

1st & 2nd Timothy and Titus are a group of Letters called the Pastoral Epistles (or Letters). The author is a pastor writing to pastors. However, their content is narrow, not covering a wide range of church affairs. Instead, they cover a narrow set of pressing problems of those times and speak to those problems.

Historical Situation: Christians experiencing

- Pressure from the state – persecution not widespread
- “Church against the world” environment
 - The present age is hostile
 - The world is the enemy
- Scripture tells us:
 - Christians stand in sharp contrast to the world
 - On certain points, Christians are to adjust to the world – obedience is exemplary Christian conduct Titus 2:9-10, Titus 3:1
- Problems with the customs of the times
 - Subordination of women
 - With respect to moral
- Overarching concern: Heretical teachings invading the Church
 - Oriental dualism and Hellenistic thought merge into Gnosticism – material evil / spirit good
 - Material universe (including humans) was evil – this leads to asceticism (self-denial) or liberalism

Timeframe of writing

- Last half of 1st century or first half of 2nd century

- Dependent on assumption of authorship
- Historical record of the time

Authorship

- Paul or a pseudonymous – writer using an assumed name
- Clearly Pauline in thought
- Less like Pauline writing style

Sequence of writings: 1st Tim / Titus / 2nd Tim or 2nd Tim / Titus / 1st Tim

READ 1st Timothy 1, 2nd Timothy 1, Titus 1:1-4

- 1st Timothy 1:1-2, 2nd Timothy 1:1-2, Titus 1:-4
- 1 & 2 Timothy almost identical, Titus contains the same elements
 - 1 Timothy 1:1 – Paul speaks with the authority of an apostle
 - Galatians 1:1, 1:11-12, 1:15
- 1 Timothy 1:1 - Hope: a key concept for Paul – basic to his eschatology – doctrine of last things
- 2 Timothy 1:1 – Life must be thought of as present and future
- Titus 1:1-3 – Paul's task – further the faith of God's elect and their knowledge of the truth
- 1 Timothy 1:2 – Paul mentions Timothy in 1st Corinthians 4:17 and Acts 16:1
- Paul's relationship with Timothy
 - Older to younger
 - Experienced to inexperienced

- Superior office vs devoted follower
- Respected by Paul

READ 1st Timothy 1:3-7, 2nd Timothy 1:3-12, Titus 1:1-4

- 1 Tim 1:3 – starts with an historical note
 - Connects with Paul's previous activities
 - Addresses intended readership
- 2 Timothy 1:3-7 – starts with a thanksgiving similar to other of Paul's letters, except Pastorals
- 2 Tim 1:3-7 – Insight into Paul's faith in Timothy
 - 3rd generation Christian – Lois grandmother, Eunice mother
 - Man of sincere faith
 - Maybe somewhat shy in his pastoral endeavors
 - 2 Timothy 1:6-7 - Asks Timothy to rekindle the gift that God gave him when Paul laid hands on him.
 - Encourages him to be bold
- 1 Timothy 1:4-7 - Paul gets right to the point
- The real concerns of the pastoral letters
 - Deviations from normal doctrine
 - Potential sources – Judaizing Christianity, Gnosticism, Marcionism (rejected Hebrew Bible and God of Israel)
 - Probably a mix of all three
 - Myths and endless genealogies is not precise

- Titus 1:14 – myths = Jewish Law

➤ Paul calls for:

- ! Timothy 1:5 – aim of instruction is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and sincere faith
- 1 Timothy 1:10-12 – Sound doctrine
- Titus 1:1-2 – concern for the elect and the knowledge of truth that leads to Godliness
- Timothy's task – Guard the true faith from the presence of heretical threats
- 2 Timothy 1:8 - Paul invites timothy to suffer for the Gospel
- 2 Timothy 1:9 - Holy calling – consecrated life, not our works, but his grace
- 2 Timothy 1:10 – Gospel is far more than arbitrary historical occurrence. Grace revealed through Jesus Christ, through the Gospel
- 2 Timothy 1:11-12 – The suffering of Paul is an integral part of his divine appointment as preacher, apostle, and teacher
- Titus 1:1-4 - Prompts belief among God's people – getting out the accurate word and our proper response

READ 1st Timothy 1:8-11, 2nd Timothy 1:13-14

➤ On the law

- Paul's historical problem with the Law is reflected (Romans 7:12)

- New function for the Law (1 Timothy 1:9-10) – Christians don't need it, Christians stand above it, evil men held in check by it
- 2 Timothy 1:13-14 – Timothy to follow Paul's example and guard the truth. How Christians live without the Law – power of the Holy Spirit dwelling within.

READ 1st Timothy 1:12-17, 2nd Timothy 1:15-18

- Paul, the foremost sinner (1 Timothy 1:15)
 - References his pre-Christian days (1 Timothy 13)
 - Christ's saving power fully exemplified in Paul
- Words of praise for Onesiphorus (2 Timothy 1:15-18)
 - Ministered to Paul
 - Not ashamed of Paul and his situation
 - Sought Paul out purposefully
- God alone is supreme (1 Timothy 1:17)
 - Rebuff to Gnostic and Marcionism
 - Sole sovereignty of God
 - Stresses one high God

READ 1st Timothy 1:18-20, 2nd Timothy 2:1-7

- Goals for Timothy
 - Wage good warfare – having faith and good conscience
 - Prophecies about Timothy (see Acts 13:1-4 Paul and Barnabus)

- Timothy's appointment was not arbitrary, but done in accordance with God's purpose
- 2 Timothy 2:1 – be strong in the grace that is in Jesus Christ
- 2 Timothy 2:3 – suffer as a good soldier of Jesus Christ
- 2 Timothy 2:5 – strive as athlete who competes according to the rules
- 2 Timothy 2:6 – like hard-working farmer who receives the first share of the crops
- Point: devotion that is unreserved is the point - 2 Timothy 2:2 is summary for 1:3 – 2:2

➤ In contrast

- Hymenaeus (2 Timothy 2:16-17) profane chatter leading people in to more impiety
- Alexander (2 Timothy 4:14-15) Did harm to Paul and opposed his message.

➤ Serious apostasy is evident

➤ Heroic and steadfast faith verses failure if faith and dire consequences

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READ 1st Timothy 2:1-7, 2nd Timothy 2:8-13

- 2 Timothy 2:8-10 – begins with early Christian creed – Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, descended from David
 - Elements of Paul's gospel – doctrine of Resurrection is central
 - Refutes Gnosticism directly

- Paul imprisoned for this Gospel
- The elect now applied to Christians

➤ Situation review

- Not persecuted for just being Christians
- Looked on with suspicion
- Careful not to deviate from established customs – else trouble (Romans 13:1-7, 2nd Peter 4:14-16)

➤ Answer – Prayer (1 Timothy 2:1-3)

- ! Timothy 2:4 – implies all – kings and officials are recipients of God's favor too
- 1 Timothy 2:5-6 – Christ gave life for all – even governing officials
- 1 Timothy 2:7 – reason for Paul's call (Galatians 1:20) – his concern reaches out to everyone – even governing officials

➤ KEY: good and stable government was a necessary condition for spread of Christianity

➤ 2 Timothy 2:11-13 – relationship between endurance suffering and salvation is explored