

**1. INTRODUCTION – TO THE PASTORAL EPISTLES:**

- a. **Pastoral Care – Pastoral Theology** – The main mission of the church is the equipping and sending of leaders into their mission field. A primary component is training leaders for the ministry of pastoral care to the congregation. Zondervan’s International Dictionary of the Christian Church describes “Pastoral Care” [AKA Pastoral Theology and Practical Theology] as – a practical application of the Scriptures to the relationship between a minister of the Gospel and the people for whose spiritual well-being he or she is responsible. It is theology because it deals with the things of God and His Word. It is pastoral, because it relates to a pastor and God’s people.
- i. The basic precepts of pastoral theology are found in the New Testament. Paul addressed the elders of the Ephesian church at Miletus in words that showed his compassion and concern for the people and his own personal commitment to Christ and His service. This vital relationship between pastor and people is further emphasized in Paul’s letters to Timothy and Titus. Details of organization and administration are given, but interwoven with them are solemn warnings and appeals that the minister’s chief concern is the cultivation of mature Christian character in himself and God’s people.
  - ii. The importance of this branch of theology is recognized by every denomination in the Christian Church, and every training college for ministers has a department of pastoral care and pastoral or practical theology. As a rule, pastoral care embraces training in the art of teaching and preaching, and the science/art of exegesis and homiletics [interpreting Scripture and delivering its message]; but the main emphasis of this training is on developing the character of the pastor and church leaders, and the care of souls involving both guidance and counseling.
  - iii. Pastoral care is exercised in different ways, such as the visitation of the homes for the discussion of spiritual problems, or personal interviews in the minister’s home or in the office at the church. In recent years, there has been a greater emphasis on psychology and counseling as an aid to pastoral care. Many of the larger churches have widened the scope of their pastoral concern by appointing chaplains for industry, schools, and colleges.
  - iv. **As stated above, Pastoral Care and Pastoral Theology are often referred to as “Practical Theology.” A relevant research textbook is Integrative Theology by Gordon Lewis and Bruce Demarest. In this book, topical components of theology are explored in five approaches – Historical, Biblical, Systematic, Apologetic, and Practical [AKA Pastoral] Theology. The brilliance of this text book is each theological topic is approached and explored in terms of the specific theological focus. This demonstrates quite profoundly how theological concepts can be applied to ministry in each of these contexts.**
- b. **Importance of the Pastoral Epistles** – These Epistles provide the most concise and detailed directives to leadership regarding church management. The Pastoral Epistles are to ministry what the Epistle of Romans is to presenting normative New Testament theology. Some of the topics explored in the Pastorals are:
- i. The importance, qualifications, and selection process for church leadership.
  - ii. The necessity of both “Orthodoxy” – meaning correct doctrine, and “Orthopraxy” – meaning correct leadership practices.

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- iii. **Guidance for leaders in managing church Body-Life.**
  - iv. **Guidance for leaders in managing other leaders within the church.**
  - v. **In general, the Pastoral Epistles were written to specific leaders within a known church context, rather than the congregations. The intent of these personal letters was to provide guidance to the most senior leaders on how to maintain a healthy Christ-centered and Gospel-centered church community. Knowing the health of any community is dependent upon the quality and character of its leaders, the Pastoral Epistles stand out as a key resource in discipling leaders.**
- c. **Author and Date of Composition** – The Apostle Paul has been accepted as the author of the Pastoral Epistles (which include 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy, Titus, and Philemon) for literally all of church history until the past century or so. In the modern critical analytical movement, some scholars hold to the notion that the Pastorals present a picture of the church that is far too advanced to have been written in the mid-first century AD. These scholars argue that the development of the church structure [corporate organization] and theological development in the church, as presented in the Pastorals, reflect a church far too advanced in such a short period of time. Most conservative scholars reject these arguments. We know there were many challenges to the early church which forced it to grow up quickly. These challenges include 1) the Greco-Roman social and political opposition, 2) the heresies of Gnosticism and Modalism, 3) Jewish faith and practice inclusions – stipulating believers had to become Jews before they could become Christians, etc. These and other challenges helped force the church to develop its distinctive identity and structure. Historical timeline elements that come into play include the following:
- i. **Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection occurred in 32 AD.**
  - ii. **Political persecution from Rome and religious persecution from Jews and Pagans – forced the early church underground while missionary ambassadors maintained a vibrant evangelical witness. The early church had a strong focus on evangelism and discipleship, and as young believers were grounded in their faith, they were sent into their mission field.**
  - iii. **Heretical infiltration and subversion was developing within the early church – this provided an impetus for the Apostles to provide written guidance to keep the church Christ-centered and theologically-grounded. Paul’s Epistle to the Romans remains the greatest theological work of the New Testament.**
  - iv. **The combination of these factors forced the early church to grow up fast and to codify their belief and organizational system.**
  - v. **Most scholars accept that the New Testament was written between the years of 45 to 95 AD, with the Epistle of James being the first writing and John’s Revelation the last. It should come to no one’s surprise that the message of New Testament Scripture is remarkably consistent and cohesive with differences in writing style and theological focus of the authors adding perspective with only minor controversy.**
  - vi. **The Gospel of Mark is regarded as the earliest of the Gospels having been written in 55-57 AD. The Gospel of Matthew was written around 58-62 AD. With the Gospel of John written in the mid to late 80’s AD.**

