

A Course

In

**I TIMOTHY,
STUDIES IN**

Prepared by the
Committee on Religious Education
of the
American Bible College

Pineland, Florida 33945

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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The compiler of this course study has been privileged to set under the teaching of some of America's greatest evangelical / fundamental Bible scholars such as Dr. Homer A. Kent Jr., former president of Grace Theological Seminary and Professor of New Testament studies. I greatly admire him for his exemplar Christian life and am indebted for his scholarly challenge. He is a gracious man of deep biblical convictions and determination to interpret the Bible in all truth and accuracy. As you will note, he does not dodge the volatile issues, but presents his understanding in a fair and accurate approach.

We wish to thank Dr. Kent for his gracious permission to use his textbook, "The Pastoral Epistles" and classroom material. This course study will consist mainly of his text book with the inclusion of additional notes from Dr. Kent's class lectures and a few personal notes, unless otherwise noted. The scripture texts are altered to conform with the King James Version except where Dr. Kent is using his own rendering. Where not interpreted by Dr. Kent, the English translation will be added in brackets for comprehension by the non-Greek student.

It is my desire that this study by Dr. Kent will be as enlightening and spiritually rewarding to you as it has been to my life and ministry.

Dr. Marvin W. Royse

INTRODUCTION

As you study the Scriptures you will find that it is of the greatest importance to approach the Bible in a reverent attitude of mind, looking upon it as the inspired Word of God, and not just an ordinary piece of literature. If the Bible is studied in the same manner as one studies Shakespeare, Milton or some historical work, it may be found interesting and profitable. But by this approach, the Bible student, persistent though he may be, will never find its rich treasures. The Apostle Paul says: "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (I Cor. 2:14) For the profitable study of the Word of God, the right spiritual attitude is indispensable.

The Scriptures should be studied as eagerly as a hungry person seeks for food. The formal reading of a portion of the Bible may have some worth as a religious exercise, but in order that the complete benefit may be obtained from its truths, they must be appropriated to personal needs. A milkman may deliver thousands of quarts of milk each day and yet go home thirsty. The Bible student may read large portions of the Bible with little benefit, unless he makes it his own by personal appropriation and feeds upon it.

In your studies of the Bible, will you appropriate the riches thereof to your own personal use, or will you read as you would read a book of fiction, a mystery, etc. In order to make full use of the pearls of wisdom contained in the Bible readings, it is suggested you reread them. Go into its wonderful fields of truth; go down into its valleys; climb its mountain peaks of vision; follow its streams of inspiration; enter its halls of learning. Many Bible truths do not appear on the surface; they must be dug up and be brought into the light by toil and effort.

There are various methods of Bible study, such as the topical method, the study of books, the study by chapters, the study of important passages, and the biographical method. In this study we are following the exegetical method which is a verse by verse method. In this way the student will see the Pastoral Epistles historically and analytically as God has inspired and preserved it.

In this course work, Dr. Kent uses the expository-exegetical method, whereby he presents the Word of God in a contextual word-meaning format so that the student has a whole understanding based on an integration of the individual word meanings. In most cases, Greek words will be phonetically denoted by italicization. In Dr. Kent's exegesis, he often presents his English translation from the Greek word structure,

thus often changing our normal English form. Bible references will be standardized in the King James Version and alterations from Dr. Kent's work will be noted in brackets. If the student is not familiar with the Greek text, it is advisable that he obtain a good Greek-English interlinear translation such as that by George Ricker Berry.

In his introduction, Dr. Kent writes, "All Christians may find in the Epistles to Timothy and Titus a practical approach to the Christian life, especially as it relates to their local church. These short letters also have a special appeal for the Christian minister or ministerial student. Many of the practical problems which he faces as a leader of God's people are discussed by the author from the administrator's viewpoint. In some instances, the only scriptural discussion of these problems occurs in these valuable letters.

Yet the attacks leveled against the Pastoral Epistles demand an investigation into the matters of authorship, text, and content. It certainly makes a great difference to a Christian whether these letters were actually written by the apostle Paul to his protégés Timothy and Titus, or whether they were the work of a forger (regardless of his motives) who fabricated them from Pauline fragments, liberally sprinkled with his own ideas. It means the difference between a properly attested portion of Scripture from the pen of Christ's apostle, and an intriguing piece of literature, not quite as trustworthy as the works of Ignatius, Polycarp, Irenaeus, and other second-century writers."

