

Notes & Outlines

**1 & 2 TIMOTHY
TITUS
PHILEMON**

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PASTORAL EPISTLES

The two letters to Timothy and the one to Titus are labeled Pastoral Epistles. The contents of the letters reveal the obvious reason for this. They were written by Paul to two of his young converts (1 Timothy 1:2; Titus 1:4) who had followed him on many of his missionary journeys and whom he had established as pastors of churches at the time of the writing of these epistles. Although they were addressed by Paul to his young friends in the ministry, the message is for churches. He gave instructions for the orderly procedure of local and visible churches. These letters have a particular message to young pastors, and they have pertinent instructions for the present-day church.

1 TIMOTHY

WRITER: Paul

DATE: About A.D. 64

Probably Paul was released from prison at Rome between A.D. 64 and 67. If this is accurate, it was during this interval that he wrote this first letter to Timothy. He wrote to Titus at this same time. Some authorities think that Paul wrote from Macedonia. Apparently he had left Timothy in Ephesus (1 Timothy 1:3), and he wrote this letter to encourage and assist him (1 Timothy 6:20).

THEME: Government and order in the local church. This is in contrast to the Epistle to the Ephesians where the church is the body of Christ, the invisible church. Here it is a local assembly of believers organized for a common purpose.

KEY VERSES:

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. (1 Timothy 1:3)

But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. (1 Timothy 3:15)

Sound doctrine and correct conduct identify the local church.

Doctrine occurs 8 times;

Godliness occurs 8 times;

Teach and *teacher* occur 7 times;

Good occurs 22 times.

OUTLINE:

I. Faith of the church, Chapter 1

A. Introduction, vv. 1, 2

B. Warning against unsound doctrine, vv. 3-10

C. Personal testimony of Paul, vv. 11-17

D. Charge to Timothy, vv. 18-20

II. Public prayer and woman's place in the churches, Chapter 2

A. Public prayer for the public and public officials, vv. 1-7

B. How men are to pray, v. 8

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B. Requirements for deacons, vv. 8-13

C. Report of Paul to Timothy, vv. 14-16

IV. Apostasy in the churches, Chapter 4

A. How to recognize the apostates, vv. 1-5

B. What the "good minister" can do in times of apostasy, vv. 6-16

V. Duties of officers of the churches, Chapters 5, 6

A. Relationship of ministers to different groups in the local church, Chapter 5

B. Relationship of believers to others, Chapter 6

COMMENT:

I. Faith of the church, Chapter 1

This is not a doctrinal statement but is a warning against false teachers. The gospel of the grace of God is central in doctrine. It concerns the person of Christ.

A. Introduction, vv. 1, 2

v. 1 — Paul declares that he is an apostle of Jesus Christ by commandment of God. “Our Savior” occurs six times in the Pastoral Epistles — used of both God and Christ. (*Will of God and the work of Christ* — it is the will of God to save sinners; it is the work of Christ that saves sinners.) “Our hope” looks to the future.

v. 2 — “My own son” would be better translated “my true child.” Both Timothy and Titus were brought to Christ through the ministry of Paul. “Mercy” occurs in 2 Timothy and Titus and is peculiar to the Pastoral Epistles.

B. Warning against unsound doctrine, vv. 3-10

v. 3 — “Teach no other doctrine” should be “not to teach a different doctrine.”

v. 4 — “Fables” are myths. “Endless genealogies” refer to the demiurge basic to Gnosticism, which believed in emanations from the divine center. It could also refer to Old Testament genealogies.

v. 5 — The purpose of sound doctrine is to produce love in Christian living.

v. 6 — “Vain jangling” is empty chatter.

v. 7 — “About which they affirm” means that they teach error with assurance.

v. 8 — “The law is good” means that it is morally excellent. It is good for moral conduct but not for salvation. Law cannot save a sinner — it should correct a sinner.

v. 9 — “Disobedient” is to be unruly.

v. 10 — The local church should teach sound doctrine to insure correct conduct. Man must think right to act right.

C. Personal testimony of Paul, vv. 11-17

v. 11 — “Glorious gospel” is the gospel of glory. “Was committed to my trust” means with which I was entrusted.

v. 12 — “He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry” should read “He counted me faithful in that He appointed me to His service.”

v. 13 — This is Paul’s statement of his life before the Damascus road experience. “Mercy” is what a sinner needs — not justice.

v. 14 — Faith, love, grace, and mercy are the great realities of the Christian faith.

v. 15 — Paul is not being academic or forensic when he states that he was the chief of sinners. He was just that. This is not hyperbole.

v. 16 — Paul would be an example and encouragement to sinners of how God saved him and of the fact that He does save sinners. “Pattern” is an example.

v. 17 — “King eternal” means King of the ages. Christ is *Lord* of the church, not King. This is a doxology.

D. Charge to Timothy, vv. 18-20

v. 18 — This is Paul’s personal charge to Timothy.

v. 19 — Apostates had already appeared among the believers in the local churches.

v. 20 — Paul calls by name two of them who had blasphemed (see 2 Timothy 2:17). “Delivered unto Satan” was evidently an apostolic ministry. “May learn not to blaspheme” means being disciplined not to blaspheme.

