

# 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy

## Introduction to the Book

- The Pastoral Epistles
  - Distinctives
    - Among the last letters written by Paul.
    - Reflective of his concerns at the end of his ministry.
    - Addressed to two young men whom Paul had trained for ministry – Timothy and Titus – with application for everyone in the Church.
    - Personal and practical in nature.
  - Doctrine
    - Encompasses both ecclesiastical and pastoral subject matter.
    - Covers matters of the Church that Paul had not previously addressed.
    - Instruction on order and structure to help local churches become more established.
- Paul's First Letter to Timothy
  - Authorship
    - The letter itself attributes the authorship to the Apostle Paul [1:1].
    - As with many Pauline epistles, the radical German “higher” critics of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and those that followed them have questioned Paul's authorship.
    - Their attack is four-pronged – historical, stylistic, ecclesiastical and theological.
    - Historical Objections
      - Aligning the chronology of the Pastorals with the Book of Acts is problematic.
      - The problem is that the critics assume the Pastorals must fit within the time frame of the Book of Acts.
      - The Book of Acts end with Paul in prison in Rome.
      - If Paul had been executed during this period of Roman imprisonment (61-62 A.D.), Luke would almost certainly have mentioned it.
      - Instead, Paul was more than likely released from prison in 62 A.D. for lack of evidence and went free for several years.
      - Paul would eventually be recaptured, tried and executed in Rome in 67 A.D.
      - Thus, Paul did not write the Pastorals during the time period of the Book of Acts, but during the period of his freedom from 62-67 A.D. which came after the time frame of the Book of Acts.
    - Stylistic Objections
      - The vocabulary in the Pastorals differs slightly from other Pauline epistles.
      - Some of the words are used only once in the N.T. but are more common in 2<sup>nd</sup> century writings.
      - The critics assume that this means that these letters were written in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century.
      - The critics ignore some important details...
        - The words used by Paul were common during the 1<sup>st</sup> century when these letters were written.

- These letters were written to two men that Paul had trained for ministry and cover different subject matter than the other Pauline epistles, so the vocabulary would necessarily be different.
- Ecclesiastical Objections
  - In other Pauline epistles Paul did not address issues of church polity.
  - The critics cite this as casting doubt on Pauline authorship and claim that the church structure and order described in these letters did not emerge until the 2<sup>nd</sup> century.
  - Instead, it makes sense for Paul to address issues of church polity considering the timing and purpose of these letters.
  - In addition, Paul's usage of certain terms (overseer and elder) contradicts the 2<sup>nd</sup> century usage of these terms.
- Theological Objections
  - The critics claim that, in these letters, Paul is addressing issues of Gnosticism which was not fully formed until the 2<sup>nd</sup> century.
  - This argument ignores the fact that the foundational tenets of Gnosticism which Paul addressed were already present in the 1<sup>st</sup> century.
  - The critics also claim that the theological perspective of the author is unlike Paul...
    - The author simply denounces error instead of refuting it.
    - The author is concerned with orthodoxy, not developing theology.
    - Right belief is given too much prominence.
  - Such a conclusion is unwarranted...
    - Paul had developed many fundamental theological truths in his other letters.
    - In the Pastorals, Paul is concerned with the guarding of these truths.
    - He also encouraged Timothy to entrust these truths to other faithful Christians.
- Conclusion
  - Understanding Paul's perspective in writing this letter (and the other Pastorals) helps explain why it seems different than his other letters.
  - Despite all the hollow objections of the "higher" critics, the Apostle Paul is the author of this letter as attested in chapter one, verse one.
- Date of Writing
  - Paul wrote this letter in the period of his freedom in between Roman imprisonments.
  - His first imprisonment in Rome was 61-62 A.D.
  - His second imprisonment in Rome would have been around 67 A.D.
  - That puts the date of writing between 63-66 A.D.
- Direct Recipient
  - Timothy was the son of a Greek father and a Jewish mother [Acts 16:1].
    - His mother (Eunice) and grandmother (Lois) were both known for their faith [2 Tim 1:5].
    - Thanks to his mother and grandmother, Timothy was well versed in the Scriptures [2 Tim 3:15].
    - When Paul met Timothy in Lystra, he took him under his wing as a promising apprentice.
  - Timothy became one of Paul's most trustworthy fellow-workers [1 Cor 16:10; Phil 2:19-22; 1 Th 3:2].
    - Six of Paul's epistles include Timothy in the salutations [2 Cor 1:1; Phil 1:1; Col 1:1; 1 Thess 1:1; 2 Thess 1:1; Philem 1].

- Timothy had become so dear to Paul that he made an appeal in his final epistle for Timothy to come to him [2 Tim 4:9, 21].
- After visiting Ephesus with Paul, Timothy remained behind to provide leadership to the congregation.
  - Timothy was relatively young [1 Tim 4:12] and he was apparently somewhat passive, even timid.
  - Because of this, Paul often encouraged Timothy to fight the good fight of faith [1 Tim 1:18; 6:12] through action [1 Tim 1:3; 4:11; 5:7; 6:2; 2 Tim 3:14; 4:2, 5].
- Outline
  - Salutation [1:1-2]
    - Author [1:1]
    - Recipient [1:2]
  - Warning About False Teaching [1:3-20]
    - Warning Against False Teachers [1:3-11]
    - God's Grace and Mercy Toward Paul [1:12-17]
    - Paul's 1<sup>st</sup> Charge to Timothy [1:18-20]
  - Proper Conduct in the Church [2:1-3:16]
    - A Call to Prayer [2:1-8]
    - Instructions for Women [2:9-15]
    - Overseers [3:1-7]
    - Deacons [3:8-13]
    - Support of the Truth [3:14-16]
  - Guarding the Truth [4:1-16]
    - Warning of Apostasy [4:1-5]
    - Paul's 2<sup>nd</sup> Charge to Timothy [4:6-16]
  - Instructions for Various Groups [5:1-6:2]
    - Various Age Groups [5:1-2]
    - Widows [5:3-16]
    - Elders [5:17-25]
    - Slaves and Masters [6:1-2]
  - Some Final Instructions [6:3-10]
    - Regarding Godliness [6:3-6]
    - Regarding Money [6:7-10]
  - Paul's Final Charge to Timothy [6:11-21]
    - Exhortation to Godliness [6:11-16]
    - Exhortation to Faithfulness [6:20-21]