

# The Pastoral Epistles

1 & 2 Timothy and Titus

## Pastoral Epistles Overview

The Pastoral Epistles, 1&2 Timothy and Titus, are so named because they are letters from Paul to two different pastors. Timothy was pastoring at the older, established church in Ephesus, and Titus was pastoring the younger, church on the Isle of Crete.

All three letters deal with very little theological doctrine, most likely because Paul trusted these men (2 Tim. 2:2) to stay true to the word. Instead the letters focus on practical life within the church with emphases on preserving true doctrine, roles of men, women, and leaders, pastoral duties, and conduct toward outsiders.

Knowing and loving these letters is essential for anyone that desires to serve and use their gifts in the local church body.

## 1 Timothy

**Theme:** Leadership

- ❖ **Author & Date:** Paul from Macedonia ca. 62-64 A.D. after his release from his first Roman imprisonment. (After end of Acts)
- ❖ **Author's reason for writing:** Paul writes Timothy giving him very practical instruction for leading and pastoring the church in Ephesus. The letter contains more about practical church life than lofty theological doctrine.
- ❖ **Literary Style:** Epistle (Letter)
- ❖ **Background and Setting:** Timothy was ~20 when he first met Paul and became a Christian. Timothy's father may have been gone and Paul became a spiritual father to him (1:2). He became a close companion with Paul throughout the rest of Paul's life (Acts 16-20). After

Acts ends (about 15 years after first meeting Paul), Timothy is serving as pastor of the Ephesian Church.

- ❖ **Key People:** Paul, Timothy
- ❖ **Historical/Cultural Context:** The church at Ephesus was well established church, but by no means perfect. Many problems including false doctrine (1:3-7), disorderly worship (2:1-15), the need for good leaders (3:1-14), and materialism (6:6-19) had to be addressed.
- ❖ **Summary:** Paul instructs Timothy on dealing with false doctrine, roles in the church, false teachers, pastoral responsibilities, and the character of the man of God.
- ❖ **Outline:** #1 Directions concerning false Doctrine  
#2 Directions concerning Worship  
duties of men/women in worship  
#3 Directions concerning Leadership  
Elders and Deacons  
#4 Directions concerning Dangers-Doctrine  
#5 Directions concerning different Groups  
The Young, Widows and Elders  
#6 Directions concerning pastoral Duties
- ❖ **Tough Questions:** If God desires everyone to be saved (2:4-6), why isn't everyone saved?

## 2 Timothy

**Theme:** Combat

- ❖ **Author & Date:** Paul's last letter. He writes it shortly before his death in 67 A.D.
- ❖ **Author's reason for writing:** Paul writes in the face of his impending martyrdom to Timothy to encourage him to minister faithfully, build leaders, maintain sound doctrine, and preach the word.
- ❖ **Literary Style:** Epistle (Letter)
- ❖ **Background and Setting:** Paul's first imprisonment was before Nero's persecution began, and he had hopes of being released (Phil. 1-2). This time in prison however, he sees it ending in death (4:6-8). In this second letter to Timothy he is passing the torch of ministry.
- ❖ **Key People:** Paul, Timothy, Luke, Mark

- ❖ **Historical/Cultural Context:** Many of Paul's exhortations to Timothy in this letter (1:6-8, 1:13-14, 2:11, 2:2, 4:2) make it seem like Timothy may have been weakening under pressure from members of his church or persecution from the world. However, these strong commands and admonitions may also be Paul's urgent, final words to his beloved disciple.
- ❖ **Outline:** 1. Greeting (1:1-5)  
2. Perseverance of a man of God (1:6-18)  
3. Patterns of a man of God (2:1-26)  
4. Perils of a man of God (3:1-17)  
5. Preaching of a man of God (4:1-5)  
6. Conclusion (4:6-22)

## Titus

**Theme:** Conduct (Evangelism)

- ❖ **Author & Date:** Paul ca. 62-64 A.D. after his release from his first Roman imprisonment. (After end of Acts—about the same time as 1 Tim. is written)
- ❖ **Author's reason for writing:** Paul writes (much like he writes to Timothy) to encourage this young pastor who he left in charge of the church in Crete. The letter is both personal encouragement and instructions for church life. There is no corrective doctrine; rather the doctrine written gives very practical application.
- ❖ **Literary Style:** Epistle (Letter)
- ❖ **Background and Setting:** The church at Crete was less established than the Ephesian church where Timothy pastored, but it faced many of the same problems from false teachers and doctrine to confusion on men/women roles and leadership in the church.
- ❖ **Key People:** Paul, Titus
- ❖ **Historical/Cultural Context:** Paul writes this letter around the same time he writes his first letter to Timothy. He has been released from his first Roman imprisonment (after the conclusion of Acts). Paul has entrusted the leadership of the church to Titus and he wants to make sure that a legacy of godly leadership continues in Crete.

- ❖ **Summary:** Paul's encouragement and instruction in the book is for the purpose of making the gospel known (2:11-14) throughout Crete. He describes how godly leaders, men, women, and slaves must live upright, holy lives because of the gospel and for the purpose of making the gospel known.
- ❖ **Outline:** 1 Evangelism through Leadership (1)  
2 Evangelism by the Congregation (2)  
3 Lifestyle evangelism (3)
- ❖ **Tough Questions:** Does the elder qualification in 1:6 mean that elder's children must be believers?

