

Pastoral Letters: 11 April 2002

Paul was probably arrested and imprisoned somewhere in Macedonia; taken back to Rome. Paul had no hope of being released. II Timothy 1: Paul was actually in prison this time, not just under house arrest.

II Timothy 4:17: "Gentile" = pagans in Roman court.

II Timothy takes the form of a testament more than of a letter. Scholars who debate the Pauline authorship of I Timothy and Titus generally accept that Paul wrote II Timothy. II Timothy is too personal to be pseudographic.

Message of the Pastorals

I. 1 Timothy.

A. False teaching: 1:3-17. False teaching at Ephesus:

- 1. Promotes controversy. Church was engulfed with arguments, probably intellectual in nature.**
- 2. Paul thinks the arguing is useless and not worth the seriousness devoted to the issues.**
- 3. Probably stemmed from the treatment of the Mosaic Law (1:8).**

Gnosticism is the prime candidate for the teachings fueling the conflict. According to Gnosticism, salvation came through specialized knowledge. Some Gnostics liked to exegete the Old Testament, particularly the creation accounts of Genesis 1-3. Problem: no evidence of Gnosticism prior to the second century A.D. However, its beginnings were around the first century. Iranaeus wrote *Against Heresies* in A.D. 185; mentioned Gnosticism. Therefore, proto-Gnosticism was probably in Ephesus in Timothy's time.

Nag Hammadi Library: Gnostic writings from 4th-5th centuries A.D.; discovered in Egypt in the 20th century.

B. Instructions to Timothy: 1-18-20. Some Christians may have defected to false teaching; began with fascination with heresies.

C. Conduct in the world: 2:1-10.

- 1. Pray for governing authorities**
- 2. Christians are to live exemplary lives. By this, people will be drawn to the Church and the truth of the gospel within the Church.**
 - a) Presentation of the gospel: 2:5-6. cf. 3:14-16. v. 16: creedal statement of the early Church. V. 15: household=church.**
 - b) Paul speaks of households because churches at the time met in believers' houses; families who owned the houses often led the church.**
 - c) V. 8: men should pray and not quarrel. Women must bring honor to the church. Paul does not want the world to equate the Church with ostentatious wealth.**

D. Conduct in the Church: 2:11--3:13

1. **Who may teach: 2:11-14.**
2. **Who may be elders: 3:1-7.**
3. **Who may be deacons (men and women): 3:8-13.**
4. **Problems with the passage:**
 - a) **Paul's prohibition of women in teaching. Paul elsewhere writes that women were very active in the church, both praying and prophesying (cf. I Corinthians 14:26, no gender delineation). Examples:**

(1) Phoebe (Romans 16:1): "deaconess" at Cenchrae; most likely a deacon, not an elder. Paul uses the masculine term; refers to an office.

(2) Junia (Romans 16:3), "apostle." Not an apostle in the authoritative sense (cf. Philippians, where Epaphroditus is called an apostle).

(3) Chloe (I Corinthians 1).

(4) Nympha: Colossians 4:15.

(5) Euodia and Synteché: "co-workers" with Paul in Philippians

Women were allowed to pray and prophesy; however, I Corinthians 14:34-35, women are sometimes to remain silent (14:34-35).

- b) **Women saved "through child-bearing." Possibilities:**

(1) Paul is referring to safety in labor and childbirth.

(2) Paul is referring to salvation through Mary's birth of Jesus.

Both are unlikely.

Most likely explanation of vv. 11-15: remember the heresy in Ephesus. Paul is addressing a problem where women teachers are leading people astray and neglecting their duties at home. Church is tarnished by the neglect of women's duties at home.

Women involved in false teaching:

(a) 4:3: de-valuing the body: attacking marriage and households.

(b) 5:3-8: people neglecting the elderly in their families. V. 8: not providing for members of their household.

Application today: these verses still apply. Paul correlates teaching of men to the Creation (2:13-14). However, application today varies from denomination to denomination. Women with gifts must serve God Who gave them the gifts. Women can serve everywhere except preaching in a functioning church. No one fully understands Paul's reasoning.

Dr. Thielman's theory: men are more prone than women to abdicate responsibility. If men aren't given specific roles, they wouldn't participate.

v. 15: women are to leave heresy and tend to their responsibilities at home.

