

20. Pastoral Letters Titus, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy

Church Orders or Regulatory Letters. Titus: Elders and Bishops; "Teach According to Sound Doctrine"; Household Code Again; Warnings Against False Teachers. 1 Timothy: Qualifications of Bishops and Deacons; Merry Widows and Gossiping Women; False Teaching and Greed. 2 Timothy: Timothy's Family Background; Current and Coming Apostasy; Inspired Scripture; "I Have Fought the Good Fight."

"Faith of Our Fathers" (hymn no. 84)

"Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses." (1 Timothy 6:12)

1. Faith of our fathers, living still
In spite of dungeon, fire, and sword;
Oh, how our hearts beat high with joy
Whene'er we hear that glorious word.

(Chorus)
Faith of our fathers, holy faith,
We will be true to thee till death!

2. Faith of our fathers, we will strive
To win all nations unto thee,
And thru the truth that comes from God,
Mankind shall then be truly free.

3. Faith of our fathers, we will love
Both friend and foe in all our strife,
And preach thee, too, as love knows how,
By kindly words and virtuous life.

Occasional Situation of the Pastorals

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Figures Addressed

- **Titus** is known only from the Pauline correspondence
 - Gentile convert brought to the Jerusalem Conference in A.D. 49 (Gal 2:1-3)
 - Served as messenger to the Corinthians
 - Preached in Crete with Paul, who left Titus there to preside over the new congregations
- **Timothy** is known from Acts and the letters of Paul
 - Converted by Paul in Lystra during the First Missionary Journey c. A.D. 46
 - Jewish mother and Greek (Gentile) father, hence Jewish; Paul circumcised him (Acts 16:1-3)
 - With Paul on Second Missionary Journey of c. A.D. 49-52
 - Sent as messenger to Thessalonica, Corinth, and Ephesus
 - *Seems to have been presided over the church in Ephesus*

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Date and Order

- Their relationship to each other is unclear because they do not make references to each other
 - this affects our understanding of the sequence in which they are written (like all Paul's letters, they are *ordered in the NT according to length*)
- **Because Paul seems certain that he is approaching death in 2 Timothy, it is assumed that he is in his (final) Roman imprisonment**
 - Because none of the events or activities mentioned in any of these letters is mentioned in Acts, it is suggested that they were written after the "first" Roman imprisonment of A.D. 63–64 and at the end of the "second," c. A.D. 66–68
 - Presumably, then, 2 Timothy was written last
- No way to determine with certainty whether Titus or 1 Timothy was written first
 - Both deal with Church administration, but whereas *Titus presided over newly established Christian congregation churches in Crete* and *Timothy led the established church in Ephesus, the organization seems more complex in 1 Timothy*
 - For convenience, then, they are taken in the order of Titus and then 1 Timothy
- **Working Dates: Titus and 1 Timothy c. A.D. 65; 2 Timothy c. A.D. 66–68**

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Literary Questions about the Pastorals

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 WHAT KINDS OF LETTER ARE THESE? WHAT KIND OF WRITING
 AND RHETORIC DOES PAUL USE IN THEM?

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Types of Letters Represented

- Pastoral Letters These are **actual (real) letters** in that they are addressed to **individuals** (like Philemon)
- However, they do address general issues. Because they focus particularly on Church administration, they are also called **regulatory letters (church orders)**
 - Titus and Timothy have responsibility over the churches, they are each “a shepherd (Latin *pastor*) of the flock (hence “**pastoral letters**”)
- 2 Timothy, or at least parts of it, represents a type known as a **testament**, because it represents the last instructions and desires of one about to die

