

## Introduction to Timothy and Titus

### I. Timothy and Titus are usually grouped together

- A. They concern the church and church leadership
- B. They were written to individual leaders rather than churches
- C. As a collection, they have had various titles
  1. Pontifical Letters
    - a. Deals with organization of the church
    - b. This was a Catholic designation
  2. Pastoral Epistles
    - a. Emphasis on elders, shepherds, and church leadership
    - b. This title was a later designation after the reformation
  3. Evangelistic Epistles
    - a. Letters were written to evangelists
    - b. The content gives instructions for evangelists

### II. Author, Date, and Occasion

- A. Written by Paul the Apostle
- B. Date
  1. The events in these letters do not fit anywhere in Acts
    - a. (1 Tim 1:3) Paul left Timothy in Ephesus  
(Acts 20:4-6) Paul leaves Ephesus and takes Timothy with him
    - b. (Titus 1:5; 3:12) - Paul left Titus in Crete and is in Nicopolis where he planned to spend the winter  
There is no mention of any of this in Acts
  2. Contrast of Paul's imprisonment in 2 Timothy and in Acts
    - a. In 2 Timothy, release is not an option
      - 1) (2 Tim 4:6-8) - Paul indicates his time is finished
      - 2) (2 Tim 4:18) - Seems to indicate the end was near
    - b. In Acts, and the Prison Epistles, the picture is different
      - 1) (Acts 28:30) "Two full years" seems to indicate possible release
      - 2) (Phil 1:25-26; 2:24) - Paul expects to be released
      - 3) (Phlilemon 22) - Paul expects to be released
  3. Early church leaders mentioned Paul's release, another missionary journey that included Spain, return to Rome and his martyrdom. These include Clement of Rome, Eusebius, and Jerome, among others
  4. This seems to indicate very strongly that Paul was imprisoned twice in Rome, the second of which is not recorded in scripture and from which he was never released.
  5. Would make the date of these epistles somewhere in the time frame of 62-67
    - a. 62 is two years from the time of Paul's imprisonment in Rome
    - b. 67 is the year of his martyrdom in Rome
- C. Occasion
  1. Written to two evangelists, Timothy and Titus
    - a. Timothy
      - 1) Greek Name: Timotheos - Honor of God
      - 2) (Acts 16:1-3) First mention of Timothy
        - a) Father was a Greek, mother was a Jew
        - b) Timothy's community thought highly of him
        - c) Timothy joins Paul after circumcision

- d) Timothy becomes part of Paul's missionary endeavor
- 3) (2 Tim 1:5) - Taught in the faith by his mother and grandmother
- 4) (2 Tim 3:15) - Instructed in the scriptures from childhood
- 5) (1 Tim 4:12; 2 Tim 2:22) - Timothy is young
- 6) (2 Tim 1:6-7; 1 Cor 16:10) Timothy might have been reserved or timid
- 7) (1 Tim 5:23) Timothy might have had a nervous stomach or had been sickly
- 8) Paul trained Timothy for ministry
  - a) (1 Cor 4:17) - Refers to Timothy of his "beloved and faithful child in the Lord"
  - b) (2 Tim 1:2) - Calls Timothy his "beloved son"
  - c) (Rom 16:21) Also refers to Timothy as his "fellow worker"
  - d) (1 Thess 3:2) Paul sends Timothy to minister
  - e) (Phil 2:19-19-22) Timothy has a "kindred spirit"
- 9) (1 Tim 1:3) Timothy was in Ephesus when Paul writes to him
- b. Titus
  - 1) Not mentioned by name in Acts,  
He may have been part of the group in Acts 15:2 that went to the Jerusalem conference, as mentioned in Gal 2:1-3.
  - 2) (Gal 2:1-5) Titus was a Greek, and remained uncircumcised unlike Timothy
  - 3) (2 Cor 8:16-17) Titus appears to be more assertive than Timothy, because he went of his own accord
  - 4) Converted by Paul and worked with Paul
    - a) (Tit 1:4) Paul refers to him as his "true child in a common faith"
    - b) (2 Cor 8:23) Titus is Paul's partner and fellow worker
    - c) (2 Cor 8:6f) Titus organized the collection in Corinth
    - d) (2 Cor 2:13; 7:6, 13, 14) Titus worked with the troubled church in Corinth
  - 5) (Tit 1:5) Titus was in Crete when Paul writes to him
- 2. Historical background
  - a. (Acts 20:17-38) Paul warned Ephesian elders of troubles to come
    - 1) Reminds them of his example and his work with them
    - 2) Warns them of coming trouble
    - 3) (v.32) Commends to God and the word of his grace
  - b. Ephesus
    - 1) Known for Temple of Artemis (Diana)
      - a) One of the wonders of the ancient world
      - b) Depicted with many breasts, indicating fertility
      - c) The various trades in support of the temple were a major source of income
    - 2) Culture was a mix of Greek and Asiatic people
    - 3) Commercial center of the province
      - a) Seaside port
      - b) River
      - c) Good highways
  - c. Crete
    - 1) Historically had a bad reputation

