth like a soldier, is obedient to God like an athlete, and hardworking like a farmer.</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. God is faithful.</li><li>2. God is true.</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Exhibit love and self-control, important attributes that define a Christian.</li><li>2. Discern between truth and love.</li><li>3. Aspire to be a faithful worker for the Lord.</li></ol>

*Overview*

**Events and Spiritual Teachings**

- A. Titus and Timothy: Good Workers for the Lord
- B. A Young Worker for the Lord
- C. An Admirable Christian
- D. Love with Self-Control

**Life Application**

- 1. Aspire to Be a Faithful Worker
- 2. Godly, Christian Living
- 3. Discern Between Truth and Love

**Memory Verse**

**Conclusion:** Aspire to clothe oneself with God’s word and knowledge in order to be a useful vessel of God.

**A. Titus and Timothy: Good Workers for the Lord**

**1. Titus**

We do not know much about Titus' personal life, other than that he was a Greek converted to Christianity by Paul (Gal 2:1–3). Aside from this, we know only of some of his work with the apostle Paul.

**a. Titus Is a Good Worker for the Lord**

Paul said Titus had a heart of “earnest care” for the members (2 Cor 8:16). Paul also described Titus as “diligent,” as Titus went to the members of his own accord (2 Cor 8:17). Titus also went to work with the church at Corinth at Paul's request to ease tensions and also collect money for the poor (2 Cor 7:6, 13–14; 8:6, 16, 23). Paul had absolute confidence in Titus' integrity and faithfulness (2 Cor 12:17–18). His confidence was well placed, as Titus served the church without taking advantage of it.

**b. Paul's Faithful Partner**

Titus continued to travel with Paul on missionary journeys, helping the Lord's work in preaching the gospel. When Paul was in Ephesus for three years, Titus served alongside him. Paul considered Titus not only to be a faithful partner in the ministry, but also his spiritual son, as Paul had led Titus to come to know Jesus.

**c. Titus Is a Comforter**

In 2 Corinthians 7:6–7, Paul recorded a beautiful description of Titus' character: “Nevertheless God, who comforts the downcast, comforted us by the coming of Titus, and not only by his coming, but also by the consolation with which he was comforted in you, when he told us of your earnest desire, your mourning, your zeal for me, so that I rejoiced even more.” Titus refreshed the members' spirits, and all that Paul had boasted about Titus was found true (2 Cor 7:13–14). Not only that, Titus held great affection for the members (2 Cor 7:15–16).

**d. Titus Is a Good Shepherd**

After Paul's release from his first imprisonment in Rome, he took Titus with him to Crete where they spread the gospel. Soon, believers established churches, and Paul entrusted Titus with the pastoral work while he himself went to visit the church in Corinth (Tit 1:5). Paul instructed Titus to continue teaching the new believers and to appoint church elders.

Paul knew that Titus would need reminders about what is required to grow spiritually. So, Paul wrote a letter to Titus, known today as the Epistle to Titus.

**2. Timothy**

**a. Timothy's Faith**

We can learn a bit of Timothy's background by reading 2 Timothy 1:1–5. He was the son of a Greek father and a Jewish mother. Timothy's mother was Eunice, and his grandmother was Lois—through her, the family's faith was established. Both Eunice and Lois prepared him from childhood to know the Scriptures (2 Tim 3:15). The truths Timothy learned from childhood made him “wise for salvation.” Timothy had a “genuine faith” (2 Tim 1:5), a faith that had been passed down from his grandmother and mother. This helped him become a valuable worker as he did the work of the Lord (1 Cor 16:10).

**b. Paul's Trusted Partner**

Timothy was a teenager when he first met Paul, and he served as Paul's trusted partner when pastoring several churches (Acts 16:1–3). He also accompanied Paul to Asia (Acts 20:4) and was sent by Paul to strengthen the churches (1 Thess 3:2; Acts 19:22; 1 Cor 4:17; Phil 2:19).

Timothy carried money collected by the Philippian church to care for Paul's needs in Corinth. When Paul was in Ephesus teaching the people about God's truth, Timothy was with him for three years. Around thirty years old by then, Timothy had served the Lord for at least ten years. It is with good reason that Paul referred to Timothy as his "true son in the faith" in his first letter (1 Tim 1:2).