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- vii. The Books of Luke [Gospel] and Acts [history] were written around 60-63 AD. The Epistles of Ephesians and Galatians were written around 61-62 AD.
  - viii. The epistles to Timothy and Titus were written in the last year or so of Paul's life. We know that Paul was martyred in Rome along with Peter in 67-69 AD. Hence, these Epistles were written around 66-68 AD. The epistle to Philemon was written about the same time as the epistle to the Colossians, around 60-62 AD.
  - ix. Thus, within a short period of time, a substantial portion of Scripture was written and distributed. The presence of the Apostles and many other eye-witnesses to the events helped to verify accuracy and credibility of these texts. This along with the Old Testament foundation provided a strong authoritative structure for the church to grow and develop.
  - x. The internal coherent argument of the Biblical unfolding in redemptive history, the timeline presented above, and the early church history and modern scholarly research collectively support the contention that Paul is the author of the Pastoral Epistles. The longtime position of the church fathers and church tradition through the ages also supports Paul's authorship. The theology presented in these epistles is clearly Pauline. Therefore, there is no good reason to erode the integrity and authority of Scripture to allow some leaders to redefine church governance and leadership often for personal reasons. In essence, there is no credible alternative to Pauline authorship.
- d. **Purpose of the Pastoral Epistles** – The timeline above is important for us to understand as it also demonstrates how quickly healthy churches can go off-track. The Pauline Epistles of Ephesians and Galatians had been written to churches that were healthy and growing. However, within a few years after these epistles were written these churches were beset with false teachers who invaded from the outside, and coupled with degraded leadership from the inside, this necessitated Paul's dispatching of Timothy and Titus to correct these deficiencies.
- i. 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy was written to ground and authorize Timothy's ministry to the church of Ephesus by providing internal structure and cohesion within the church. This also provided a basis for Timothy to defend the truth of the Gospel.
  - ii. 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy was written shortly after 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy, and its focus was to confer upon Timothy Paul's leadership authority. Paul is in essence, "passing the torch" to his chosen successor Timothy.
  - iii. See the articles on all four Pastoral Epistles for more on the background for each letter.
  - iv. The main problem in these churches that Paul founded had to do with false teachers who were promoting a "Syncretistic" perversion of the true Gospel Paul had preached. Syncretism is the blending of religious concepts where the resultant ideas no longer resemble the original faith concepts. In this case, the false teachers were adding a toxic blend of Christian doctrinal heresies including:
    - 1. Jewish dietary customs and Law restrictions – Requiring the need for works in addition to faith as required under Jewish Law and customs. The "Judaizers" [see themes chart below] mentioned in several epistles were those who taught that Christians had to abide by all of the Jewish Laws and customs in addition to the teachings of Jesus and His Apostles.

2. **Hellenist Pagan ideas were added that taught of the separation of the material and spiritual world, which held that because the material world was fatally flawed, the spiritual world was all that mattered.**
  - a. **These teachers promoted the thought that since the physical world was irrelevant, the religious prescriptions against promiscuity and debauchery had no basis for the believer at all, because the Spiritual life was all that mattered.**
  - b. **Another component of this physical/spiritual duality resulted in the heresy of “Modalism.” Modalists argued that Jesus was not fully God, only fully human. They taught that Jesus became the Christ when the Spirit came upon him at his baptism and Jesus ceased being Christ when the Spirit departed from him upon the cross. This is not the picture of Jesus as being fully God and fully Man that the Gospels and Epistles support.**
  - c. **Another Hellenist Pagan thought was that Jesus was merely a Spiritual being who appeared to be human, much like Greek and Roman gods who were believed to periodically come to earth. Another wrinkle of this was that Jesus was a human that was possessed by the Spirit during Jesus’ ministry, and the Spirit then left Jesus prior to the crucifixion. Each of these taught that Jesus was other than what Scripture said He is – the Emmanuel, God with us... fully God, fully human, the perfect and only possible atonement for fallen humanity.**
3. **Mystical religion influences were also in play that advocated a “deeper secret knowledge” that could only be provided through a mystic-master, usually for a price.**
  - a. **Gnosticism according to Zondervan’s Archeological Study Bible, was one of the earliest Christian heresies, drawing from Greek-Platonic philosophical concepts and adding imagery from both the New Testament and Pagan myth.**
  - b. **Gnosticism was a syncretic movement [see syncretism] that claimed to provide “secret knowledge” [Gnosis] about God. Gnostics considered the Judea-Christian Creator as an inferior god within the Greco-Roman Pagan Pantheon. Their teachings centered around the concept that the material world was inherently evil with no eternal benefit, thus they rejected the Christian message that humanity lived out a spiritual life in a physical world. Humanity being both Spiritual and physical beings [a hybrid] was rejected by the Gnostics. The Gnostic “savior” was seen as anyone bringing spiritual enlightenment, rather than the ONE fulfilling the Jewish Scriptural requirement of the Atonement for the Sin-nature of fallen humanity.**
  - c. **Some Gnostics believed that anyone with the proper enlightenment could receive the “Christ Anointing” meaning a type of Christ which had no**

