

1 TIMOTHY

First Timothy is one of four letters Paul addressed to _____[a]. Three of those—1 and 2 Timothy and Titus—belong to a group of Paul’s writings known as the “_____ [b] Epistles.” That designation is only a couple hundred years old (it became popularized around 1726). The designation “Pastoral Epistles” was embraced because so many considered Timothy and Titus to be the “pastors” of congregations they served as Paul’s representatives. The word “pastor,” of course, is the _____[c] form of the word “_____ [d],” and a “shepherd” in the New Testament was one of the designations of a man who served a congregation as one of its elders (or overseers). Even though Timothy and Titus were trusted co-workers of Paul and were his personally commissioned representatives to the church in Ephesus (Timothy) and Crete (Titus), there is no evidence that they were elders (i.e., pastors/shepherds) of those congregations. With that said, since “Pastoral Epistles” is now the commonly accepted designation for these three letters, I continue to use it for communication and convenience.

PAUL AND TIMOTHY

Paul first met Timothy when he arrived in _____[e] during the first part of his second missionary journey (around AD 50; Acts 16:1-2). When Paul arrived in Lystra, the church there couldn’t say enough good about Timothy. Timothy’s mom was _____[f] (Acts 16:1), but his dad was _____[g] (presumably he wasn’t a Christian). Because Timothy’s mom was a Jew, Jewish people would have considered him to be a Jew as well. But since he wasn’t _____[h] when Paul met him, he would have been considered an _____[i] by the Jewish community, and possibly not been allowed in the _____[j].

From his youth, Timothy had been steeped in the Old Testament Scriptures by his mom, _____[k], and his grandma _____[l] (2 Tim 1:5; 3:15). Paul found Timothy to be just the kind of pupil he was looking for. He was spiritually sensitive and deeply devoted to the things of God. He also had one foot in the _____[m] world and one in the _____[n] world. Through the years he proved himself to be intensely studious (2 Tim 3:14-15) and totally dedicated to the gospel (Phil 2:19-22). When Paul took Timothy on as part of his ministry team, he had to be _____[o] (Acts 16:3). Of course, this was done purely for _____[p] reasons and not for _____[q] ones. Even though Paul was an “apostle to the Gentiles” (Eph 3:1), his standard practice when entering a new town was to first take the gospel to the

local synagogue. To be able to enter the synagogues with his mentor, Timothy needed to be a circumcised Jew.

Timothy quickly found a special place in Paul's heart (1 Cor 4:17; Phil 2:22; 1 Tim 1:2). He appears alongside Paul in the opening greetings of several epistles (2 Cor 1:1; Phil 1:1; Col 1:1; 1 Thess 1:1; 2 Thess 1:1). He became so trusted by Paul that it seems Paul came to see Timothy as an extension of himself. Not only did he refer to Timothy as his "true _____[r] in the _____[s]" (1 Tim 1:2), but he knew he could send Timothy anywhere on special missions to solve problems that Paul himself normally would have undertaken (1 Cor 16:10-11; Phil 2:19-23; 1 Tim 1:3).

PLACE AND DATE OF WRITING

It's tough to say with certainty where Paul was when he wrote 1 Timothy. Most believe that Paul was _____[t] from his "house arrest" in Rome, and then began what some have called his "_____ [u] missionary journey." After he was released from prison, his travel itinerary is impossible to reconstruct with precision. But tidbits from his letters to Timothy and Titus give us a little bit of information with which we might be able to form a hypothetical timeline.