Though young, Timothy was a model to follow for preaching the gospel (2 Tim 4:2). Hebrews 13:23 talks about Timothy being "set free," possibly referring to imprisonment for preaching the gospel. Yet Timothy remained true to his pastoral calling and duties, and gave himself wholeheartedly to the Lord's work.

**c. Timothy Sets an Example**

In Philippians 2:20–21, Paul described the heart of Timothy, saying that he had "no one like-minded, who [would] sincerely care" for the members. Paul's comment about Timothy reminded the members of his faithfulness.

Timothy pastored the church in Ephesus (1 Tim 1:3), and Paul constantly wrote letters of encouragement to Timothy to mentor him. He was around forty years old and still relatively young when Paul wrote 1 Timothy and 2 Timothy. The members in Ephesus church may not have thought much of Timothy because of his young age. However, Paul encouraged him not to let anyone despise him because of his age, but to set an example for the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, and in purity (1 Tim 4:12).

**B. A Young Worker for the Lord**

All of us begin as young Christians. As students, we can start by learning from Timothy that age does not restrict our faithfulness to God.

Sometimes, we may feel that we are too young to undertake duties in church, often leaving them to more senior members. We often, and too humbly, say that we are inexperienced because of our young age. But the church cannot grow if no one is willing to receive the baton. We may not be a strong spiritual worker yet, but the work we do today will shape us into strong workers in the future. Youths are the pillars of the church. Therefore, we must not allow our age to become a stumbling block in our service to the Lord.

What are some ways a youth can be a good leader? Timothy set an example through the following:

- 1. Speech:** A good Christian youth should shun godless chatter and gossip. A godly, Christian youth should speak the truth and let his speech be enriched with love and humility. Let us remember that although our friends outside of church may swear and curse, our mouths—which we use to praise God—should not be used to curse man (Jas 3:10). "Not what goes into the mouth defiles a man; but what comes out of the mouth, this defiles a man" (Mt 15:11).

2. **Life:** Our lives are living testimonies and proof that we can become leaders of the church. Our life is defined by what we do and say; therefore, we have to be vigilant in leading a godly life by cultivating our hearts, speech, and actions according to God's expectations.
3. **Love:** A person with love is selfless, patient, and kind. He does not boast, is not proud, and does not envy (1 Cor 13). We have to emulate Jesus and clothe ourselves with all the traits of love. We should always be willing to sacrifice for others, as it is when people feel our true love that we win over more souls for Christ.
4. **Faith:** Remain steadfast in the faith and truth that we have. Remember that our faith in our Lord Jesus should not be shaken by anything, whether it is family, friends, health, or wealth. It is easy to lose our faith in times of adversity, but when we overcome these hurdles, our faith, now tested, will be stronger than ever. Others may ridicule us for our beliefs, but we should never compromise our faith for acceptance or popularity in school.
5. **Purity:** Purity is the greatest challenge for youths in church today. Satan is indeed like a roaring lion waiting to pounce (1 Pet 5:8), and lust is a major tactic he uses to lure youths into sin. Today, it is important for us to understand that we must uphold and safeguard our purity until the day we marry. We need to abstain from sexual interactions that would taint our holiness as followers of Christ.

### C. An Admirable Christian

In 2 Timothy 2:1–7, Paul uses three analogies to describe to Timothy how to be an admirable Christian who is strong in Christ.

1. **Soldier:** A soldier's main desire is to please his commanding officer by fulfilling the duty assigned to him. As soldiers of Christ, we must strive to please God, our commanding officer. Yet, we often seek to please men more than God. We prefer to fit in and be liked, but to be liked we may say things against the truth or God's will. While it is always easier to agree than to disagree, for the sake of Christ and the truth, a good soldier will stand up for what is right and defend God's teachings and commandments.
2. **Athlete:** An athlete does not receive his victor's crown unless he competes according to the rules. To be "crowned" as a Christian, we have to "compete" according to God's rules. That is, we must live our life in obedience to God. Our life was created by God, and unless we abide by God's commandments, we will be "disqualified" in the end. Sometimes, we feel that it is unfair that our friends seem to go unpunished for breaking the rules. But as His children, God holds us to a higher standard. When He chastises us, we know that He loves us.
3. **Farmer:** We must be hardworking like the farmer, who must be first to receive his share of crops. But if a farmer does not work, then there will be no crops to receive. The Bible teaches us to work out our salvation with fear and trembling (Phil 2:12). Although Jesus Christ has given us the chance of eternal life by dying on the cross for us, it is still up to us to work out our salvation. It is important to be hardworking, not spiritless, when working for God.