Responses to Alleged Pseudonymity

- **Once again, the style of these letters differs noticeably from the undisputed letters**
 - Writing styles, however, can change with time and experience
 - Paul’s custom of using scribes, to whom he may have given considerable liberty in phrasing, etc.
 - The particular subject matter of these letters, particularly regarding church structure and government, may account for much of the different vocabulary
- **The earlier letters say little about church structure and function**
 - Those letters, however, were concerned with particular doctrinal issues that affected entire congregations
 - Paul does mention bishops (*episkopoi*) in Philippians 1:1
 - Elders (*presbyteroi*) are mentioned in Acts 14:23, 20:17; bishops (*episkopoi* translated “overseers” in KJV) in Acts 20:28; and a parallel to the order of widows of 1 Tim 5:5–9 is found in Luke 2:36–37
 - Towards the end of his career, Paul may have been particularly concerned about how the churches would be cared for after his passing
- **External evidence from Church fathers and opponents is mixed on whether these are Paul’s writings**
 - Opponents, such as Marcion, did not like these

Implications of Pauline Authorship

- Supports a “second career” (further missionary efforts) after the Roman imprisonment of A.D. 63–64
 - Pastorals contain much biographical information of Paul’s activities and associations not found in Acts
- The directions given about bishops and deacons is authoritative; these offices were in the earliest church and did not “evolve!”

Titus

• ————— •

“You must teach what is in accord with sound doctrine . . . In your teaching show integrity, seriousness and soundness of speech that cannot be condemned, so that those who oppose you may be ashamed because they have nothing bad to say about us.” (Titus 2:1–9)

Structure of Titus

- **Opening Formula:** Greeting to Titus (1:1-4)
- **No Thanksgiving**
 - *But Paul is not angry here . . . Is it all business or a sign of familiarity?*
- **Body (1:5-3:11)**
 - **Appointment of Elders and Bishops (1:5-9)**
 - **False Teaching (1:10-16)**
 - Community Behavior and Belief (2:1-3:11)
 - **Household Code (2:1-10)**
 - Christ's Redemption and its Power to Transform (2:11-14)
 - Pastoral Instructions to Titus (2:15-3:11)
 - *Hymn or Liturgical Fragment (3:4-7)*
- **Concluding Formula:** Greetings and a Blessing (3:12-15)

Elders and Bishops

- “For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain **elders** in every city, as I had appointed thee: **If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly. For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God;** not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; **Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.**” (Titus 1:5-9)
- Here Paul moves from a discussion of **elders** (*presbyteroi*, literally “older ones”) in 1:5-7 directly to a review of the qualifications of a **bishop** (*episkopos*, “overseer”)
 - Some speak of presbyter-bishops (explaining a difference between Episcopalians and Presbyterians!), but **apparently it means that bishops were drawn from among the most faithful elders**
- **husband of one wife suggests a man who did not remarry after a divorce** (or even perhaps after having been widowed)
 - **Priesthood holders should not be involved in unnecessary marital irregularities**

“You must teach what is in accord with sound doctrine . . .”

(Household Code, 2:1–10)

☞ Instructions for every group in the household!

- ☞ “Teach the **older men** to be temperate, worthy of respect, self-controlled, and sound in faith, in love and in endurance.”
- ☞ “Likewise, teach the **older women** to be reverent in the way they live, not to be slanderers or addicted to much wine, but to teach what is good.”
- ☞ “Then they can train the **younger women** to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled and pure, to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands, so that no one will malign the word of God.”
- ☞ “Similarly, encourage the **young men** to be self-controlled. In everything set them an example by doing what is good. In your teaching show integrity, seriousness and soundness of speech that cannot be condemned, so that those who oppose you may be ashamed because they have nothing bad to say about us.”
- ☞ “Teach **slaves** to be subject to their masters in everything, to try to please them, not to talk back to them, and not to steal from them, but to show that they can be fully trusted, so that in every way they will make the teaching about God our Savior attractive.”