Perhaps Paul first went to the island of Crete when he was released from prison in late AD 62 or early AD 63. After several weeks there, he left Titus there (Titus 1:5) and took the rest of his mission team to Miletus, which is just south of Ephesus. While in Miletus, one of his co-workers, Trophimus, got sick and Paul had to leave him there to recover (2 Tim 4:20). Before Paul left Miletus, he probably sent for Timothy, whom he had sent from Rome to serve in Ephesus (1 Tim 1:3). Paul then sailed from Miletus to Troas, where he probably spent the winter of AD 63-64. From there he probably wrote to Titus. As soon as the weather permitted, Paul left Troas for Macedonia (Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea), leaving his cloak and books behind (2 Tim 4:13). It seems he left instructions for a man named Carpus (in Troas) to send his belongings to Rome via ship after Paul had arrived back in Rome. After a brief visit to the churches he had established during his third missionary journey, Paul intended to turn south for Corinth and then over to Nicopolis, where he planned to spend the winter with Titus (Tit 3:12) before setting sail for Rome again. But something interrupted those plans. News arrived from Ephesus that wasn't good. When he briefly visited with Timothy in Miletus, he implored him to remain at his post, but the difficulties Timothy faced required a letter of support from Paul and a personal visit (1 Tim 3:14-15; 4:13). He may have cut short his visit to Macedonia and retraced his steps through Troas and over to Ephesus. After stabilizing the church in Ephesus, Paul left Timothy in charge and then

resumed his original plan to winter in Nicopolis with Titus. The following spring (AD 65), he departed for Rome, perhaps intending to undertake his mission further west, perhaps to Spain (Rom 15:24, 28). But, probably in connection with the outbreak of Nero's persecution, Paul was rearrested and eventually executed. It was during the period of freedom between his two Roman imprisonments that the events mentioned in 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus took place.

THE PURPOSE OF 1 TIMOTHY

As Timothy was facing some difficulties in the church at Ephesus, Paul wrote him to give him guidance for stabilizing the congregation there. Paul expressed his primary purpose for the letter in 1 Timothy 3:15: "I write so that you will know how one ought to _____[v] himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the _____[w]." First Timothy, then, is a book of practical instruction regarding the affairs of the _____[x].

MATTERS OF EMPHASIS IN 1 TIMOTHY

In line with Paul's purpose to support and instruct Timothy in guiding the Ephesian church to be a God-honoring, spiritually mature church, a few matters of emphasis flow from Paul's pen. I'll mention three.

Instruction about False Doctrine/Teachers

In Chapters 1 and 4 Paul warns about the growing problem of _____[y] doctrine (1 Tim 6:3-4). Right out of the gate Paul reminds Timothy: "As I urged you upon my departure for Macedonia, remain on at Ephesus so that you may instruct certain men not to teach strange doctrines" (1 Tim 1:3). What exactly was the _____[z] of these false doctrines? Like in Colossae, it seems it combined both Jewish beliefs and Greek philosophy. It seems one of the _____[aa] philosophical elements was the belief that _____[bb] is evil. Here are the indicators for that:

- Paul had to declare all creation to be _____[cc]: "For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with gratitude" (1 Tim 4:4).
- Paul emphasized that Jesus truly lived in the _____[dd] (1 Tim 3:16). If one believes "creation is evil," naturally it means rejecting the idea Jesus had an actual human body.
- Paul condemns _____[ee] practices (1 Tim 4:2-5). Denying the body of anything pleasurable indicates the belief that the body is evil and therefore needs to be deprived and punished.

And here are indicators that the false teaching included Jewish elements:

- The false teachers were fascinated with “_____ [ff] and genealogies” (1 Tim 1:4). The word “myths” is related to Judaism because Paul also used the same word in Titus 1:14 and there he calls them “Jewish myths.” And the Old Testament is full of _____ [gg]. Among other things, genealogies were essential in establishing the land rights of Jewish tribes and for defining who they were.
- The false teachers were also trying to enforce _____ [hh] laws (1 Tim 4:3) which also seems to indicate a Jewish element in their false teaching.
- The false teachers were “wanting to be teachers of the _____ [ii]” (1 Tim 1:7). Clearly, this also shows the Jewish element.

Instructions about the Church Assembly

At the beginning of Chapter 2, Paul gives Timothy explicit instructions concerning the conduct of _____ [jj] worship. First, we need to ask, “Is the setting of 1 Timothy 2 a public gathering?” I think there are several reasons to conclude that it is:

- Paul speaks of men “lifting up holy hands” in _____ [kk] (1 Tim 2:8). This was a normal _____ [ll] for public prayer among both Jews and Christians.
- Women are told not to be _____ [mm] in the way they dress (i.e., they weren’t to dress “for show”) (1 Tim 2:9-10). This kind of instruction would seem to be especially applicable to public occasions.
- The phrase “in every _____ [nn]” (1 Tim 2:8) often appears in Jewish and Christian usage with an almost technical sense of “in every place of meeting.”
- Women are told they must “_____ [oo] receive instruction with entire submissiveness” (1 Tim 2:11). This would hardly be applicable to home and private settings.