- a) Famed as a drunken, insolent, untrustworthy, lying gluttonous people
- b) Ancient words derived from Cretans
  - 1] "Kretizein, To "cretanize" - To lie and cheat
  - 2] Proverb: "To cretize a cretan" - To match lie for lie
  - 3] A Cretan - A worthless cheat
- 2) (Acts 2:11) Cretans were among the first to hear the Gospel
- 3) Because of location, Crete had exposure to many cultures
- 3. Nature of the heresy and trouble in Ephesus and Crete
  - a. Intellectual speculation
    - 1) (1 Tim 1:4, 6-7) Myths and speculation, fruitless discussion
    - 2) (Tit 1:14) Jewish myths
    - 3) (1 Tim 6:4) Morbid interest in controversy
  - b. Division, quarrels, and strife
    - 1) (2 Tim 2:14) Wrangling about words ruins hearers
    - 2) (2 Tim 2:16-17) Worldly, empty chatter leads to further ungodliness and gangrene
    - 3) (2 Tim 2:23) Foolish, ignorant speculations lead to quarrels
    - 4) (Tit 3:8-11) Reject a factious man
  - c. Asceticism
    - (1 Tim 4:1-3) Forbidding marriage and certain foods
  - d. Immorality
    - 1) (2 Tim 3:6) Taking advantage of weak women
    - 2) (Tit 1:16) Disobedient to God
    - 3) (1 Tim 6:5) Try to profit from godliness
  - e. False Knowledge and Teaching
    - 1) The full blown Gnostic heresy, which came in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century, was based on speculative knowledge<sup>1</sup>
    - 2) (Tit 1:10) Empty talkers and deceivers
    - 3) (1 Tim 6:4) Refers to worldly false knowledge
    - 4) (2 Tim 4:3) Smorgasbord teaching to tickle the ears
  - f. Denial of the Resurrection
    - 1) (2 Tim 2:18) Resurrection already took place
    - 2) Various forms of resurrection heresy in ancient times
      - a) Greeks believed in immortality, but not in a resurrection
      - b) Some taught that a man lived on in his children, and that this was the resurrection
      - c) Some taught the resurrection took place at baptism, and was symbolic of a renewed life, but not after death
- 4. Paul writes to Timothy and Titus to deal with leadership and false teaching
  - a. Leaders need to be appointed and strengthened as Paul did in Acts 20
  - b. (Tit 1:10) Leaders need to be able to refute false teaching
  - c. (Tit 2:1, 7) Leaders need to promote spiritual soundness
  - d. (2 Tim 2:2) Leaders to promote growth in spiritual leadership
  - e. (1 Tim 4:7, 13, 15; 6:11; 2 Tim 3:16; 2 Tim 4:2) Spiritual soundness comes from spiritual discipline

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<sup>1</sup> Built on the assumption that matter was bad and spirit was good. The two were to have nothing to do with each other. This resulted in both hedonism and asceticism.