During this course the student is required to read through the entire Pastoral Epistles ten times.

Contents

<i>Acknowledgement</i>	3
<i>Introduction</i>	4
I. GENERAL BACKGROUND OF I TIMOTHY	6
II. HISTORICAL TESTIMONY TO THE AUTHORSHIP OF I TIMOTHY	11
III. PROBLEMS OF PAULINE AUTHORSHIP OF I TIMOTHY	18
IV. ESPOSITORY EXEGESIS AND TRANSLATION OF I TIMOTHY	30
Chapter One	33
Chapter Two	40
Chapter Three	50
Chapter Four	60
Chapter Five	68
Chapter Six	78

CHAPTER 1

GENERAL BACKGROUND OF I TIMOTHY

- I. THE AUTHOR
- II. THE DESTINATION
- III. THE OCCASION
- IV. THE DATE

1

GENERAL BACKGROUND OF I TIMOTHY

THE AUTHOR

This Letter to a young co-worker claims to have been written by the apostle Paul (1:1), as do II Timothy (1:1) and Titus (1:1). From the letter itself several bits of information concerning the whereabouts and plans of the writer are indicated.

Paul must have been at liberty and not imprisoned at the time of writing, since he describes a recent journey and prospects for a visit to Timothy in the near future, Paul had recently made a trip to Macedonia (1:3), instructing his colleague Timothy to care for the work at Ephesus, capital of the province of Asia in Asia Minor. It has been inferred (1:3) that Paul himself had been at Ephesus and had left Timothy there while he went on. However, this is not a necessary inference, since Paul could have given the instruction referred to by letter from any place along the way. But the reference to Paul's action regarding Hymenaeus and Alexander seems to demand that he had been at Ephesus (1:20).

Paul's hope was to make a personal visit to Timothy in Ephesus very soon (3:14). However, this plan still may have been in the tentative stage at the time of writing, for he recognized the distinct possibility of a delay in accomplishing his purpose (3:15).

Any delineation of the author of I Timothy must take into account the pertinent information contained in II Timothy and Titus. It is commonly agreed that all three, which claim to be the work of Paul, are the product of one writer and come from approximately the same period of time. First Timothy and Titus were first, with only a brief interval of time between their composition. It is not absolutely proved that I Timothy preceded Titus, but most students feel that such did occur, for the facts can be readily reconstructed if that

were the case. Second Timothy was written from a Roman prison with Paul facing imminent death.

In the Book of Titus (1:5) Paul reveals a recent visit to the island of Crete, where, upon departing, he had left Titus to guide the church. He informs Titus of his plan to spend the winter in Nicopolis, probably the city of that name in Epirus, which was in the Roman province of Achaia (3:12).

In II Timothy, Paul was writing as a bound prisoner in Rome (1:16, 17; 2:9). He had recently visited Miletus (4:20), Troas (4:13), and perhaps Corinth (4:20).

When the data from all three epistles are collected, one is able to reconstruct several possible itineraries. (See Chapter III, page 18, for a full itinerary compiled from additional sources.) There is not sufficient and compelling data to prove any one itinerary to be the proper one. Many of the stopping points on Paul's program could be reversed in order. To take a dogmatic position regarding his route is obviously unrealistic. It is not a problem of conflicting data, but of insufficient data. To the recipients of these epistles, their knowledge of contemporary events and plans of Paul undoubtedly enabled them to fill in any gaps in the history. The following itinerary is suggested as reasonable and in accord with the facts of I and II Timothy, and Titus. Other suggestions may be equally reasonable (see Map 1, page 18). A full itinerary based on additional sources is constructed in Chapter III.

1. Trip to Crete, leaving Titus to carry on the work (Titus 1:5).

2. Trip into Macedonia, with Timothy instructed to minister at Ephesus (I Tim. 1:3).

3. A possible visit to Ephesus, fulfilling Paul's intention (I Tim. 3:14).

4. Winter spent at Nicopolis (Titus 3:12). This is the primary reason for believing I Timothy to have preceded Titus, since a visit to Ephesus could hardly have been the next item on Paul's agenda ("shortly") if he planned to winter in Nicopolis. Probably, if the proposed visit to Ephesus did occur it was made just before the letter to Titus was written.

