

1 Timothy - Introduction

There are three (3) letters that belong together as the “Pastoral Epistles” of Paul:

- 1 Timothy
- 2 Timothy
- Titus

These three letters were written to 2 young Pastors who worked with Paul:

- Timothy
- Titus

All three letters deal with two basic subjects:

- The creed (doctrine) of the church - **the church within**
- The conduct of the church - **the church without**

Three styles of church government derived from these three epistles:

- **Episcopal**
 - One man, at the top, who speaks for God, all others are to listen and obey. (Pope)
- **Presbyterian**
 - Government by ruling officers: Eldership (presbytery), governing through a multitude of counsel of spiritual men ordained by God.
- **Congregational**
 - Entire congregation governs the church through plenary votes. The people, as a whole, make all of the decisions and are in complete control.

Timothy:

1 Cor 4:17 ¹⁷For this reason I have sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful son in the Lord, who will remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church.¹

Phil. 2:19-24 ¹⁹But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, that I also may be encouraged when I know your state. ²⁰For I have no one like-minded, who will sincerely care for your state. ²¹For all seek their own, not the things which are of Christ Jesus. ²²But you know his proven character, that as a son with *his* father he served with me in the gospel. ²³Therefore I hope to send him at once, as soon as I see how it goes with me. ²⁴But I trust in the Lord that I myself shall also come shortly.²

TIMOTHY. The son of a mixed marriage; his mother, who evidently instructed him in the Scriptures, was a Jewess and his father a Greek (Acts 16:1; 2 Tim. 1:5). He was a native of Lystra (Acts 16:1) and was highly esteemed by his Christian brethren both there and in Iconium (Acts 16:2). When he became a Christian is not specifically stated, but it is a reasonable inference that he was a convert of Paul's first missionary journey, which included Lystra in its itinerary, and that on that occasion he witnessed Paul's sufferings (2 Tim. 3:11). It is not certain when Timothy's mother Eunice became a Christian, perhaps before Timothy, but certainly before Paul's second missionary journey.

¹The Holy Bible, New King James Version, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

²The Holy Bible, New King James Version, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

He was affectionate (2 Tim. 1:4) but very fearful (2 Tim. 1:7ff.), needing not a few personal admonitions from his father in the faith; he is warned not to give way to youthful lusts (2 Tim. 2:22) and not to be ashamed of the gospel (2 Tim. 1:8). Yet no other of Paul's companions is so warmly commended for his loyalty (1 Cor. 16:10; Phil. 2:19ff.; 2 Tim. 3:10ff.). It is fitting that the apostle's concluding letter should be addressed so affectionately to this almost reluctant successor, whose weaknesses are as apparent as his virtues. 3

A few features of the heresy Timothy is warned about are:

- An asceticism was being taught that opposed marriage (1 Tim. 2:15; 4:3; 5:14)
- prescribed abstinence from certain foods (1 Tim. 4:3; 5:23; Titus 1:15).
- Two heretics were teaching that 'the resurrection is past already,' which implies a spiritualism in which the heavenly life was experienced in the present (2 Tim. 2:18).
- References to 'myths and genealogies' (1 Tim. 1:4; cf. Titus 3:9) may imply the influence of a gnosticizing Judaism (a view that is supported by references to Jewish elements in the heresy; 1 Tim. 1:7-11; Titus 3:9). 4

I. Outline of contents

1 Timothy

a. *Paul and Timothy* (1:1-20)

The need for Timothy to refute false teaching at Ephesus (1:3-11); Paul's experience of God's mercy (1:12-17); a special commission for Timothy (1:18-20).

b. *Worship and order in the church* (2:1-4:16)

Public prayer (2:1-8); the position of women (2:9-15); the qualifications of bishops and deacons (3:1-13); the church: its character and its adversaries (3:14-4:5); the church: Timothy's personal responsibilities (4:6-16).

c. *Discipline within the church* (5:1-25)

A discussion of the treatment suitable for various groups, especially widows and elders.

d. *Miscellaneous injunctions* (6:1-19)

About servants and masters (6:1-2); about false teachers (6:3-5); about wealth (6:6-10); about the aims of a man of God (6:11-16); more about wealth (6:17-19).

e. *Concluding admonitions to Timothy* (6:20-21) 5

3The New Bible Dictionary, (Wheaton, Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.) 1962.

4Achemier, Paul J., Th.D., *Harper's Bible Dictionary*, (San Francisco: Harper and Row, Publishers, Inc.) 1985.

5(1962). *The New Bible Dictionary*.