

HOW OLD WAS TIMOTHY?

10/6/22

*How old was Timothy when this scripture was written? **1TIM 4:12 Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.** It is falsely assumed that Timothy was in his late teens or in his early twenties when these verses were written, but a quick check of bible chronology and the established dates of the writings of the following letters, give us a far better grasp of Timothies age through the scriptures.*

Timothy... Personal Chronology. The following is a simple chronology of the years (AD) and age of Timothy, every time he is mentioned in the New Testament (all dates are approximate only and can be checked easily by simple Google searches relating to bible chronology).

1TIM 4:12 Let no man despise thy youth... *The remainder of the chapter is personal. Timothy was much younger than Paul, much younger than most of the pastors and leaders, but he must have been at least thirty five years old when this verse was written. He was converted about A.D. 46 and was then a young man: quite young, according to the ideas of that age, to be an officer in the church. In A.D. 51, Paul had taken him away from home.*

50AD (20 years old). ACT 16:1 Then came he to Derbe and Lystra: and, behold, a certain disciple was there, named **Timotheus**, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father was a Greek: **2** Which was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium. **3** Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and took and circumcised him because of the Jews which were in those quarters: for they knew all that his father was a Greek. *If we suppose that he was twenty at this time, then he would have been thirty two to thirty five years old when Paul made the 'Youth' remark, if we consider the calendar variations.*

51AD (21yo) ACT 17:14 And then immediately the brethren sent away Paul to go as it were to the sea: but Silas and **Timotheus** abode there still. **15** And they that conducted Paul brought him unto Athens: and receiving a commandment unto Silas and **Timotheus** for to come to him with all speed, they departed.

51AD (21yo) ACT 18:5 And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews *that Jesus was Christ.*

Early 51AD (21yo) 1THE 1:1 Paul, and Silvanus, and **Timotheus**, unto the church of the Thessalonians *which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

1THE 3:2 And sent **Timotheus**, our brother, and minister of God, and our fellowlabourer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith: & **6** But now when **Timotheus** came from you unto us, and brought us good tidings of your faith and charity, and that ye have good remembrance of us always, desiring greatly to see us, as we also *to see you:*

51AD (21yo) 2THE 1:1 Paul, and Silvanus, and **Timotheus**, unto the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:

53AD (23yo) ACT 19:22 So he sent into Macedonia two of them that ministered unto him, **Timotheus** and Erastus; but he himself stayed in Asia for a season.

55/56AD (25/6yo) ACT 20:4 And there accompanied him into Asia Sopater of Berea; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and **Timotheus**; and of Asia, Tychicus and Trophimus.

56AD (26yo) 1COR 4:17 For this cause have I sent unto you **Timotheus**, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church. **1COR 16:10** Now if **Timotheus** come, see that he may be with you without fear: for he worketh the work of the Lord, as I also *do.* & **24** My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen. <<*The first epistle to the Corinthians was written from Philippi by Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus and Timotheus.*>>

56/57AD (26yo) 2COR 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and **Timothy our** brother, unto the church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints which are in all Achaia:

& **19** For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, *even by me and Silvanus and Timotheus*, was not yea and nay, but in him was yea.

56/57AD (26/7yo) ROM 16:21 **Timotheus** my workfellow, and Lucius, and Jason, and Sosipater, my kinsmen, salute you.

61AD (31yo) COL 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and **Timotheus** *our* brother,

61AD (31yo) PHL 1:1 Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ, and **Timothy** *our* brother, unto Philemon our dearly beloved, and fellowlabourer,

62AD (32yo) PHI 1:1 Paul and **Timotheus**, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons:

PHI 2:19 But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send **Timotheus** shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state.

62AD (32yo) 1TIM 1:2 Unto **Timothy**, *my* own son in the faith: Grace, mercy, *and* peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord. & **18** This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare;

****1TIM 4:12** Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. *Bible chronology very clearly places Timothies age at the earliest, at 32 when this letter was written.*

1TIM 6:20 O **Timothy**, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane *and* vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called: **21** Which some professing have erred concerning the faith. Grace *be* with thee. Amen. <<*The first to Timothy was written from Laodicea, which is the chiefest city of Phrygia Pacatiana.*>>

60s (30s) HEB 13:23 Know ye that *our* brother **Timothy** is set at liberty; with whom, if he come shortly, I will see you. & **25** Grace *be* with you all. Amen. <<*Written to the Hebrews from Italy, by Timothy.*>>

67AD (37yo) 2TIM 1:2 To **Timothy**, *my* dearly beloved son: Grace, mercy, *and* peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

2TIM 4:22 The Lord Jesus Christ *be* with thy spirit. Grace *be* with you. Amen. <<*The second epistle unto Timotheus, ordained the first bishop of the church of the Ephesians, was written from Rome, when Paul was brought before Nero the second time.*>>

Timothy was ministering as Paul's assistant from his early twenties, so he is an excellent reference to motivate the younger amongst us to take leadership roles in the fellowship.

We need to be careful not to quote the scripture relating to Timothies youth (1Tim 4:12) as proof that he was used at a young age... that would be wrong. Rather the scriptural timeline establishes his youthful ministry and lifelong servitude to God.

Why is the word 'youth' mentioned in Timothy if he is in his early thirties? The answer is reasonably simple if put in context with scriptural precedent. Under Jewish law, a man could not become a priest until he reached the age of thirty (this is why Jesus waited till he was 30 before he began his ministry). This would be the common mindset of all those who came out from under the law, or who observed the new Christian church from the outside. Thus anyone in their thirties would still be considered young or youthful in their role of pastor or leader at this time.