We will surely become admirable Christians if we can keep Paul's three metaphors in our hearts: defend like a soldier, be obedient like an athlete, and be hardworking like a farmer. All of these are ingredients for an admirable Christian, worthy of God's love and salvation.

### D. Love with Self-Control

Paul's letter to Titus encouraged the members in Crete to exercise self-control. In Titus 1:8–9, Paul said an elder must be “a lover of what is good, sober-minded, just, holy, [and] **self-controlled**, holding fast to the faithful word as he has been taught.” Self-control is one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit (Gal 5:22–23) and is difficult to exercise at any age. Self-control is meant to sway our hearts away from our sinful nature and towards pleasing God (Rom 8:5–8).

In today's world, many who preach about love speak of accepting all people despite their sins. In other words, the meaning of “love” as defined by the world is that we must accept sinners who continue to sin, even though they proclaim that they have embraced Christ. Therefore, we see that sinners no longer feel the need to exercise self-control to get rid of their sinful desires because of the “love” they are shown. However, the Bible tells us that those who believe in Jesus need to truly repent of their sins and change their ways to become a new man (Eph 4:20–24).

In 1 Corinthians 13, we are told that true love “does not rejoice in iniquity.” Self-control is a rare trait today because people like to follow their desires. It is clear that Satan uses love as a tool to attack Christians. People around the world have forsaken the truth and the word of God in order to please men, all in the name of love. The people in the world today are like those in the times of Judges who did as they wished. Therefore, we should not confuse love with the permission to continue in sin. A Christian who truly loves Christ has the self-control to restrain himself from sin, as he would rather please God than man.

### *Check for Understanding*

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- 1. In what ways was Titus a good worker for the Lord?** He had a heart of earnest care and was diligent. Paul also showed complete confidence in his integrity and faithfulness.
- 2. How did Paul encourage Timothy to be a good worker for God despite his youth?** He encouraged Timothy to set a good example to the believers in word, conduct, love, spirit, faith, and purity.
- 3. What three analogies did Paul use to describe an admirable Christian? What were the attributes that we should emulate?** A soldier defends God's truth and commandments, an athlete is disciplined and obedient, and a farmer is hardworking.
- 4. Why is it important for us to have self-control?** Self-control will sway our hearts away from our sinful nature and towards pleasing God.

### *Life Application*

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#### **1. Aspire to Be a Faithful Worker**

As youths, we should not be afraid to take on more responsibilities in church. It is not wrong to aspire to be a great worker for the church. Of course, it is always wise to examine our hearts to ensure that we are driven to lead the church because we want to serve God, not because of our pride. Here is a testimony of how a young boy in church had a goal and achieved it.

*A 13-year-old brother loved spending time with children and baby-sitting the kids in church. Naturally, he desired to become an RE teacher when he grew older. However, he felt saddened that he could not serve as a teacher at his young age; he also did not have the Holy Spirit—his greatest obstacle. He started praying earnestly, and two years later at a church event, he received the precious Holy Spirit. Today, this brother is happily teaching RE students and is indeed a spirit-filled worker of the Lord.*

From this testimony, we see how a boy aspired to take up a role in church and worked towards it. He knew what was required for him to do the job, and he pursued it. We often see youths pursuing their dreams in the secular world, where they study intensely to become a doctor or lawyer. But we do not often see youths equipping themselves with knowledge to serve God or aspiring to take up a leading role in church. If there is a need in church such as, for example, Mandarin or Spanish translators, we can take language lessons to improve ourselves, and God will help us if our goal is to serve Him in church. Be aware of the needs of the church and ask yourself if you can be the one to offer your skills and talent to the church.

