

Survey of 1 Timothy

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Introduction

1. Paul wrote this letter toward the end of his life to the fellow pastor and child in the faith, Timothy (1:1-2). Timothy is facing the difficult task of ministering to all the saints in Ephesus (1:3) and Paul writes to help refute false teaching (1:3-7; 4:1-8; 6:3-5, 20-21); to supervise the affairs of the church (2:1-15); and the appointment of church leaders (3:1-13; 5:17-25).
2. 1 and 2 Timothy along with Titus are generally referred to as the “Pastoral Epistles” even though they do not use any terms like shepherd or pastor. They are Paul’s directions to Timothy and Titus and to the churches they oversee. Timothy’s father was Greek and his mother Jewish Christian (Acts 16:1). From childhood he had been taught the scriptures (2Ti.1:5; 3:15).
3. 1 Timothy was written sometime after Acts 28 and at least eight years after Paul’s three-year stay in Ephesus (Acts 19:8, 10; 20:31).
4. Paul was in all likelihood imprisoned twice in Rome. As he anticipated in Philippians he was released from his first imprisonment (Phil. 1:19, 25, 26; 2:24), which allowed him to continue his missionary endeavors. In 1 Timothy Paul had recently left Timothy at Ephesus (1Tim.1:3). In Titus he had recently been with Titus in Crete (Tit.1:5); but appears then to be at Nicopolis at the time of writing the epistle to Titus and wants Titus to join him there. By the time Paul writes 2 Timothy, Paul is a prisoner at Rome and expects to soon die (2 Tim. 1:17). He had apparently recently left some of his belongings at Troas (2 Tim. 4:13). And he had also been to Miletus where he had to leave behind his companions Trophimus, who was ill (2 Tim. 4:20) and Erastus who remained in Corinth. Thus, shortly before writing the Pastoral Epistles, Paul had traveled in Asia, Crete, and in parts of Europe (2 Tim. 4:13, 20).

Outline

Charge Concerning Doctrine (1)

Charge Concerning Public Worship (2—3)

- a. Role of Men and Public Prayer (2:1-8)
- b. Role of Women (2:9-15)
- c. Qualifications of Elders (3:1-7)
- d. Qualifications of Deacons (3:8-13)

Charge Concerning False Teachers (4)

Charge Concerning Church Discipline and Duties (5)

Charge Concerning Pastoral Motives (6)

Main Points and Application

1. Paul warns Timothy about the growing problem of false doctrines, particularly the misuse of the law of God (1:3-11). There has never been a day in the life of the church where strange doctrines did not exist (Acts 20:29-30). Why is there reluctance to address this? How do some “pay attention to myths and endless genealogies and speculations” (1:4) in our day?

2. From 1:3-11 what are some of the indicators that we are in the midst of strange doctrines? What are the best ways for fighting error?

3. What is the good news found in the statement that Paul is the chief of sinners (1:15)?

4. When Paul told us to pray for our rulers and all men, Nero was the emperor of Rome (2:1-8). We are to pray for both good and bad authorities that we might lead a quiet and peaceful life. What should we remember when we pray?

5. What do we learn about the roles of men and women (2:1-15)?
 - a. Maleness (2:1-8).
 - b. Femaleness (2:9-15).

6. In the qualifications of elders and deacons (3:1-13) what are the main things we must look for? The criteria for making sure of one's inward call by the Spirit and one's outward call by God's saints to be an Elder or Deacon is found in Acts 6:1-6, 1Timothy 3:1-13, and Titus 1:5-9. All of the non-optional criteria mentioned in these passages for determining accurately whether one is called to be an Elder or Deacon in the church fall under three headings:
 - A. Calling/Desire (v.1). Does he have spiritual knowledge of the Spirit's work in him and others? Does he have scriptural knowledge that is sufficient to lead and counsel the flock of God and guard them from error?
 - B. Competence/Design (v.2-8). Does he have a competent measure of ministerial gifts which enable him to adequately minister to the needs of the saints?
 - C. Character/Dignity (v.4-7). Does he have the kind of piety the flock of God would do well to emulate and practice in their own individual lives?

7. Church manners are a lost art in many places today yet it makes a big difference how we conduct ourselves as the church (3:14-16). How does God say we are to do it in this passage?

8. People will tell you that to be holy you must not marry, you must not eat certain foods, and you must put a ban all sorts of things God created as good (4:1-5). How does this go on today? What then is the solution to a godly life (4:6-16)?

9. What are God's instructions for those with money (6:10, 17-19)?