II. Public prayer and woman’s place in the churches, Chapter 2

A. Public prayer for the public and public officials, vv. 1-7

v. 1 — “Supplications” are petitions. “Intercession” is to intercede on their behalf as if they did not pray.

v. 2 — “All that are in authority” means those in an office who could affect or influence the spread of the gospel. Pray that there might be freedom to live as believers should and freedom to witness to the lost.

v. 3 — This is the will of God.

v. 4 — God’s desire is the salvation of all. Praying for rulers so that the gospel can be preached is in the will of God. Also, He wants all believers to advance to full maturation by studying the Word of God.

v. 5 — Prayer is made only through Christ, for no man can come immediately into the presence of God — only mediately through Christ. He is the mediator because He is both man (Jesus) and God (Christ).

v. 6 — Christ is a propitiation (mercy seat) for the whole world. Mercy must be appropriated to be effective (just as a gift

must be accepted).

v. 7 — “I am ordained” is to be appointed.

B. How men are to pray, v. 8

“I will” is desire. “Everywhere” means in every place where believers meet. “Lifting up holy hands” was a custom in that day, practiced by the early church. It revealed the dedication and lives of those praying. “Without wrath” means that sins have been confessed. “Without...doubting” (see Hebrews 11:6).

C. How women are to pray, vv. 9-15

v. 9, 10 — As in v. 8, “I desire” is understood. Women are not to dress with the idea of attracting the opposite sex when they pray to God (see 1 Corinthians 11:5).

v. 11 — Women were leaders in the mystery religions of Paul’s day (see notes on Ephesians), which were largely sex orgies. Here Paul cautions that women are not to speak in tongues publicly (see 1 Corinthians 14:34).

v. 12 — The woman is not to be over the man in spiritual matters — for the sake of order and headship. This should be an incentive to a man to be the *spiritual* leader rather than asserting authority as a dictator.

vv. 13-15 — It was the sin of Eve that brought sin into the world, and only sinners are produced through the childbearing. It was the birth of Jesus to Mary that brought the Savior into the world. No *man* provided a Savior — a *woman* did. However, a woman is saved by faith the same as a man is saved by faith, and she is to grow in love and holiness the same as a man.

III. Officers in the churches, Chapter 3

A. Requirements for elders, vv. 1-7

v. 1 — “True saying” is better translated “faithful saying.” “Desire” — a better word is “seeks.” “Bishop” is an overseer or superintendent. Elder and bishop are the same person (some good men disagree with this position). “Elder” (Greek *presbuteros*) is the word applied to the person; “bishop” (Greek *episkopos*) is applied to the office.

v. 2 — Positive qualifications: “one wife” — not guilty of immorality, polygamy, or an un-scriptural divorce; “temperate”

(in KJV, “vigilant”) — a better translation would be “cool, calm or not credulous”; “sober-minded” — a better word is “serious”; “of good behavior” — a better word is “orderly”; “apt to teach” means an ability and love of teaching.

v. 3 — Negative qualifications: “not given to wine” means no drunken conduct; “not violent” (in KJV, “no striker”) is not pugnacious; “not greedy of filthy lucre, but patient” means “not covetous, but reasonable”; “not a brawler” — a better translation is “not contentious”; “not covetous” means to not be a money lover.

v. 4 — In his own home, an elder should be the authority without being the dictator.

v. 5 — He will be the same man in the church that he is in his home. No dictator nor Mr. Milquetoast need apply.

v. 6 — “Novice” is better translated as “new convert.” “Lifted up with pride” is blinded with pride. “Condemnation” is judgment. Satan will be his accuser.

v. 7 — “Good report” is a good testimony.

B. Requirements for deacons, vv. 8-13

v. 8 — Paul and Apollos are called deacons; in 1 Corinthians 3:5 they are called ministers. Others who are called ministers:

Christ (Galatians 2:17),

Government officials (Romans 13:4), and

Ministers of Satan (2 Corinthians 11:15).

“Minister” is a general term for a servant and worker. “Grave” is calm and cool. “Double-tongued” in our idiom is to be two-faced. “Not given to much wine” — the Bible teaches temperance, not total abstinence. “Greedy of filthy lucre” means having an insatiable love of money, obtained by any means.

v. 9 — “Mystery of the faith” means the revelation of the gospel in Christ. “The faith” is the content of the gospel. “In a pure conscience” is a vessel that holds the gospel.

v. 10 — A deacon should be tested before he is placed in office. “Blameless” means they are not to be guilty if accused.

v. 11 — Wives of deacons must measure up to certain standards. “Slanderers” are gossips.

v. 12 — Same as elders.

v. 13 — A deacon who serves well will become a man to be trusted. “Boldness” is confidence and courage in witnessing.

C. Report of Paul to Timothy, vv. 14-16

v. 14 — Paul sent this letter ahead to Timothy to guide him until he himself could come.

v. 15 — This letter would be the book of church order for the local church in the absence of Paul.

v. 16 — “Mystery of godliness” — the purpose of God is to make a man with God-likeness (1 John 3:2). “God was manifest in the flesh” — the flesh that revealed God to man at the same time concealed Him, for God is Spirit. “Justified in the Spirit” is better read as “vindicated in the Spirit.” “Seen of angels” is better translated “appeared unto angels.” “Gentiles” (κτιν) is more accurately “nations.” “Received up into glory” is more accurately “taken up in glory.”

This was probably one of the primitive creeds of the early church. It is in contrast to what follows in the next chapter.

IV. Apostasy in the churches, Chapter 4

A. How to recognize the apostates, vv. 1-5

v. 1 — “Now” should be “but” and should be joined to the brief primitive creed in 3:16. It is in contrast to it. “Latter times” refers to the last days of the church on earth. “Depart” (Greek *apostesontai*) means to stand away from. Apostates are those who once believed the Scriptures and the great truths of the Scriptures but have come to the place where they reject them entirely. “The faith” is the body of truth in the Scriptures. “Seducing” is wandering. “Doctrines of demons” is teachings of demons. Evidently the evil spirits lead the false teachers in giving satanic error.

v. 2 — “Speaking lies in hypocrisy” would be better translated “through the hypocrisy of men who speak lies.” “Having their conscience seared with a hot iron” is more accurately “branded in their own consciences with a hot iron.”

v. 3 — These errors were taught by the Essenes, an ascetic group down by the Dead Sea where the Dead Sea Scrolls were found. They were not Christian but were in existence during the lifetime of our Lord.

vv. 4, 5 — This should settle the question about diet and especially about meats. “By the word of God” means to return thanks.