Warnings Against False Teachers

- “But avoid stupid controversies, **genealogies**, **dissensions**, and **quarrels about the law**, for they are unprofitable and worthless. After a first and second admonition, have nothing more to do with anyone who causes divisions, since you know that such a person is perverted and sinful, being self-condemned. (3:9–10; see 1 Timothy 1:3–4)
- **Genealogies** here seems to refer to the proto-Gnostic view of deity or angels flowing outward from God (cf. Colossians)
 - *This is not a passage against family history or vicarious work as we know it today!*
 - Some might also see this as an argument against extreme Judaizers who felt that their ancestry alone saved them
- **Dissensions**, doctrinal divisions leading to disunity
- **Quarrels about the law**, seen as Judaizing tendencies in Galatians and then flowering with the angelology of Colossians-Ephesians

1 Timothy

“Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands . . . Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.” (1 Timothy 4:12–15)

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Structure of 1 Timothy

- **Opening Formula:** Greetings to Timothy (1:1–2)
- **Once again, no thanksgiving**
- **Body (1:3–6:19)**
 - Warnings Against False Teachers (1:3–11)
 - Paul’s Example as a Teacher (1:12–17)
 - Paul’s Charge to Timothy (1:18–20)
 - Instructions Concerning Prayer and Worship (2:1–15)
 - **Church Leadership (3:1–16)**
 - Correction of False Teaching–asceticism (4:1–5)
 - Instructions for the Pastor (4:6–5:2)
 - Instructions for Different Groups (5:3–6:2)
 - False Teaching and Greed (6:3–10)
 - **The Good Fight of Faith (6:11–19)**
- **Conclusion:** Charge to Timothy and Blessing (6:20–21)

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Church Leadership

- Qualifications of Bishops (3:1–7)
- Qualifications of Deacons (3:8–13)
- The Church, the Bulwark of Truth (3:14–16)
 - *Christ Hymn Fragment (3:16b)*

*God [Christ] was manifest in the flesh,
justified in the Spirit,
seen of angels,
preached unto the Gentiles,
believed on in the world,
received up into glory.*

Qualifications of a Bishop (3:1–7)

- “This is a true saying, **If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.** A bishop then must be blameless, **the husband of one wife**, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, **apt to teach**; Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; **One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity**; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) **Not a novice**, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover **he must have a good report of them which are without**; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.”
 - “**whoever aspires to the office of bishop desires a noble task**” (NRSV)
 - “**married only once**” (NRSV), in particular **not frivolously divorced and remarried**
 - “**able to teach**” (NIV), “**a good teacher**” (NJB)
 - “**one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity**” (NAU)
 - Novice: “**He should not be a new convert**” (NJB)
 - “**And he must have a good reputation with those outside the church**” (NAU)

Qualifications of Deacons (3:8-13)

- “Likewise **must the deacons be grave**, not double tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; **Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience**. And **let these also first be proved**; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless. Even so must **their wives be grave**, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. For **they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree**, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.”
- “Deacons, likewise, are to be men worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain.” (NIV)
- “They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience.” (NIV)
- “**They must first be tested**; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons” (NIV), “They are first to be examined” (NJB) – have an interview!
- “In the same way, **their wives are to be women worthy of respect**, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything. A deacon must be the husband of but one wife and must manage his children and his household well.” (NIV)
 - Ancient deacons or “servants” were not young men but grown adults!
- “**served well as deacons obtain for themselves a good standing**” (NKJV)

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“Honour widows that are widows indeed . . .” (5:3-16)

- “Honour widows that are **widows indeed**. But if any widow have children or nephews, let them learn first to shew piety at home, and to **requite their parents**: for that is good and acceptable before God. Now she that is a widow indeed, and **desolate**, trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day.” (5:3-5)
- “But if a widow has children or grandchildren, these should learn first of all to put their religion into practice by caring for their own family and so **repaying their parents and grandparents . . .**” (NIV)
 - **True widows** are those without any means of family support, neither husband nor children or grandchildren
 - **repaying their parents**: The children and grandchildren must “repay” their mother or grandmother for taking care of them!
- “The real widow, left alone, has set her hope on God and continues in supplications and prayers night and day” (5:5 NRSV)
 - Cf. Anna in Luke 2:36-37
- “No widow may be put on the list of widows unless she is over sixty, has been faithful to her husband . . .” (5:9ff. NIV)
 - The Church had an order of widows who were cared for; in return they served in the Church