5. Visit to Miletus where Trophimus was left sick (II Tim. 4:20).

6. Visit to Troas where a cloak and parchments were left (II Tim. 4:13).

7. Perhaps a visit to Corinth (II Tim. 4:20).

8. Imprisonment at Rome (II Tim. 1:16, 17).

The cities Miletus, Troas, Corinth, and Rome suggest the order one would follow en route to Rome.

Since we know Rome was the final point reached, the others can be arranged in their geographical order.

THE DESTINATION

The addressee of the letter was a young man named Timothy, who was described in the greeting as a genuine child in faith, and in the second letter as a beloved child. His name appears twenty-four times in the New Testament, and from these occurrences we glean the only reliable information extant concerning him.

Timothy was a native of the Lycaonian city of Lystra (Acts 16:1,2) in Asia Minor. Acts 16:1 does not indicate whether he was from Derbe or Lystra, but the naming of Lystra and Iconium (v. 2) as places where his good reputation was known has led most interpreters to choose Lystra, because it is the city common to both verses. Another reason lending support to Lystra is based on Acts 20:4, where Paul's companions are listed according to their places of residence. In this geographical grouping, Timothy is distinguished from Gaius of Derbe. If he were from Derbe, one would have expected the statement to read "Gaius and Timotheus of Derbe" or "of Derbe, Gaius and Timotheus" in conformity to the other groupings in the list.

His mother Eunice and grandmother Lois were devout Jewesses (Acts 16:1; II Tim. 1:5). His father, however, was a Greek and there is nothing to indicate that he was a Jewish proselyte (Acts 16:1,3). One would rather suppose that he was not a believer in any sense, since his son had not been circumcised.

Timothy was probably converted on Paul's first journey, since on Paul's second visit he was chosen as his traveling companion. Paul on his first missionary journey preached in Lystra (Acts 14:6,7). Because of the childhood training which Timothy had received in the Scriptures (II Tim. 3:14,15), in addition to the example of "unfeigned faith" exhibited in his grandmother and mother, he was prepared for a receptive hearing of the Gospel message. Timothy also had opportunity to witness Paul's sufferings for the cause of Christ, since at Lystra occurred the stoning and extraordinary recovery of the apostle (Acts 14). Doubtless these factors all had a part in convincing young Timothy that Jesus was truly his Messiah. Paul claims a spiritual relationship to Timothy, calling him "my son" (1 Cor. 4:17; II Tim. 2:1), which may indicate him as the one humanly responsible for his

spiritual life, that is, the one who brought about his conversion.

The good reputation in the community of this young convert led Paul to select him as a traveling companion and assistant (Acts 16:1-3). On this second journey Silas had been chosen to take the place of Barnabas, and now Timothy was perhaps to fill the place that John Mark had formerly occupied (see Acts 13:5). Timothy first submitted to circumcision at the hands of Paul to avoid unnecessarily antagonizing the Jews who knew of his pagan father. It should be noted that this circumcision was not for salvation. Timothy was already saved when Paul arrived this time. But his mixed nationality would cause problems. Since he was uncircumcised, Jews regarded him as a gentile, but the gentiles classed him as a Jew because of his religion and his mother. This operation would regularize his status. Furthermore, the writer of Acts explains that this rite was performed as an aid to the work in Jewish areas (Acts 16:3). Otherwise Jewish synagogues would have been closed to him wherever his family background was known. Now he would be able to enter with Paul into the synagogues and take part in the services, bearing his testimony and expounding the Scriptures as they pointed to Christ. It should be clearly understood that circumcision was not performed to make him more acceptable to Christians, but to make him acceptable to Jewish audiences. It was an instance of Paul's principle of expediency (I Cor. 9:20).

Being set apart for the work of ministry by the laying on of the hands of Paul and the presbytery (I Tim. 4:14; II Tim. 1:6), Timothy joined Paul on the second missionary journey (Acts 16:2-4; 17:14,15; 18:5; I Thess. 1:1; 3:2,6; II Thess. 1:1). On this journey he was sent back to Thessalonica to assist the church.

Timothy also was a companion of Paul on the third missionary journey (Acts 19:22; 20:4; II Cor. 1:1, 19). At this time he was sent by the apostle on a mission to the church at Corinth to give special instruction (I Cor. 4:17; 16:10). Later he rejoined Paul and accompanied him back to Corinth, for he sends greetings along with Paul in the Epistle to the Romans written from Corinth (Rom. 16:21).