B. What the “good minister” can do in times of apostasy,
vv. 6-16

v. 6 — The minister should warn believers about the apostasy and false teachers by teaching the words of the faith.

v. 7 — Avoid old women’s myths. Practice godliness.

v. 8 — “Bodily exercise” means bodily gymnastics. Obviously, Paul exercised physically, for he walked over most of the Roman Empire. (He did not need to jog.) He is saying here that physical exercise is only for this life.

v. 10 — Christ is the Savior of all men, but only those who believe are saved (John 3:16; 1 John 2:2).

v. 12 — Timothy was young, probably in his 30s.

v. 13 — The minister is to read the Scriptures publicly, to comfort and to teach.

v. 14 — Timothy had a gift of the Spirit to do this, as every minister should have. Timothy was an ordained teacher by the laying on of the hands of the elders.

v. 15 — “Meditate” means to be diligent in study.

v. 16 — Timothy is warned to be faithful in his teaching.

V. Duties of officers of the churches, Chapters 5, 6

A. Relationship of ministers to different groups in the local church, Chapter 5

v. 1 — An elder is not to be rebuked publicly but is to be entreated privately.

v. 2 — He is to have a chaste relationship with the opposite sex.

vv. 3-13 — This is a section given over to instruction about widows. Evidently widows were supported by the local church (v. 3). Family responsibility comes first in a Christian’s life (v. 8). A widow could occupy an official place in the church — evidently this has to do with the office of deaconess (vv. 9, 10). Idleness and gossip are condemned (v. 13).

v. 14 — Woman is the homemaker.

v. 15 — Some had gone into mystery religions.

v. 16 — Each family is to support its own widows.

vv. 17-19 — Elders are to be honored. A man who brings a charge against an elder must do it before witnesses.

v. 20 — Does this mean to call the offending elder by name? Probably so.

v. 21 — The minister must not show partiality.

v. 22 — “Lay hands suddenly on no man” is a caution not to be hasty in returning a sinning elder to office.

v. 23 — Wine here is a medicine. Timothy, though young, had a physical infirmity.

vv. 24, 25 — God does not always judge a believer’s sins here in this life. Sometimes judgment does not come until a believer stands before the judgment seat of Christ (see 1 Corinthians 11:31, 32).

B. Relationship of believers to others, Chapter 6

vv. 1, 2 — This is capital and labor relations.

vv. 3-5 — Have nothing to do with proud men who want to argue.

vv. 6-16 — This is a list of precious gems for the believer. A believer should find satisfaction with his position in life (v. 6). A true axiom (v. 7). Riches do not bring satisfaction (v. 9). Money is not evil in itself (v. 10); it is amoral. “The love of money” is a root of all kinds of evil. The man of God should pursue these virtues (v. 11). This fight (v. 12) may be outward or inward, physical or spiritual. Jesus is the only One who has been raised from the dead in a glorified body (v. 16).

v. 17 — This is a warning to the rich.

v. 18 — “Distribute” is to sympathize.

v. 19 — “Lay hold on eternal life” is the life which is life indeed.

v. 20 — “That which is committed to thy trust” (see 2 Timothy 1:12). “Knowledge falsely so called” should be “the falsely-named knowledge.” Paul is speaking of the Gnostic heresy.

2 TIMOTHY

WRITER: Paul

DATE: A.D. 67

The following is a probable calendar of the events of Paul's life during his last years:

- A.D. 58 Paul's arrest in Jerusalem.
- A.D. 61 His arrival in Rome.
- A.D. 61-63 His first Roman imprisonment.
- A.D. 64-67 His release. He writes 1 Timothy and Titus, probably from Macedonia.
- A.D. 67-68 His arrest and death. He writes 2 Timothy prior to his death in Rome.

KEY VERSES:

Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. (2 Timothy 2:15)

Preach the word; be diligent in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine. (2 Timothy 4:2)

Key words are "ashamed" (1:8, 12) and "endure" (2:3).

THEME: Loyalty in days of apostasy.

1. Loyalty in suffering (Chapter 1)
2. Loyalty in service (Chapter 2)
3. Loyalty in apostasy (Chapters 3:1 — 4:5)
4. Loyalty of the Lord to His servants in desertion (Chapter 4:6-22)

REMARKS:

Webster's definition of apostasy is: total desertion of principles of faith. Apostasy is not due to ignorance; it is a heresy. Apostasy is deliberate error; it is intentional departure from the faith. An apostate is one who knows the truth of the gospel (doctrines of the faith).

In 2 Timothy, Paul speaks of the ultimate outcome of gospel preaching. The final fruition will not be the total conversion of mankind, nor will it usher in the Millennium. On the contrary, there

will come about an apostasy which will well-nigh blot out “the faith” from the earth. This is in complete harmony with the startling word of Christ, “When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?” (Luke 18:8). This is not in keeping, of course, with a social gospel which expects to transform the world by tinkering with the social system. These vain optimists have no patience with the doleful words of 2 Timothy. Nevertheless, the cold and hard facts of history and the events of the present hour demonstrate the accuracy of Paul. We are now in the midst of an apostasy which is cut to the pattern of Paul’s words in remarkable detail.

