

# Timothy & Titus

Stories of Fear and Courage



**David Murray**

A StoryChanger Devotional

“We are created for stories. We read stories, tell stories, watch stories, and live in stories. Yet we instinctively know and long for our stories to fit into something bigger, more meaningful, and more comprehensive. As we read Scripture, we can see how that longing might be fulfilled, but we don’t always know how to connect our own stories to the great story of redemption that culminates with Christ. This is why I’m so thankful for David Murray’s StoryChanger series. These short devotionals are wonderful guides for connecting our stories with God’s larger story and helping us call others into God’s great story. I gladly recommend their use in personal, family, and group prayer and devotional settings.”

**Chris Bruno**, Global Partner for Hawaii and the Pacific Islands, Training Leaders International; author, *The Whole Story of the Bible in 16 Verses*

“David Murray’s new StoryChanger Devotional series is exactly what Christians are craving right now. These daily devotionals are accessible both in their content and brevity. In just a few minutes each day, readers will find comfort in the truth of the gospel and challenges in following the way of Jesus. Just because the devotionals are short doesn’t mean that they won’t pack a life-changing punch. This series will introduce you to the Bible in the ways that you want and provoke you in the ways that you need.”

**Adam Griffin**, coauthor, *Family Discipleship*; Host, *The Family Discipleship Podcast*; Pastor, Eastside Community Church, Dallas, Texas

“What I appreciate most about the StoryChanger Devotional series is how accessible it is to a wide range of ages. Whether you read these books alone or with others, you’ll find them to be practical, easy to follow, and helpful for applying the truths of Scripture to your everyday life. My family enjoys using the StoryChanger Devotionals for our Bible reading and discussion time. The readings prompt encouraging discussions about Scripture around our dinner table each night.”

**Glenna Marshall**, author, *The Promise Is His Presence* and *Everyday Faithfulness*

“We live in a world that takes pride in technological progress. And yet here we are, still a people shaped by stories—our own, those presented to us by the world, and those handed down to us by history. In the StoryChanger Devotional series David Murray has crafted brief, engaging, and accessible devotions based on the biblical text. Each volume will help us understand God’s story, make sense of the world around us and, along the way, discover the transformation we need in our personal story. Slow down a while, open your Bible, and let these books prompt your ponderings about God’s story and yours.”

**Peter Mead**, Pastor, Trinity Chippenham, United Kingdom;  
Director, Cor Deo; blogger, BiblicalPreaching.net

“If you are looking for biblically based devotional books that are surprisingly accessible to any level of Christian maturity, you have picked the right series. The StoryChanger Devotional series is uniquely useful because David Murray wrote it. He has a special writing gift that demonstrates his skill as an expositor and his shepherding intuition as a pastor. That gift is wonderfully present in every volume, and I commend this whole series to pastors to buy in bulk and distribute to your entire congregation to study together.”

**Brian Croft**, Executive Director, Practical Shepherding

## **Timothy and Titus**

## **The StoryChanger Devotional Series**

By David Murray

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*Timothy and Titus: Stories of Fear and Courage*



# Timothy and Titus

Stories of Fear and Courage

David Murray

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*To Jean Gomes.*  
*My copastor, brother, and friend.*





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# Introduction to the StoryChanger Devotionals

Do you want to know the Bible's Story better, but don't know how? Do you want to change your story, but don't know how? Do you want to share the Bible's Story and the way it has changed your story, but don't know how? The StoryChanger Devotional series is the answer to this triple *how*.

*How can I know the Bible better?* At different points in my Christian life, I've tried to use various helps to go deeper in personal Bible study, but I found commentaries were too long and technical, whereas study Bibles were too brief and not practical.

*How can I change my life for the better?* I knew the Bible's Story was meant to change my story but couldn't figure out how to connect God's Story with my story in a transformative way. I was stuck, static, and frustrated at my lack of change, growth, and progress.

*How can I share God's Story better?* I've often been embarrassed by how slow and ineffective I am at sharing God's Story one-on-one. I know God's Story relates to other people's stories and that God's Story can change others' stories for the better, but I'm reluctant to seek out opportunities and hesitant when they arise.

So how about a series of books that teach us the Bible's Story in a way that helps to change our story and equips us to tell the Story to others. Or, to put it another way, how about books that teach us God's Story in a way that changes ours and others' stories?

After writing *The StoryChanger: How God Rewrites Our Story by Inviting Us into His* as an introduction to Jesus as the transformer of our stories, I thought, "Okay, what now? That's the theory, what about the practice? That's the introduction, but what about the next chapters? Jesus is the StoryChanger, but how can his Story change my story in practical ways on a daily basis? And how do I share his life-changing Story with others?"

I looked for daily devotionals that would take me through books of the Bible in a way that explained God's Story, changed my story, and equipped me to tell God's Story to others in a life-changing way. When I couldn't find any resources that had all three elements, I thought, "I'll write some devotionals for myself to help me know God's Story, change my story, and tell the story to others."

A few weeks later COVID hit, and I decided to start sharing these devotionals with the congregation I was serving at the time. I wanted to keep them connected with God and one another through that painful period of prolonged isolation from church and from one another.

I found that, like myself, people seemed to be hungry for daily devotionals that were more than emotional. They enjoyed daily devotionals that were educational, transformational, and missional. We worked our way verse-by-verse through books of the Bible with a focus on brevity, simplicity, clarity, practicality, and shareability. The StoryChanger started changing our stories with his Story, turning us into storytellers and therefore storychangers too.