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Merry Widows and Gossiping Women

- “As for younger widows, do not put them on such a list. For when their sensual desires overcome their dedication to Christ, they want to marry . . . Besides, they get into the habit of being idle and going about from house to house. And **not only do they become idlers, but also gossips and busybodies**, saying things they ought not to.” (5:11-13 NIV)
 - Younger women often have an opportunity or want to remarry . . .
 - Women with means and time may be susceptible to false teachers as in 2 Timothy 3:6, “For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sin.”
- “I think it is best for young widows to marry again and have children and a household to look after, and not give the enemy any chance to raise a scandal about them.” (5:14 NJB)

False Teaching and Greed (6:3–10)

- “Whoever teaches otherwise and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching that is in accordance with godliness, is conceited, understanding nothing, and has a morbid craving for controversy and for disputes about words. From these come envy, dissension, slander, base suspicions, and wrangling among those who are depraved in mind and bereft of the truth, imagining that godliness is a means of gain.” (6:3–5 NRSV)
- “But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and *into* many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For **the love of money is the root of all evil . . .**” (6:9–10)
 - “For **the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil . . .**” (NIV, NRSV)

2 Timothy

“For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.”
(2 Timothy 4:6–8)

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Structure of 2 Timothy

- **Opening Formula:** Greeting (1:1–2)
- **Thanksgiving** (Titus and 1 Timothy had lacked this—has Paul’s desperate circumstances made him grateful for friends?)
 - Paul’s Gratitude for the Faithfulness of Timothy and Recollection of His Family Background (1:3–8)
- **Body** (1:6–4:18)
 - Exhortations to Timothy (1:8–14)
 - Paul’s Recent Experiences (1:15–18)
 - Further Exhortations to Timothy (2:1–13)
 - *Hymn Fragment Illustrating the Participation Model* (2:11b–13)
 - **Examples of True Vs. False Teaching** (2:14–3:9)
 - Paul’s Example to Timothy (3:10–13)
 - **Inspired Scripture** (3:14–17)
 - **Final Charge in View of Creeping Apostasy** (4:1–5)
 - **The End Is Near: Paul Has “Fought the Good Fight”** (4:6–8)
 - Paul’s Situation (4:9–18)
- **Concluding Formula:** Final Greetings and Benediction (4:19–22)

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Timothy's Family Background (1:3-8)

- “I thank God, whom I serve from *my* forefathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day; Greatly desiring to see thee, being mindful of thy tears, that I may be filled with joy; When I call to remembrance **the unfeigned faith that is in thee**, which dwelt **first in thy grandmother Lois**, and **thy mother Eunice**; and I am persuaded that in thee also . . .” (1:3-5)

Current and Coming Apostasy

- **Examples of True vs. False Teaching (2:14-3:9)**
 - “This know also, that **in the last days perilous times shall come**. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; ***Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.***” (3:1-5)
- **Final Charge in View of Creeping Apostasy (4:1-5)**
 - “I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. **For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine**; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables . . .”

Inspired Scripture (3:14–17)

- “But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; And that **from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures**, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be **perfect**, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” (3:14–17)
 - The scriptures at Paul and Timothy’s time would have been, for the most part, the Jewish scriptures (our old testament)
 - “So that the man of God may be **thoroughly equipped** for every good work.” (3:17 NIV, *artios* = KJV “perfect”)

“I have fought the good fight . . .”

- Paul’s testimony, anticipating martyrdom
- “For I am now ready to be offered, and **the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith**: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, **which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day**: and not to me only, but **unto all them also that love his appearing**.” (4:6–8)
 - “**that day**” clearly lay far in the future
 - **His appearing**: Instead of *parousia*, which had moved from “advent” to more of the sense of “presence” in his later letters, Paul uses the term *epiphaneia* or “appearance”