Although the visible church has entered the orbit of awful apostasy, the invisible church is on its way to the epiphany of glory.

SPECIAL FEATURE: “Swan Song” of the Apostle

The deathbed statement of any individual has an importance that is not attached to other remarks. This is what lends significance to 2 Timothy. It is the deathbed communication of Paul; it is his final message. It has a note of sadness that is not detected in his other epistles. Nevertheless, there is the overtone of triumph, “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course....” Paul writes his own epitaph in 4:6-8. The epistle is very personal — there are twenty-five references to individuals.

OUTLINE:

- I. Afflictions of the gospel, Chapter 1**
 - A. Introduction, vv. 1-7
 - B. Not ashamed, but a partaker of affliction, vv. 8-11
 - C. Not ashamed, but assured, vv. 12-18
- II. Active in service, Chapter 2**
 - A. A son, vv. 1, 2
 - B. A good soldier, vv. 3, 4
 - C. An athlete, v. 5
 - D. A farmer, vv. 6-14
 - E. A workman, vv. 15-19
 - F. A vessel, vv. 20-23
 - G. A servant, vv. 24-26
- III. Apostasy coming; authority of the Scriptures, Chapters 3:1 — 4:5**

- A. Conditions in the last days, Chapter 3:1-9
- B. Authority of Scriptures in the last days, Chapter 3:10-17
- C. Instructions for the last days, Chapter 4:1-5

IV. Allegiance to the Lord and of the Lord, Chapter 4:6-22

- A. Deathbed testimony of Paul, vv. 6-8
- B. Last words, vv. 9-22
(*“The Lord stood with me.”*)

COMMENT:

I. Afflictions of the gospel, Chapter 1

A. Introduction, vv. 1-7

vv. 1, 2 — See notes on 1 Timothy 1:1, 2.

v. 3 — This is another name to add to the prayer list of the apostle Paul.

v. 4 — “Greatly desiring” is longing. Paul had a deep affection for Timothy, his son in the faith.

v. 5 — Timothy had a godly grandmother, Lois, and a godly mother, Eunice. His father was a Greek, and it is not known whether or not he was in the faith.

v. 6 — See 1 Timothy 4:14.

v. 7 — “Fear” is cowardice. “Power” is strength to overcome in the believer’s life. “Sound mind” is discipline. God does not intend that defeat should be the norm in Christian living.

B. Not ashamed, but a partaker of affliction, vv. 8-11

v. 8 — It takes courage to stand for Christ. Paul speaks of himself as a prisoner of Christ in reality — not of the Roman government.

v. 10 — “Who hath abolished death” is “since He has made of none effect death.” “Immortality” is incorruption.

v. 11 — Paul was a preacher, an apostle, and a teacher. “Of the Gentiles” does not appear in the better manuscripts.

C. Not ashamed, but assured, vv. 12-18

v. 12 — Paul was not ashamed of the gospel (Romans 1:16), and he urges Timothy not to be ashamed of it (v. 8). “That which I have committed unto him” should be “that which has been committed unto me.” Paul’s salvation and apostleship was a sacred trust that God

could keep though He had committed it to Paul.

v. 13 — “Form” is example or type — content of sound words.

v. 14 — “Good thing” means honorable trust.

v. 15 — These two, Phygelus and Hermogenes, probably apostates, were evidently ashamed of Paul.

v. 16 — Onesiphorus was the opposite (4:19).

v. 17 — He was not ashamed of the bonds of Paul.

v. 18 — Onesiphorus was a special saint who receives special mention in the Word of God.

II. Active in service, Chapter 2

In seven figures of speech, Paul describes the duty and activity of a believer.

A. A son, vv. 1, 2

v. 1 — As a believer, he is called “my son” — because he is born from above.

Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. (1 Peter 1:23)

As a son, he is to be strong.

v. 2 — As a son he is to instruct others so that they in turn may pass the gospel on to others.

B. A good soldier, vv. 3, 4

v. 3 — “Endure hardness” is to suffer hardness with him.

v. 4 — This verse has been used as an argument for clerical celibacy. However, Paul’s argument is that the emphasis should not be upon this life but on the life to come.

C. An athlete, v. 5

“A man” means an athlete. “Strive” refers to contending in the games.

D. A farmer, vv. 6-14

v. 8 — “Remember Jesus Christ of the seed of David, raised from the dead” is more accurate.

v. 9 — “Evildoer” is a malefactor. While Paul is bound, the gospel is not.

v. 10 — Paul travailed that others might be born into the family

of God.

v. 11 — “It is a faithful saying” is “faithful is the saying.”

v. 12 — This is strong language, but it reveals that Paul also believed that faith without works is dead.

v. 13 — According to the nature of Christ, He cannot accept as true one who is false. That would be tantamount to denying Himself.

v. 14 — “Strive not about words” is disputes. “To no profit” is, literally, to “nothing useful.” “Subverting” (Greek *katastrophe*) is a catastrophe for the hearers.

E. A workman, vv. 15-19

v. 15 — “To show thyself” is to present thyself. “A workman” evidently means a teacher (see 1 Timothy 5:18). “Not to be ashamed” — a worker should know the Word. “Rightly dividing” is to handle rightly.

v. 17 — Here are the names of two more apostates: Hymenaeus and Philetus.

F. A vessel, vv. 20-23

vv. 20, 21 — There are different types of vessels for different uses (see Jeremiah 18). The clay can decide if it will be a vessel of honor. A vessel must be clean to be usable.

v. 22 — “Follow” is to pursue.

v. 23 — “Foolish” means stupid. “Unlearned” is ignorant. “Avoid” is better translated as “refuse.”