## Gospel Connection

- ❖ Paul's first letter to Timothy shows God's perfect patience in the gospel; that God would stay his judgment on sinners, like Paul, to give hope to those who would later believe (1:15-17). This letter also gives us a window into the heart of God in the gospel, who desires that all men be saved and come to knowledge of the truth (2:1-6).
- ❖ Paul's second letter to Timothy shows the hope of the gospel throughout generations. The gospel is Paul's hope as he sits in prison (2 Tim 2:8-9), the gospel is Timothy's hope for the suffering he will face (1:8-9), and the gospel will be entrusted to countless generations as it is entrusted to faithful men (2 Tim. 2:2).
- ❖ In the book of Titus, the gospel is clearly presented as the hope of our right standing before God. It is not because of works, but by grace we are saved and are able to live holy, upright lives. ***Tit 3:3-8 For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another. But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs***

*according to the hope of eternal life. The saying is trustworthy, and I want you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works. These things are excellent and profitable for people.*

## Life Passages

### ❖ 1 Timothy:

- 1 Tim. 1:15 Chief of Sinners
  - Paul's self assessment. Why is it important to see yourself as a sinner? Why is it dangerous to have high "self-esteem"? (see Mk 2:17)
- 1 Tim. 2:4 God desires all men to be saved
  - God's will is described two different ways in the Bible. God's **sovereign will** describes his control of all things (Eph. 1:11), and God's **moral will** describes his heart for us to follow him in holiness (1 Thess. 4:3). Which will does this verse fit under? How do we know?
- 1 Tim. 2:12-13 Women in Church
  - What do these verses have to say about women pastors? What roles are women encouraged to take in the church?
- 1 Tim. 3:1-7 Qualifications of an overseer
  - How are the qualifications for an overseer/elder different than the call for holy living for all Christians? Why are these qualifications vital for leaders in the Church? Why does it matter how elders manage their household (verse 4)?
- 1 Tim. 3:8 Deacons
  - How are the qualifications for deacons different? What is the role of deacons in the church? (The seven men in Acts 6:3 are traditionally thought of as the first deacons)
- 1 Tim. 3:11 Women Deacons?
  - It is debated whether or not the word "women" in verse 11 refers to female deacons or deacon's wives. Which makes more sense given the

context? Besides deaconesses, what other roles should women have in the church?

- 1 Tim. 6:6-10 Contentment and Money
  - Godliness is simply described as living moment by moment as if the God of the Bible really exists. How does this bring contentment?
  - What things is Paul content with having? (Verse 8)
  - What dangers accompany riches? How can we flee the love of money? (Verses 11-12)
  - What should we do if we are rich (and yes, we are) verses 17-19
- ❖ 2 Timothy:
  - 2 Tim. 1:7 God did not give us a spirit of fear
    - If fear in ministry does not come from God where does it come from? What are some ways in which you are fearful in ministry? How can we overcome this fear?
  - 2 Tim. 2:2 Spiritual Multiplication
    - Why is this a good pattern and an effective model for spreading the gospel?
    - Where are you in this process? Are you entrusting what you have heard to others that can teach others? How can you become a more effective discipler?
  - 2 Tim. 2:15 Rightly handling the Word
    - How is your handle on the Word? What are some ways we can grow in this area?
  - 2 Tim. 2:22 Flee youthful lusts, and pursue...
    - What are some practical ways of fleeing lusts?
    - Why is it important to "pursue" and not simply "flee"?
  - 2 Tim. 3:15 Parents role in salvation of kids (1:5 also)
    - What part to parents play in the salvation of their kids? How are you preparing for or participating in this role?
  - 2 Tim. 3:16 Inspiration
    - How does this verse correct our often low view of Scripture?
    - How should scripture be used?
  - 2 Tim. 4:3 Ear Itching

## Theology Lab Presents:

Thru the Bible

- Paul says that people will find teachers who suit their sin. How do you see this happening today? Why is it important that God's word makes us uncomfortable at times?
- 2 Tim. 4:6 Death is a departure
  - How does Paul see death? How should we?
- ❖ **Titus:**
  - Titus 1:5 Elders make a church
    - Why doesn't this bible study count as church? Why are elders vital to a church?
  - Titus 1:6-9 Qualifications for elders
    - How are these qualifications similar/different than 1 Tim. 3?
  - Titus 1:15-16 Profess to know
    - What is the difference between someone who professes to be a believer and one who is one?
  - Titus 2:2-3 Older Men and Older Women
    - What are the roles of older men and older women?
    - Why is it important for younger men and women to have older men and women in their lives?
  - Titus 2:4-5 Younger Women
    - What are the roles of a younger woman?
    - Does this verse teach that women should not work outside the home?
    - Why is submission important?
  - Titus 2:6-8 Younger Men
    - Why is Paul's first command for younger men that they be self-controlled? How can young men grow in this?
  - Titus 2:9-10 Slaves
    - Slavery in NT times was more similar to a employee-employer relationship than evil North American slavery. How can we apply these commands to our current jobs?
  - Titus 2:11-14 God's Grace
    - How has God's grace appeared?
    - If salvation has come to all, why aren't all saved?
    - What kind of life does the gospel compel?

## Theology Lab Presents:

Thru the Bible

- Titus 3:1 Attitude toward Government
  - What motivation for obeying government does Paul give in verse 3? Why should we obey our government, even when we disagree?
- Titus 3:3 What you were
  - Why is it important to remember our lives before Christ?
- Titus 3:5 Regeneration
  - Regeneration is the Holy Spirit's work of new birth through the gospel. When did regeneration occur in your life? Is it important to know a specific date?