Although these devotionals will take only about five minutes a day, I'm not promising you quick fixes. No, the StoryChanger usually changes our stories little by little. But over months and years of exposure to the StoryChanger's Story, he rewrites our story, and, through us, rewrites others' stories too.

To encourage you, I invite you to join the StoryChangers community at [www.thestorychanger.life](http://www.thestorychanger.life). There you can sign up for the

weekly StoryChangers newsletter and subscribe to the StoryChangers podcast. Let's build a community of storychangers, committed Christians who dedicate themselves to knowing God's Story better, being changed by God's Story for the better, and sharing God's Story better. We'll meet the StoryChanger, have our stories changed, and become storychangers. I look forward to meeting you there and together changing stories with God's Story.<sup>1</sup>

1 Some of this content originally appeared on *The Living the Bible podcast*, which has since been replaced by *The StoryChanger podcast*, <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/the-storychanger/id1581826891>.





# Introduction to *Timothy and Titus:* *Stories of Fear* *and Courage*

The pastoral letters reveal how the apostle Paul used God's Story to strengthen and encourage two overwhelmed and fearful young pastors, Titus and Timothy. These young men were facing the daunting challenge of establishing and ordering new churches full of new Christians in pagan cultures.

Although the pastoral letters are addressed primarily to leaders in the church, they contain much spiritual instruction about how to relate to our spiritual leaders, how to support them, and how to benefit from them. Also, as always, Paul uses every opportunity to point us to Christ and the gospel, whatever our roles in the church or the culture might be.

May these stories of fear and courage change our stories and make us storytellers so that we become storychangers too.



# 1 TIMOTHY

**If we don't fight  
against anything,  
we won't have  
anything left  
to fight for.**



Hear  
God's Story

Change  
Your Story

Tell  
the Story

Change  
Others' Stories

# 1

## Fighting for Love

### 1 TIMOTHY 1:1–5

Some Christians are called to be courageous and others to be compassionate, right?

Wrong. Although many think that being courageous means you cannot be compassionate (and vice versa), the apostle Paul unites these two virtues in 1 Timothy 1:1–5 when he calls Timothy and us to unite them in our lives. *How do we unite courage and compassion?*

Timothy had a problem with timidity, prompting Paul to write this letter to encourage him—to put courage in him—and to also advance the cause of love. Let’s use this letter to Timothy to grow in both compassion and courage.

### We Must Fight Falsehood 1:1–4

Paul briefly greets Timothy (1:1–2), before launching into a vigorous call to arms: “As I urged you when I was going to Macedonia, remain at Ephesus so that you may charge certain persons not to teach any different doctrine, nor to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies, which promote speculations” (1:3–4).

Paul harnesses a military word—*charge*—to convey the idea of forceful authority. He demands Timothy fight on two fronts. He is to oppose “any different doctrine” (1:3), meaning novel teaching of any kind, and divisive ideas, which he calls “myths and endless genealogies, which promote speculations” (1:4).

*If we don’t fight against anything,  
we won’t have anything left to fight for.*

*“If we are to fight against human disorder, what do we fight for?”  
We fight for God’s order.*

## **We Must Fight for God’s Order 1:4**

In contrast to the novel teaching and divisive speculations of the false teachers, Timothy is to devote himself to “the stewardship from God that is by faith” (1:4). *Stewardship* means “order,” and here it’s an order that comes “from God,” in contrast to the chaos that came from false teachers. Such divine order “is by faith,” meaning it results from believing God’s truth.

*Fighting usually produces chaos,  
but this fighting produces order.*

*“That sounds like a lot of fighting.  
Isn’t Christianity all about love?”  
Yes, it’s love we’re fighting for.*

## **We Must Fight for Love 1:5**

Paul commands Timothy to fight *against* chaotic falsehood and *for* God’s order, but he insists that “the aim of our charge is love” (1:5). Despite the common tendency to separate courage from compassion, biblical courage is not against compassion but actually assists it. The two are not in contrast but complement each other.

So, we have the charge and we have the end goal. What’s the plan? How do we get from the charge to the goal, from fighting to love? Paul lays out a three-step plan. This love “issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith” (1:5). The purer our hearts, the clearer our consciences, and the more genuine our faith, the faster and closer we get to the great goal of love and compassion.

*Fight because you love,  
and you’ll love because you fought.*

## Changing Our Story with God's Story

At various points in my life, I've lacked courage. Other times I've lacked compassion. Many times I've been courageous when compassion was more appropriate, and compassionate when courage was more needed. Where then do we turn when we fail, fail, and fail again?

We turn to Christ who is the greatest fighter and the greatest lover. He fights because he loves and loves because he fights. He fights against falsehood, he fights for God's order, and he fights for love. He has a perfectly pure heart, a perfectly good conscience, and a perfectly sincere faith. He therefore has perfect love. We stand in awe at his impeccable compassion, his impeccable courage, and his impeccable combination of them. His perfect combination of courage and compassion covers our imperfect courage, our imperfect compassion, and our imperfect combination of them.

**Summary:** How can we unite courage and compassion? *Fight against falsehood and for God's order to maximize Christ-like love.*

**Question:** In what area of life is God calling you to show courageous compassion?

**Prayer:** Compassionate and courageous Savior, help me to follow your three-step plan to compassionate courage.