G. A servant, vv. 24-26

v. 24 — The believer is also called a servant (bondslave). “Must not” is a moral obligation, a spiritual necessity. “Strive” — see verse 5.

v. 25 — Attempting to teach those who oppose or are antagonistic to him. “The acknowledging” is more correctly “the knowledge.”

v. 26 — “Who are taken captive” have been held captive.

III. Apostasy coming; authority of the Scriptures, Chapters 3:1 — 4:5

A. Conditions in the last days, Chapter 3:1-9

v. 1 — “In the last days” means the last days of the church (see 1 Timothy 4:1; 2 Peter 3:3; Jude 18; James 5:3). “Perilous times” means grievous or hard times.

vv. 2-5 — There are nineteen words or phrases used to describe the last days:

1. “Lovers of their own selves” are lovers of self.
2. “Covetous” is better “lovers of money.”
3. “Boasters” are swaggerers.
4. “Proud” is haughty.
5. “Blasphemers” is better “railers.”
6. “Disobedient.”
7. “Unthankful.”
8. “Unholy” is profane or common.
9. “Without natural affection” means abnormal relationships.
10. “Trucebreakers” means irreconcilable.
11. “False accusers.”
12. “Incontinent” means without self-control.
13. “Fierce” is savage.
14. “Despisers of those that are good” is better “haters of good.”
15. “Traitors” are betrayers.
16. “Heady” means reckless.
17. “High-minded” means blinded by or drunk with pride.
18. “Lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God” means pleasure-lovers rather than God-lovers.
19. These go through the rituals of religion but lack life and reality. “From such turn away” means to avoid them.

vv. 6, 7 — Some folk have been going to Bible classes (so-called) for years, listening to everyone who will teach them, but they never reach the age of maturation. Their lives are not changed.

v. 8 — Jannes and Jambres are the traditional names of the chief magicians of Pharaoh who opposed Moses. They duplicated the first three miracles of Moses. “Reprobate” is castaway. They have discarded the faith.

v. 9 — “Folly” means that their teaching is senseless and immoral.

B. Authority of Scriptures in the last days, Chapter 3:10-17

v. 10 — “Fully known” is better “thou didst follow.” “Manner of life” is conduct. Paul’s life is an open book.

v. 11 — This is the area where Timothy was reared and where Paul stopped on three of his missionary journeys. Here is where he was stoned to death.

v. 12 — “Godly” is according to godliness. That godliness and persecution go together is an axiom of the Christian life. There is no escaping.

v. 13 — “Seducers” is better “sorcerers” or “impostors.” “Deceiving” is leading astray.

vv. 14, 15 — Over against this dark background the believer has recourse to a knowledge of the Scriptures. The Scriptures are the only source of help for believers in days of apostasy.

“Unto salvation” does not mean particularly “getting saved” or the moment of salvation. Timothy is saved. This has a wider meaning and includes the life that issues from being saved. This is Christian living. The Scriptures give the *modus operandi* and the *modus vivendi* for Christian living.

v. 16 — “All scripture” means every passage of Scripture is given by inspiration of God — it is *God-breathed*. Not only is Scripture God-breathed, it is profitable. “Doctrine” is teaching. “Reproof” is conviction. “Correction” is setting right. “Instruction” is discipline.

v. 17 — “Perfect” is complete, full maturation. “Thoroughly furnished” is fitted out for a life of every good work.

C. Instructions for the last days, Chapter 4:1-5

v. 1 — “At his appearing” is by His appearing (epiphany), the Rapture of the church. “His kingdom” is the revelation, the return of Christ to the earth to establish His kingdom.

v. 2 — “Preach the word” is the rallying cry for believers in the last days of the church. The church is to give out the Word of God. “Be diligent” is to be ready. “Reprove” is, rather, convict. “Rebuke” carries the thought of threaten. “Exhort” is comfort. “Doctrine” is teaching.

v. 3 — “Shall they heap to themselves teachers”:

Shall invite teachers *en masse*. In periods of unsettled faith, scepticism, and mere curious speculation in matters of religion, teachers of all kinds swarm like the flies in Egypt. The

demand creates the supply. The hearers invite and shape their own preachers. If the people desire a calf to worship, a ministerial calf-maker is readily found.*

“Having itching ears”:

Clement of Alexandria describes certain teachers as “scratching and tickling, in no human way, the ears of those who eagerly desire to be scratched.” Seneca says, “Some come to *hear*, not to *learn*, just as we go to the theatre, for pleasure, to delight our ears with the speaking or the voice or the plays.”*

v. 4 — Church members will turn from the truth to fables (cults, isms, and sensational showmanship).

v. 5 — “Afflictions” are hardships. It will cost something to preach the Word of God in the last days. “Evangelist” is a traveling teacher, a missionary. “Make full proof of thy ministry” means to fulfill or fully perform your service.

IV. Allegiance to the Lord and of the Lord, Chapter 4:6-22

A. Deathbed testimony of Paul, vv. 6-8

Paul writes his own epitaph.

v. 6 — “Ready to be offered” means poured out as a libation, a drink offering. “Departure” is the Greek *analuseos*, a nautical term used of a ship ready to put out of the harbor for a sea voyage.

v. 7 — “A good fight” is rather *the* good fight, as a soldier. “Finished my course” (race course) as an athlete. “I have kept the faith” as a steward.

v. 8 — “Crown of righteousness” is the reward of a righteous life. (For crowns, see 1 Corinthians 9:25; Philippians 4:1; 1 Thessalonians 2:19; James 1:12; Revelation 3:11). To “love his appearing” is different from holding the doctrine of the coming of Christ. This verse refers to the Rapture.