## **2. Godly, Christian Living**

Many in the world today claim to be Christians, but how many are truly godly Christians? To be godly Christians, we must imitate Jesus Christ in our lives. In everything that we do, we must ask ourselves, *Would Jesus approve? Would Jesus react the way I did?* In 1 Corinthians 11:1, Paul tells us to follow his example, just as he followed Christ's. A godly Christian endeavors to do well in all aspects of his life, not just in church. But in order to be a godly Christian, we must manifest the fruit of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

Self-control is a fruit of the Holy Spirit. Sometimes, we may lose our patience and snap at another person. However, if we practice daily spiritual cultivation, then the Holy Spirit will help us exercise self-control. Daily spiritual cultivation calls for prayer and reading the Bible so that we can store the word of God in our hearts. It is only through the help of the Holy Spirit that we can live a godly, Christian life.

## **3. Discern Between Truth and Love**

In our world today, the media often advocates extending love to everyone, including homosexuals. It portrays those who are against freedom of marriage as conservative and narrow-minded, and in many western countries, same-sex marriage has been legalized. It is all too easy for us to be taken in by the name of love, extending acceptance and granting equality to everyone. However, we must discern between love and the truth. When showing love, the truth of God should never be compromised; the Bible clearly tells us in 1 Corinthians 6:9 that homosexuals will not inherit the kingdom of God.

We live in a corrupt generation. Therefore, we should remain steadfast in the truth and stay firm in our beliefs. True love means adhering to the words of God and fearing God. True love does not mean doing as we wish and giving in to lustful desires. True love means having the self-control to rein in our fleshly desires and having the strength to do what is right and just.

### **Memory Verse**

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"Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity." (1 Timothy 4:12)

### **Context**

Paul was exhorting Timothy to be courageous in taking up the leadership of the church despite his young age.

### **Meaning**

1. "Youth" means young age.
2. To despise means to regard someone with contempt. In this verse, Paul is telling Timothy that he should not allow the members of the church to look down on him because of his age.

3. In order to win the favor, trust, and respect of the members, Timothy should be an example to them in word, conduct, love, spirit, faith, and purity. Paul meant that Timothy should strive to emulate Christ in his daily life.

### *Conclusion*

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We should aspire to be great workers for God even at our young age. To do so, we need to be examples to others by living godly, Christian lives worthy of praise and emulation. How? By emulating our Lord Jesus Christ, who is perfect in all ways, and practicing daily spiritual cultivation. Only then will we be able to clothe ourselves with the self-control and wisdom that makes us able to discern right and wrong in the complicated world that we live in today.

Do you pray and read the Bible daily? Do you examine your heart, ensuring that there is no malice and evil in all that you do? Do you aspire to be a servant or worker in the church? How have you prepared yourself along the way?

## Lesson 11 Homework Assignment Answer Key

1. Paul instructed Timothy to set an example in speech, conduct, love, spirit, faith, and purity. Pick two. How can you manifest Christ in these areas in your life?  
*Personal answers.*
2. Name three important traits of Titus. Why was he such a good worker for the Lord?
  - *Paul said Titus had a heart of “earnest care” for the members (2 Cor 8:16).*
  - *Paul also described Titus as “diligent,” as he went to the members of his own accord (2 Cor 8:17), and also went to work with the church at Corinth at Paul’s request, to ease tensions and to collect money for the poor (2 Cor 7:6, 13–14; 8:6, 16, 23).*
  - *Paul had absolute confidence in Titus’ integrity and faithfulness (2 Cor 12:17–18).*
3. Why do you think Timothy grew up to be such a good worker for God?  
*Timothy had a good religious upbringing by his mother Eunice and grandmother Lois. Religious education is crucial in molding a child to be a godly youth.*
4. What are the three analogies that Paul used to describe an admirable Christian?  
*A soldier defends God’s truth and commandments, an athlete is disciplined and obedient, and a farmer is hardworking.*
5. How does love defined by the Bible differ from love defined by the world?  
*The world says that to show love is to accept sinners, even if they do not strive to change themselves, and that it is okay to be guided by your desires. The Bible tells us that love does not rejoice in iniquity, but one who has true love for Jesus will instead exert self-control to restrain himself from sin and become a new man in God.*
6. A description of love can be found in 1 Corinthians 13:4–8. Pick one characteristic that you think you can improve upon and explain how you plan on improving.  
*Personal answers.*