5. Offices of elder and deacon (3:1-13)

a) Elders: 3:2-7. Theme of Pastoral: concern of the household (vv. 4-5). Wives also have a responsibility to manage households (5:14). Other requirements: teaching and leadership.

b) Deacon: 3:8-13. Doesn't mention teaching or leadership. 3:11: "women:" not mentioning wives of deacons ("their" is not in the Greek text), but of a class of deacons who are women. Paul apparently believed in female deacons.

"Husband of 1 wife:" Paul wouldn't have qualified (he was single!) by standards some hold today. Jesus accepted divorce in certain situations; therefore, those divorced and re-married in these situations should not be prohibited from holding the offices of elder or deacon (Dr. Thielman's opinion). Term most likely applies to cases of bigamy, polygamy, or infidelity, not divorce.

3:14-16: "Household of God:" house churches are housing the truth of God in Paul's time.

E. False Teaching: 4:1-5. Best description of false teaching in I Timothy; early form of Gnosticism.

F. Instructions for Timothy: 4:6-5:25. Ch. 5: how the church should operate in respect to older members, younger members, widows. Some in the church were neglecting their family duties, including their elderly parents; apparently the younger widows were most guilty. Younger widows were primary purveyors of the heresy. V. 9: order of women working in the church.

G. Conduct in the World: 6:1-2. There were many slaves in the early Church. Still, cf. 1:10. Paul's reasoning for slaves behaving toward their masters: "that the name of God and the teaching may not be reviled (v. 1b)."

H. False Teaching: 6:3-10. Paul is not intellectually interested in the controversy as he is other letters.

I. Instructions to Timothy: 6:11-21. Another hint to the controversy: vv. 20-21.

Titus

Theme: Doing what is good as a result of right belief. Paul doesn't believe that one corrects their life and then believes; believe first, and God through the Holy Spirit will correct the life and transform the new believer's mind and conduct. Situation: Paul left Titus in Crete to care for churches he, Titus and Timothy had established.

A. Instructions to Titus: 1:5-9. Qualifications of elders/overseers. See above.

B. False Teaching: 1:10-16. False teaching had made some progress in the churches; similar to what Timothy faced in Ephesus, but here some of the

false teachers are Jewish (1:10). V. 11: false teachers are moving from house to house, just as the women were in Ephesus. Gnostic and ascetic (1:15).

vv. 12-13: 1. Paul is describing only the false teachers. 2. Historical context: probably written by Epimenides of Crete. Cretans were famous for their boasting of the god Zeus, who they claimed was once a Cretan mortal who was deified; therefore, Cretans gained a reputation of lying about the gods.

C. Doing What Is Good: 2:1-3:15. relationships: 2:1-10. Women are to teach: 2:3. Motivations for behaviors: vv. 5b, 8b, 10b; 11-14. Same pattern in 3:3-8.

2 Timothy

Paul was in prison (1:16-18, 2:9). 4:16: Paul has endured one hearing and is facing another; he expects to die (4:7). People slandered and deserted Paul (4:14, 16), leading to his condemnation.

Authenticity: Pryer, O'Connor (for test purposes; these scholars argue that Paul wrote 2 Timothy; too personal to be pseudographical).

Note: Dr. Thielman did not use the outline on this book.

A. Purpose:

1. Call to Timothy to come before winter comes (4:21). Paul also wants Mark to be there.
2. Anticipates the possibility Timothy and Mark won't arrive on time before his execution; therefore, this is Paul's last will and testament.
3. Paul urges Timothy
 - a) Not to be led astray by persecution;
 - b) Not to be led astray by false teaching
4. Paul offers himself as an example of endurance in face of suffering (1:6-12).
 - a) V. 13: Pattern of Paul.
 - b) Paul's 2nd example of suffering: 2:8-13.
 - c) 3:10-12: Paul reminds Timothy of his own persecutions.
 - d) 4:5-6: Paul calls Timothy to "endure suffering."
 - e) 4:17: Paul considered himself a success because the gospel was proclaimed.

B. 4 steps for Timothy to guard against false teaching:

1. Remember the content of the gospel.
2. Timothy should remember his ordination (1:6)
3. Timothy should be faithful to what he learned from his Christian elders (1:5, 14; 3:14-17).
4. Paul tells Timothy to stay away from false teachers (2:16-18; 3:1-9).