B. Last words, vv. 9-22

(“*The Lord stood with me.*”)

Here follows a list of believers in the first century.

v. 9 — Paul urges Timothy to make every effort to come to him

*Marvin R. Vincent, *Word Studies in the New Testament*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1946, pp. 320, 321.

in Rome.

v. 10 — “Demas” is a short form of “Demetrius.” His name appears with Luke, the beloved physician, in Colossians 4:14, but only his name is there. He probably showed early in his profession the signs of an apostate.

v. 11 — Luke is faithful to the end. Mark made good, and Paul acknowledges it.

v. 12 — Tychicus is evidently the minister at Ephesus.

v. 13 — The cloak was to keep his body warm in the damp Mamertine prison; the books and parchments were for his mind.

vv. 14, 15 — I would hate to be Alexander the coppersmith! (See 1 Timothy 1:20; Acts 19:33.)

vv. 16-18 — “At my first defense” means his first trial. “The Lord stood with me” — something for the spirit of Paul.

Present purpose: “That all the Gentiles might hear.”

Future goal: “The Lord...will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom.”

vv. 19-21 — This is an exchange of personal greetings and news.

v. 22 — This is Paul’s final benediction.

TITUS

WRITER: Paul

DATE: A.D. 64-67 (See notes on 1 Timothy.)

CONTRAST:

While little is known of either Timothy or Titus, there seems to have been quite a contrast between them. Titus seems to have been a stronger man, both physically and spiritually, since Paul expresses less concern for his welfare. Titus was probably more mature and possessed a virile personality. Timothy was a Jew who was circumcised by Paul, but Titus was a Gentile, and Paul seems to have refused to circumcise him (Galatians 2:3). Paul circumcised one young preacher and refused to circumcise the other. Surely there is no rule that can be drawn from this other than “in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature” (Galatians 6:15).

THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH:

Here is a fine picture of the New Testament church in its full-orbed realization in the community as an organization. Many boast today that they belong to a New Testament church. In this epistle is found the measuring rod. The ideal church is one that has an orderly organization, is sound in doctrine, pure in life, and “ready to every good work” (Titus 3:1).

THE RETURN OF CHRIST:

In the first two epistles that Paul wrote (1 and 2 Thessalonians), the return of Christ is a great pulsing hope. This has led some critics to say that Paul believed this only when he was young and that he changed when he became more mature. However, in this epistle to Titus, one of his last, the blessed hope still possesses the soul of this intrepid pioneer of faith, “Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ” (Titus 2:13). The word for “looking” has the root meaning of *enter-taining*. This is the hope that occupied the guest chamber in the heart of Paul during all of his life, beginning at the Damascus Road and going on to the Appian Way.

OUTLINE:

- I. The church is an organization, Chapter 1**
(*As such, it should be orderly [v. 5].*)
 - A. Introduction, vv. 1-4
 - B. An orderly church must have ordained elders who meet prescribed requirements, vv. 5-9
 - C. The bad reputation of the Cretans, vv. 10-16
- II. The church is to teach and preach the Word of God, Chapter 2**
 - A. The church must teach sound doctrine, vv. 1-10
 - B. The church must preach the grace of God, vv. 11-15
- III. The church is to perform good works, Chapter 3**
(*To do this, it should be eager, anxious, and learning to perform good works [vv. 1, 8, 14].*)
 - A. Good works are evidence of salvation, vv. 1-7
(*The work of the Holy Spirit in contrast to the old life.*)
 - B. Good works are profitable for the present and future, vv. 8-15

COMMENT:

- I. The church is an organization, Chapter 1**
 - A. Introduction, vv. 1-4**
 - v. 1** — Paul uses an unusual designation for himself in the Pastoral Epistles (see 1, 2 Timothy). “A servant of God” is a bondslave of God. “Apostle of Jesus Christ” is one called directly of Jesus Christ (Galatians 1:1, 12). “According to the faith of God’s elect” — *the faith* is the body of truth in the New Testament, the apostles’ doctrine (Acts 2:42). “Acknowledging” is better translated “*knowledge of the truth according to true piety.*”
 - v. 2** — “In hope” is resting upon hope. “Which God, who cannot lie” — see Romans 3:4.
 - v. 3** — “In due times” is in His own seasons. “Through preaching” is in a proclamation. “Which is committed unto me” is where-with I was entrusted. Paul puts down a solid basis for his authority as he gives instruction to Titus for the local church.
 - v. 4** — Titus is another spiritual son of Paul (see CONTRAST in the introductory remarks).

B. An orderly church must have ordained elders who meet prescribed requirements, vv. 5-9

v. 5 — Paul had left Titus in Crete to organize local churches with elders as spiritual leaders. The elders are representatives of the congregations (there was to be more than one). They have spiritual oversight of the churches as well as being teachers of the Word.

vv. 6-9 — “Elder” and “bishop” seem to be synonymous terms. There are some additions and some omissions when compared to the requirements in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 (see notes). An elder (v. 7) must not be self-willed, for he is a steward of God as well as a representative of the people. He is in the church to find and to do God’s will. This is a better rendering of v. 9:

Holding fast the trustworthy word according to the teaching, that he may be able to exhort in the sound teaching and to convict the gainsayers (heretics).

C. The bad reputation of the Cretans, vv. 10-16

v. 10 — “Vain talkers” are empty chatterers.

v. 11 — “Subvert whole houses” is to overthrow whole families.

v. 12 — “One of themselves” refers to Epimenides. To speak like a Cretan meant to lie. “Evil beasts” means that they were rude and cruel. Found in another poem about Crete are these lines:

Crete, which a hundred cities doth maintain,
Cannot deny this, though to lying given.

vv. 13, 14 — Because of their background, Titus was to deal with them severely so they would not turn from the truth to fables.

v. 15 — Ceremonies and rituals cannot change the evil heart of man. Only the Word of God can change a human heart — then a ritual is acceptable.

v. 16 — Paul is saying that faith without works is dead.