Instructions about Church Leadership

In Chapter 3 Paul turns his attention to church _____ [pp]. The Ephesians had apparently allowed the leadership to degenerate until some were teaching false doctrine and others, guilty of sin, needed public rebuke (1 Tim 5:19-20). The backdrop, then, of Paul’s discussion on _____ [qq] is set against the backdrop of unqualified leaders in Ephesus. For that reason, Paul gives a list of qualifications of elders (whom he also calls “_____ [rr]”) (1 Tim 3:1-7). In addition to elders who lead the church, Paul lists the qualification of men who _____ [ss] the church in a special way. These men are called “_____ [tt].”

LESSONS FROM 1 TIMOTHY

- _____[uu] of the Lord need to be heard again and again. In Ephesus problems kept reappearing and reasserting themselves.
- Keeping the church _____[vv] pure is a difficult but necessary task. (1 Tim 1:3; 1:18; 4:6)
- The ultimate standard for all of Christian _____[ww] is “does God _____[xx] it?” (1 Tim 2:3)
- Our _____[yy] should not be confined to our own narrow interests; we must embrace the _____[zz] in prayer. (1 Tim 2:1-2)
- The reason we must be concerned about all people is because wants _____[aaa] people to be saved. (1 Tim 2:4)
- When the gathered church prays and men are present, God calls _____[bbb] to lead those prayers. (1 Tim 2:8).
- When authoritative teaching is done in church life and men are present, God calls _____[ccc] to be the teacher. (1 Tim 2:11-15)
- God’s plan for _____[ddd] headship and _____[eee] submission is pre-cultural (1 Tim 2:11-15)
- The work of _____[fff] God’s people is tough, serious and demanding work that can only be filled by _____[ggg] who possess certain spiritual virtues and character traits. (1 Tim 3:1-7)
- Deacons must be _____[hhh] who also possess certain spiritual virtues and character traits. (1 Tim 3:8-13)
- Spiritual _____[iii] is the key to godly living. (1 Tim 4:6-8).
- Our hard _____[jjj] to be godly isn’t _____[kkk] by instant gratification. (1 Tim 4:10)
- Focus on God’s _____[lll], using your _____[mmm], and _____[nnn] to maturity. (1 Tim 4:13-15)
- We must cultivate _____[ooo] in our lives. (1 Tim 6:6-11)
- We must provide care for the _____[ppp] among us. (1 Tim 5:1-16)

FILL-IN-THE-BLANK ANSWER KEY

[a] individual	[ss] serve
[b] Pastoral	[tt] deacons
[c] Latin	[uu] instructions
[d] shepherd	[vv] doctrinally
[e] Lystra	[ww] worship
[f] Jewish	[xx] accept
[g] Greek	[yy] prayers
[h] circumcised	[zz] world
[i] apostate	[aaa] all
[j] synagogue	[bbb] men
[k] Eunice	[ccc] men
[l] Lois	[ddd] male
[m] Gentile	[eee] female
[n] Jewish	[fff] overseeing
[o] circumcised	[ggg] men
[p] practical	[hhh] men
[q] spiritual	[iii] self-discipline
[r] child	[jjj] work
[s] faith	[kkk] motivated
[t] released	[lll] Word
[u] fourth	[mmm] gifts
[v] conduct	[nnn] growing
[w] truth	[ooo] contentment
[x] church	[ppp] needy
[y] false	
[z] content	
[aa] Greek	
[bb] creation	
[cc] good	
[dd] flesh	
[ee] ascetic	
[ff] myths	
[gg] genealogies	
[hh] food	
[ii] Law	
[jj] public	
[kk] prayer	
[ll] posture	
[mm] ostentatious	
[nn] place	
[oo] quietly	
[pp] leaders	
[qq] elders	
[rr] bishops	