During Paul's first imprisonment at Rome, Timothy was his close companion (Phil. 1:1; Col. 1:1; Philemon 1). Paul purposed to send him on a special mission to Philippi (Phil. 2:19-23). Sometime in his career Timothy was imprisoned, but the time and place are not recorded (Heb. 13:23).

After Paul's release, he sent Timothy to guide the church at Ephesus, and this task seems to have

involved a considerable amount of time and responsibility. Timothy was at Ephesus when the first epistle was written to him, and was probably there at the writing of the second epistle also (I Tim. 1:3; II Tim. 1:16-18; 4:19). The church at Ephesus must have been dear to the apostle's heart, for he had stayed longer at Ephesus than at any other center on his journeys (Acts 20:31). Yet the city itself was a focal point of wickedness and thus was greatly in need of the Gospel. Archaeologists have unearthed the great temple of Artemis (Latin: Diana) in Ephesus. The temple itself was one of the wonders of the ancient world. The building was 163 feet by 342 feet, and had 117 columns. The roof was covered with large marble tiles. Brilliant colors, as well as gold, were used to decorate the stonework of the temple. The sacred object within was an image of Artemis. The top part of the image was a woman, carved grotesquely to emphasize the fertility of nature. The lower part was left uncarved, and was merely a rough block of wood. It was reputed to be so ancient that the tradition arose that it had fallen from Heaven (Acts 19:35). Silversmiths in Ephesus had developed a lucrative business by selling small replicas of the shrine as images and souvenirs. The characterization of Ephesus by Shakespeare in his *Comedy of Errors* shows its reputation:

They say this town is full of cozenage,
As, nimble jugglers that deceive the eye,
Dark-working sorcerers that change the mind,
Soul-killing witches that deform the body,
Disguised cheaters, prating mountebanks,
And many such-like libertines of sin.¹

Thus Timothy's field of labor was not an easy one.

The relationship of the apostle Paul to the younger Timothy is one both beautiful and challenging. That an older man should selflessly love, instruct, and repose confidence in a youth and then continue to exhibit such close companionship for approximately twenty years is surely admirable. For a young man to respond with similar respect, confidence, and heartfelt admiration, without jealousy, impatience, or resentment is equally commendable. The relationship of these two men is a remarkable display of Christian virtues at their best.

The function which Timothy fulfilled in the early church should not be confused with the present-day pastor. Rather, in those formative days of the church he

¹ J. Payne Collier, *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare* (New York: World Syndicate Company, Inc. 1925), p. 89.

seems to have been one of several who helped to carry out the transition from the times of the apostles to the post Apostolic era of the church. In the beginnings of the church, the authority of the apostles brought into being the church, and served to guide and instruct it. Although it seems clear that from the beginning local churches were congregationally controlled, still the influence of the apostles was strong. Timothy, therefore, was an apostolic representative. He exercised the guidance and counseling ministry that Paul would have performed had he been present. Titus occupied a similar position (Titus 1:5). Thus it is probably not correct to visualize Timothy as the pastor of the local Christian church at Ephesus. Rather, he was Paul's official delegate to assist the Ephesian church with its officials in conducting affairs in the proper manner.

THE OCCASION

The designation "Pastoral Epistles" is appropriate for the letters to Timothy and Titus because they contain instruction for pastoral work in churches.

First Timothy was written to the young minister at Ephesus because of a possible delay in Paul's arrival (3:14). During his absence, which might be prolonged, Timothy needed the instructions which only the apostle Paul, with his great experience and revelations from the Lord, could give. Thus I Timothy contains advice on specific matters of church polity. Timothy is urged to enforce the teaching of sound doctrine, to see that meetings are conducted orderly and scripturally. He is to insure that church officers are sufficiently qualified, and that they be motivated by spiritual considerations rather than a desire for worldly prestige or gain. The letter also took occasion to warn of the danger presented by false teachers, who in spite of claims of wisdom and learning in the Mosaic Law were actually hypocrites, motivated by demonic powers.

Although I Timothy is a personal letter addressed to one individual, it is also official rather than private. The contents were not meant for Timothy alone, but were for the edification of all the church. Thus we find such expressions in the letter as, "These things command and teach" (4:11). The epistle deals with church matters, not just personal matters. Hence I Timothy and the other pastorals were included in the canon from the start.

It is possible that the young minister Timothy was of a timid, retiring disposition, and frail health, who

needed encouragement. Several passages may indicate this.