II. The church is to teach and preach the Word of God, Chapter 2

A. The church must teach sound doctrine, vv. 1-10

v. 1 — The local church should be conspicuous by the teaching of sound doctrine (the Word of God).

vv. 2-5 — This is for senior citizens. Aged men, among other things, must be sound in the faith. Aged women, among other

things, must be teachers of good things. By their experience they are able to instruct the young women, which includes “to love their husbands” and to be “obedient to their own husbands” (which means they are to teach them how to respond to the love of the husband).

v. 5 — “Keepers at home” are workers at home. “Good” is kindly.

v. 6 — Does Paul mean that Titus or the old men are to teach the young men?

vv. 7, 8 — Probably he means Titus, for he, as a young man, is to be an example in many things.

vv. 9, 10 — These are instructions for servants. “Purloining” is to appropriate to one’s own use. The reason that servants are to please their masters is not fundamentally to please their masters, but to adorn the doctrine of God. To please God we must please those to whom we are responsible. The word for “adorn” is *kosmosin* from which we get the word *cosmetic*.

B. The church must preach the grace of God, vv. 11-15

(See author’s booklet, “Grace in Three Time Zones.”)

v. 11 — Past tense: The grace of God hath appeared (epiphany). Over 2000 years ago, He came into human history to establish a space-time relationship with mankind. He intruded into the stream of humanity — He died and rose again. This is what the grace of God is all about.

v. 12 — Present tense: This is the teaching ministry of Christ that continues through the work of the Holy Spirit (see John 16:12-15). This is practical sanctification.

v. 13 — Future tense: “Looking for” is a continuing expectancy. This is the Rapture, which means the redemption of our bodies. This completes salvation. “The great God and our Savior, Jesus Christ” — this is a clear-cut statement of the deity of Christ.

v. 15 — Titus is to preach these things with authority.

III. The church is to perform good works, Chapter 3

(*To do this, it should be eager, anxious, and learning to perform good works [vv. 1, 8, 14].*)

A. Good works are evidence of salvation, vv. 1-7

(*The work of the Holy Spirit in contrast to the old life.*)

v. 1 — The church must have members who are law-abiding. A believer should obey the laws of the land in which he lives — if they do not conflict or contradict his duty and relationship to God. “Ready to every good work” means a preparation and eagerness to perform every good work.

v. 2 — “To speak evil of no man” evidently means evil that is without proof, for Paul calls many evil men by name (see 2 Timothy 1:15; 2:17; 4:14). “Brawlers” means those who start a fight.

v. 3 — This is what the unsaved are and do.

v. 4 — The kindness and love of God provided a Savior for man (John 3:16).

v. 5 — “Works of righteousness” do not save a sinner — because he has none (they are as filthy rags according to Isaiah 64:6). “According to his mercy” — God does not save by mercy or love. Love provided a Savior to pay the penalty for sin; now God, who is rich in mercy, can save according to His mercy. He saves by grace which is love in action (Ephesians 2:4-9). “Washing of regeneration” is laver of regeneration (1 John 1:7; 2:2; 4:10). “Renewing” is making new, the new birth.

v. 6 — “Shed” or poured forth — salvation comes through Christ.

v. 7 — Justification comes first and comes through Jesus Christ.

B. Good works are profitable for the present and future,
vv. 8-15

v. 8 — Believers should be consistently reminded to perform good works, for it is profitable.

v. 9 — These are the things to be avoided, for they are not profitable.

v. 10 — Heretics in doctrine and conduct are to be avoided also.

v. 11 — “Subverted” is turned aside. “Sinneth” is to trespass. “Condemned of himself” is to be self-condemned.

vv. 12, 13 — Personal greetings and admonitions.

v. 14 — Paul’s final word concerns good works.

v. 15 — Paul concludes his letter with a benediction.

PHILEMON

WRITER: Paul

DATE: Probably A.D. 62 (See outline of Ephesians and the Prison Epistles introduction.)

FORM:

The Epistles present a different style in revelation. God used law, history, poetry, prophecy, and the Gospels heretofore, but in the Epistles He adopted a more personal and direct method. In this intimate way, He looks back to the Cross and talks about the church. Someone has said that the Epistles are the love letters of Christ to us. Dr. Deissmann divided them into two classifications: Epistles and letters. The Epistles are general, while the letters are more personal and individual. Under this division, the Epistle of Philemon would be classified as a letter, for it is individual and intimate. There is reason to believe that Paul did not expect its contents to be divulged (at other times he knew that he was writing Scripture). This does not detract from the inspiration and value of Philemon, but rather enhances its value and message.

BACKGROUND:

The story behind the Epistle to Philemon was enacted on the black background of slavery. There were approximately 60 million slaves in the Roman Empire, where the total population did not exceed 120 million. A slave was a chattel. He was treated worse than an enemy and was subject to the whim of his master.

The story can be briefly reconstructed. Onesimus was a slave belonging to Philemon, a Christian of Colosse. This slave had opportunity to run away and seized on it. He made his way to Rome where he expected his identity and past life to be swallowed up by the great metropolis. One day he chanced upon a gathering where Paul was preaching. There he heard the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit regenerated him, making him a new creature in Christ. He told his story to Paul, and Paul sent him back to Philemon with this accompanying letter.