- physical body. They believed this was the spiritual presence that came upon Jesus at his baptism which left him upon his crucifixion.
- d. Another brand of Gnostics called “Docetists” believed that Jesus was actually a divine spirit [like Greek gods Zeus or Hermes – see Acts 14:8-15] whose physical body was only an illusion [see 1 John 4:2]. Christian doctrine teaches that Jesus was fully human and fully God, which the Gnostics rejected.
  4. These false teachers encouraged an unhealthy fascination with myths, genealogies, and a preoccupation with the Law of Moses. Their teachings included Gnostic heresies of spiritual/physical dualism, prohibitions against certain foods, and teachings that the final resurrection had already occurred. Into this backdrop of confusion, Paul sent Timothy to clarify what was true and real faith.
  5. The result of this toxic syncretistic concoction was a confused faith that was no longer truly Christo-centric, and disrupted the entire inner-life of the church.
  - v. In addition to these heretics that invaded the church, there were also those who arose within the Church leadership who had become morally and ethically corrupted and became self-serving opportunists who saw the congregation as a means to furthering their own material ends, instead of acting as self-sacrificial leaders who shepherd the flock in the name and with the character of Jesus.
  - vi. The result of the combination of these failures, were some of the specifics Paul calls out in the Pastoral Epistles:
    1. Christians were acting in an abusive and unloving manner to one another.
    2. Unqualified men had become leaders who had fallen into sin and encouraged others to do likewise.
    3. Women were flaunting their wealth and newly acquired knowledge and influence over their weaker congregants.
    4. The poor were being denigrated and victimized within the body by those who should be ministering to them.
    5. Prayer had become stagnant and unspiritual as individuals launched into self-serving aggrandizement.
    6. The church had lost its reputation in the unbelieving community and the Gospel message that had been convicting and drawing people to Christ, lost its power.
  - vii. Paul writes these Pastoral Epistles to provide authoritative support for his missional protégés Timothy and Titus by establishing a clear picture of what a true shepherd-leader looks like and acts like, and the appropriate conduct expected that forms the foundation of church effective leadership. Timothy and Titus are now publicly authorized by Paul’s Apostolic authority to correct the deficiencies within the church.
  - e. **Summation** – The Pastoral Epistles were written to speak into these and other problems within the church, and they remain one of the clearest resources for the church in the definition of “orthodoxy” meaning what constitutes true Christian faith, and “orthopraxy” meaning the proper action of the governing servant-leaders within the church.

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**2. GENERAL THEMES OF THE PASTORAL EPISTLES – Dr Gary Tuck:**

Theme	1 TIMOTHY	2 TIMOTHY	TITUS
Gospel entrusted	1:11; 6:20	1:13,14	1:3
Instruction (paragge/lion)	1:5,18; 4:11; 5:7		
Teach authoritatively!	1:3f; 2:1; 4:11; 5:7,21; 6:2,17f	2:2,23; 4:2	1:9,11,13; 2:1,12,15; 3:8,10
God our Savior	1:1; 2:3; 4:10	1:8f	1:3; 2:10; 3:4
Jesus Savior		1:10	1:4; 2:13; 3:6
Save	1:15; 2:4, 15; 4:16	1:9; 4:18	3:5
Salvation		2:10; 3:15	
Doxology	1:17; 6:15f		
Faithful saying	1:15; 3:1; 4:9	2:11	3:8
Judaizers	1:4; 4:2f		1:10
... Myths	1:4,7; 4:1		1:14; 3:9
False doctrine	1:3; 4:1,7; 6:3,20f	2:23; 4:4	1:14; 3:9
Healthy doctrine	1:10; 4:6; 6:3	1:13; 4:3	1:9,13; 2:1,2 (healthy faith)
Abandoning truth	1:6,19f; 4:1; 5:15; 6:10,21	1:15; 2:18	1:14
Hold to the truth	6:11-14,19,20	1:16; 2:14-16; 3:14	1:9
Knowledge of truth	2:4	2:25	1:1
Faith	1:2,4,5,12,14,16,18; 2:7,15; 3:13,16; 4:3, 10,12; 5:9,16; 6:2	1:5,13; 2:22; 3:15	1:1,4; 3:15
Faithful ( <i>pistos</i> )	1:12,15; 3:1,11;	2:2,11,13	1:6,9; 3:8

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	4:3,9,10,12; 5:16; 6:2,2		
"The Faith"	1:19; 3:9; 4:1,6; 5:8; 6:10,12,21	2:18; 3:8,10; 4:7	1:13; 2:2
Good deeds	5:10,25; 6:18	3:17	1:1 (16); 2:1,7,11f, 14; 3:1,8,14
Endure hardness		1:6-8; 2:1,3-6,10,12; 3:11f; 4:5	
Fight	1:18; 6:12	2:3; 4:7	