

1 Timothy

Preface To The First Epistle Of Saint Paul To Timothy (15)

This Epistle Paul writes to give a model to all bishops of what they are to teach and how they are to rule the Church in every station, so that it may not be necessary for them to rule Christians according to their own human opinions.

In chapter 1, he commands that a bishop keep true faith and love and resist the false preachers of the law who, beside Christ and the Gospel, would also insist on the works of the law; and he includes, in a brief summary, the whole Christian doctrine concerning the purpose of the law and the nature of the Gospel; and he sets himself up as an example to all sinners and troubled consciences.

In chapter 2, he commands to pray for men of all stations, and orders that women are not to preach or wear costly adornment, but be obedient to their husbands.

In chapter 3, he describes the kind of persons that bishops, or priests, and their wives ought to be, also the deacons and their wives, and praises those who desire to be bishops of this kind.

In chapter 4, he prophesies of the class of false bishops and clergy, opposed to those spoken of above, who will not be persons of that kind, but will forbid marriage and foods and, with their doctrines of men, will aim at the very opposite of the things he has described.

In chapter 5, he gives commands concerning the conduct of widows and young women, and tells what widows are to be supported from the common funds; also how godly and blameworthy bishops, or priests, are to be held in honor or punished.

In chapter 6, he exhorts the bishops to cleave to the pure Gospel, to concern themselves with it in their preaching and their living, and to avoid unprofitable and curious questions, which are put forward only in search for worldly reputation and riches.