PURPOSE:

The **primary** purpose of this epistle is to reveal Christ's love for us

in what He did for us before God in pleading our case. This is the finest illustration of substitution: “If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee anything, put that on mine account” (Philemon 18). We can hear Christ agreeing to take our place and to have all our sin imputed to Him — “For he hath made him...to be sin for us...” (2 Corinthians 5:21). He took our place in death, but He gives us His place in life: “If thou count me, therefore, a partner, receive him as myself” (Philemon 17). We have the standing of Christ before God, or we have none at all. He took our hell, and He gives us His heaven “that we might be made the righteousness of God in him” (2 Corinthians 5:21). Onesimus, an unprofitable runaway slave, was to be received as Paul, the great apostle, would have been received in the home of Philemon.

The **practical** purpose is to teach brotherly love. Paul spoke of the new relationship between master and servant in the other Prison Epistles. Here he demonstrates how it should work. These men, belonging to two different classes in the Roman Empire, hating each other and hurting each other, are now brothers in Christ — and they are to act like it. This is the only solution to the problem of capital and labor.

OUTLINE:

- I. Genial greeting to Philemon and his family, vv. 1-3**
- II. Good reputation of Philemon, vv. 4-7**
- III. Gracious plea for Onesimus, vv. 8-16**
- IV. Guiltless substitutes for guilty, v. 17**
- V. Glorious illustration of imputation, v. 18**
- VI. General and personal items and requests, vv. 19-25**

COMMENT:

- I. Genial greeting to Philemon and his family, vv. 1-3**

v. 1 — “A prisoner of Jesus Christ” — later, Paul makes his plea on the basis that he is a prisoner (v. 9). He was not in prison because of the cleverness of the Jerusalem religious leaders or the power of Roman officials. He was in prison because Jesus Christ willed it. Note that Timothy is with Paul. “Philemon” (see **BACKGROUND**). “Fellow-worker” — Philemon is not only dearly beloved, but is associated with Paul and Timothy in proclaiming the gospel.

v. 2 — “Apphia” is the wife of Philemon. “Archippus” is the son of Philemon. He is a young man who is a fellow soldier, enduring hardness for the gospel. “Church in thy house” — there were no church buildings in the apostolic period. The church assembled in homes.

v. 3 — This is the usual greeting of Paul (see other Prison Epistles).

II. Good reputation of Philemon, vv. 4-7

v. 4 — Paul had made Philemon a subject of prayer. This would seem to denote a special and close relationship between them.

v. 5 — Philemon had a good reputation as a believer. His “love” was toward the Lord Jesus and toward the other believers. His “faith” was toward the Lord Jesus, and he was faithful to other believers.

v. 6 — The life of Philemon was a testimony. “Every good thing” was the result of the fact that “it is God who worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure” (Philippians 2:13).

v. 7 — Paul had joy and consolation in the love of Philemon for other believers. “Bowels,” or heart, implies the entire psychological nature. It means that by him the inner life of the believers had great satisfaction.

III. Gracious plea for Onesimus, vv. 8-16

v. 8 — Paul now comes to the purpose of the letter and approaches his subject diplomatically and cautiously.

v. 9 — Paul gives three reasons as the basis for his plea:

1. “For love’s sake” — probably Philemon’s love for Paul.
2. “Paul, the aged” — though Paul is not too old in years, his suffering and persecution as a missionary for Christ have aged him.
3. He is a prisoner of Jesus Christ, in bonds in Rome, and could not come in person (see v. 1).

v. 10 — “Onesimus” means profitable.

v. 11 — “Unprofitable” — Paul is making a play upon words. “Profitable” (v. 10) was unprofitable; but now that he is a believer, he is profitable. He is now truly Onesimus — profitable to both Philemon and Paul. This is a subtle suggestion that while in prison

Paul could use him.

v. 12 — But Paul is returning him to Philemon.

v. 13 — Paul very candidly speaks his mind. This is very personal. Perhaps Paul did not intend us to read it.

v. 14 — Again he makes a subtle suggestion: Philemon could return Onesimus to him to minister to him in prison. Did Philemon send him back to Paul? I don't know, but I think he did.

vv. 15, 16 — Since Onesimus has become a believer, his status and relationship to Philemon are different. He is still a slave according to the Roman law, but he is more than that — he is a beloved brother. He is now really profitable. He can live up to his name for the first time.

IV. Guiltless substitutes for guilty, v. 17

This is one of the grandest illustrations of plenary substitution and imputation. Behind Paul's plea is Christ's plea to the Father on behalf of the sinner who trusts Christ as the Savior. That sinner is received on the same standing that Christ is received. In other words, the saved sinner has as much right in heaven as Christ has, for he has *His* right — “accepted in the Beloved” (Ephesians 1:6).

V. Glorious illustration of imputation, v. 18

The reason the saved sinner is accepted in heaven is that Christ took his place down here. The sins of the sinner were put on Christ, and He paid the penalty.

VI. General and personal items and requests, vv. 19-25

v. 19 — Paul agrees to pay the entire debt of Onesimus. Philemon is to receive him as he would receive Paul. “I will repay it” (see Hebrews 10:5-10).

v. 20 — Paul pleads for Onesimus.

v. 21 — Paul feels that Philemon will do more than he requests.

v. 22 — Paul expects to be released from prison. He requests prayer in that direction.

vv. 23-25 — These are personal greetings to mutual friends.

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SAMPLE SUMMARY FOR EACH CHAPTER

1. Theme of chapter —
2. Most important verse —
3. Most prominent word —
4. Teaching about Christ —
5. Command to obey —
6. Promise to claim —
7. New truth learned —

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