

PEOPLE

Timothy

The name Timothy means “honoring God.” He was a native of Lystra in Lycaonia. Timothy was the son of a mixed marriage (a Jewish mother and Greek father). His mother Eunice and his grandmother Lois were very highly respected for their piety and faith. (2 Timothy 1:5) From early childhood Eunice and Lois taught him the OT Scriptures. Timothy may have been subject to ill health or “frequent illnesses” and Paul encouraged him to “use a little wine because of his stomach.” (1 Timothy 5:23)

Timothy may have been young and inclined to be timid but that did not stop him from being a good example. (1 Timothy 4:12) His speech, love, purity, faith and life were an excellent model for others to follow. Timothy combined special gifts (2 Timothy 1:6) with dedicated faithfulness (1 Corinthians 4:17). This led “brothers at his native Lystra and neighboring Iconium speak well of him.” (Acts 16:2)

Timothy had as a close relationship with Paul and Paul was his mentor. Paul chose Timothy, a disciple with a sincere faith, to become one of his traveling companions and co-workers. Paul circumcised Timothy not because this was necessary for salvation, but it would help in evangelizing the Jews who lived in the area.” (Acts 16:3) Paul loved Timothy dearly as a son in the faith (2 Timothy 1:2) Paul wanted Timothy above all others to be with him at the time when he faced martyrdom. (2 Timothy 4:9, 21)

Timothy was with Paul during much of the second and third missionary journeys. Listed below are some of the ministry activities that Timothy had with and to Paul during the two missionary journeys:

- Timothy was among those who accompanied Paul to deliver the collection gathered for the saints at Jerusalem (Acts 20:4, 5).
- For a time Timothy was with Paul in Rome during his first imprisonment (Philemon 1).
- Frequently Paul sent Timothy as his representative on important missions to congregations:
 - To Thessalonica (1 Thessalonians 3:2),
 - To Macedonia (Acts 19:22),
 - To Corinth (1 Corinthians 4:17).
- He placed him in charge of the congregation at Ephesus (1 Timothy 1:3).

Nothing certain can be said about Timothy's later life. According to Hebrews 12:23, he may have suffered imprisonment from which he was released. Tradition has Timothy continuing as the bishop of Ephesus until martyrdom under Nerva in A.D. 97.

Sources:

- People's Bible Commentary
- Wikipedia