

Introduction to Pastoral Epistles:

Text: 1 Timothy 1:1-4 “Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God our Savior, and Lord Jesus Christ, which is our hope; Unto Timothy, my own son in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord. As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine, Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do...”

Summary Statement for the book: Paul instructs Timothy regarding life in the local church and his responsibilities in it so that the church would remain orderly in practice and pure in doctrine as it proclaimed the Word of God to the world.¹

Summary Statement for 1:1-4: Paul identified himself, his authority as a representative of Christ, and his primary concern for the church at Ephesus.

Detail 1: God used the apostle Paul to write this letter.

- Paul was converted in the mid 30’s
- His missionary journey’s out of the church are Antioch went from the mid 40’s- mid 50’s and are covered in the book of Acts
- He first involved Timothy in the early 50’s
- This is likely written in the mid 60’s between two imprisonments, from Macedonia.
- The details of the church plant at Ephesus are recorded by Luke from Acts 16-18.
- It seems that Paul sent Timothy to Ephesus around 10 years after the church was planted, and after a period of time at Ephesus, Timothy wants to leave and be with Paul.
- This is the catalyst for the letter we are studying.

Detail 2: Paul emphasized the ultimate authority of his instructions to Timothy regarding church life: “An apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God our Savior...”

- **Though he has a tender relationship with Timothy, he is establishing his authority as an apostle.**
- **He is further emphasizing his authority by indicating that he is an apostle by the commandment of Christ.**
- **Sub question: What is an apostle?**
 - On the most basic level, an apostle was an individual who was sent out under the authority of another and acting as a representative of the one who sent them. (Commissioned)
 - In many cases the person had a role in government like an ambassador.
 - In the case of the spread of the gospel in the first century, some individuals functioned as church planters/missionaries as representatives of their respective churches.

¹ Hullinger, Dr. Jerry. *New Testament Life and Belief: A Study in History, Culture, and Meaning* (p. 475). Piedmont International University. Kindle Edition.

- In this case, the term is very specific and worthy of careful notice: **He is an apostle of Jesus Christ**
 - **Knew Christ personally.**
 - **Was personally called by Christ to an official capacity.**
 - **He was representing Christ and was also bearing Christ's authority.**
 - **There was a validation of this ministry.**
 - **They were recognized as officials in this capacity in the early church.**

Passage 1: Acts 1:15-25 “And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of names together were about an hundred and twenty,) Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus. **For he was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry...**²¹Wherefore **of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection.** And they appointed two, Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias. And they prayed, and said, Thou, **Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, show whether of these two thou hast chosen,** That he may **take part of this ministry and apostleship...**”

Passage 2: 1 Corinthians 15:1-9 “Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: And that **he was seen** of Cephas, then **of the twelve**: After that, **he was seen** of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, **he was seen** of James; **then of all the apostles**. And **last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time**. For **I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle**, because I persecuted the church of God...”

Passage 3: 2 Corinthians 12:12 “Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds...”

Detail 3: Paul identified the one who has commissioned Him, and the nature of His personal ministry toward Paul and the recipients of his letter:

- **He is our Savior:** “God our Savior...”
- **He is our hope:** “And Lord Jesus Christ which is our hope...”

Detail 4: Paul identified the primary recipient of his letter, and his relationship to him: “Unto Timothy my own son in the faith...”

Three Observations:

- **Paul explicitly trusted Timothy: Philippians 2:19-22** “But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state. For **I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state. For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's. But ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel.**”
- **Paul saw Timothy as a grounded man whom he personally appointed to the ministry office he currently held: 2 Timothy 1:3-6** “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. Wherefore **I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands...**”
- **Paul had poured significant time and energy into a mentoring relationship with Timothy, and he had confidence in his ability to make discerning judgments about future leadership: 2 Timothy 2:1-2** “Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And **the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also...**”

Detail 5: Paul reminded Timothy not only of their personal relationship one with another, but also, God’s relationship to them both: “Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord...”

- **Grace:** Unmerited favor
- **Mercy:** Tender compassion
- **Peace:** The removal of the former animosity created by their sin
- **From God:** God not mankind is the initiator of this relationship
- **Our Father:** As Father, God assumes the responsibility to provide care and sustenance to His people, and He does it from the disposition of a loving father
- **Jesus Christ our Lord:** As those who have been redeemed to God, we are responsible to submit to His authority as our master.

Detail 6: Though Paul has apostolic authority, he appealed to Timothy from the position of an encourager: “I besought thee to abide in Ephesus when I went to Macedonia...”

- **Observation 1:** Timothy wanted to come be with Paul, and as we get later into the letter, we will see that he is facing tremendous opposition and pressures, so he wants to be back in a place of serving under/alongside, rather than out in the forefront.
- **Observation 2: παρακαλέω:** He is coming alongside him as an encourager/coach, understanding that

Detail 7: He told Timothy that his primary ministry responsibility involved confronting false teaching in the church: “That thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine...”

- **Charge:** This would involve confrontation.
- **Some:** Not every teacher in the church was involved in these doctrinal deviations.

- **No other doctrine:** This statement indicates that there was an established body of truth, known to the apostles and to the church, and it was the standard for the teaching and practices of the church.

Detail 8: He told Timothy that his second responsibility involved helping the average church member develop both discernment and courage to reject false teaching: “Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies...”

- **Fables:** Rabbinical teachings
- **Endless genealogies:** Hypothetical situations and assumptions about the content of the scriptures.

Detail 9: He told Timothy that the reason he needed to address these false teachers and help the church develop discernment was that they were becoming distracted with unanswerable discussions and missing opportunities to grow in the faith and be stirred up into godly living: “Which minister questions rather than godly edification which is in the faith...”

- **Questions rather than godly edification:** Not all false teaching will send you to eternal destruction. Some false teaching simply distracts you from the heart of the Christian faith and keeps you from developing into a faithful godly servant of Christ.
- **Which is in the faith:** Spiritual maturity happens within a body of truth, not independent of it.

Some practical implications from this text:

- **Implication 1:** We must give careful attention to every detail of this epistle, because it is not simply the opinion of a Christian sage from the first century, but it is the word of God.
- **Implication 2:** The strength of the future of the church is rooted in its ability to reproduce godly mentoring relationships like Paul had with Timothy.
- **Implication 3:** A healthy view of our relationship to God and His relationship to us positions us to properly receive His instructions.
- **Implication 4:** Authority should never replace an encouraging spirit.
- **Implication 5:** We must be fiercely loyal for the faith, not simply popular teachers within the faith.
- **Implication 6:** We need to realize that false teaching always has negative consequences.
- **Implication 7:** Don’t waste people’s time and opportunities to grow by spending time in theological hypotheticals.