Let no man despise thy youth: but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity (4:12).

Neglect not the gift that is in thee (4:14).

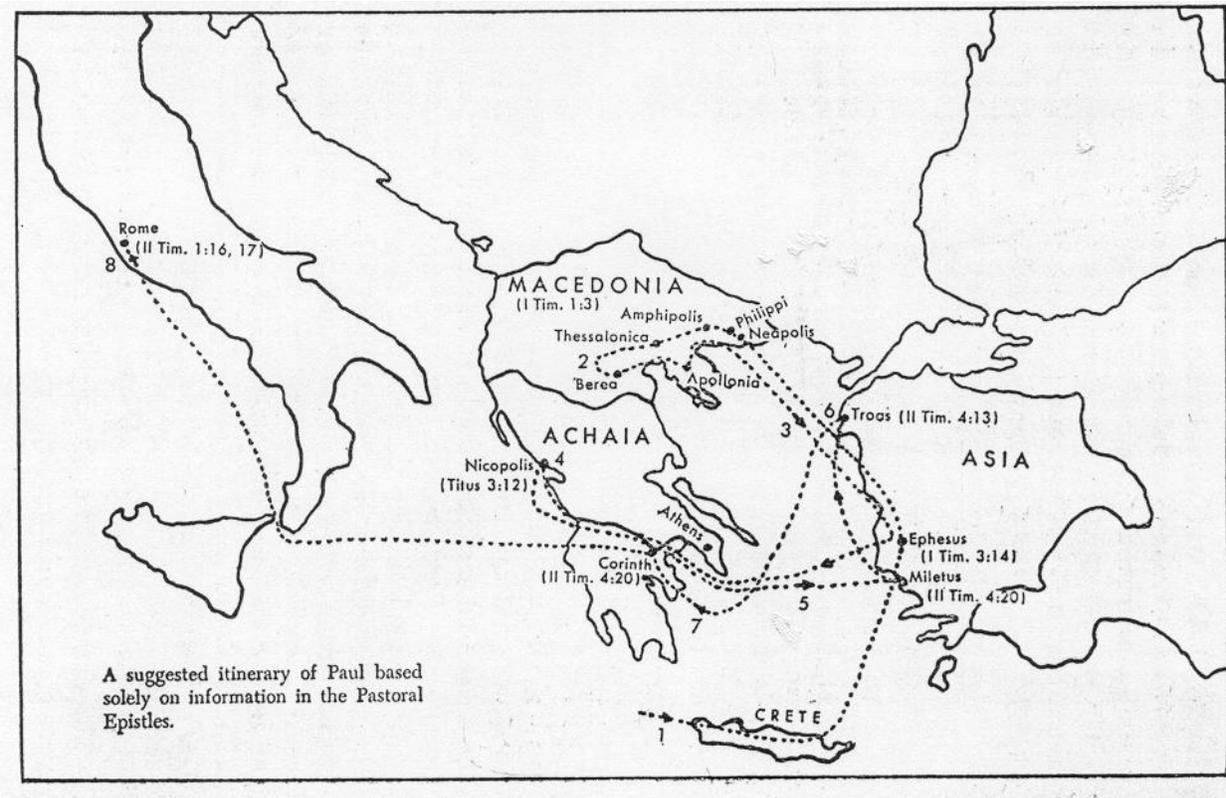
Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee (4:15, 16).

Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities (5:23).

However, this is in no way to be understood as a disparagement of Timothy, and may be an unwarranted inference. All ministers need encouragement from time to time. Every servant of God needs constantly to exercise his gifts, to meditate on the Word, and to concern himself with setting a proper example before the believers entrusted to his care. The more this writer has studied these Pastoral Epistles, the less convinced he has become of Timothy's timidity. The tremendous confidence which Paul reposed in Timothy, sending him to this most important field, reveals him to have been worthy to some degree at least of the title "man of God" which Paul uses of him (I Tim: 6:11).

THE DATE

The dating of I Timothy depends on the solution of the great chronological problem of the Pastoral Epistles. Must we find room for these epistles somewhere in the period covered by the Book of Acts, on the assumption that Paul died as a result of the first Roman imprisonment? Or may we safely assume a release and then a second imprisonment? This problem is dealt with fully in chapter III. At this point, however, it can be said that the Pastoral Epistles cannot be fitted into the framework of Acts without making some of the historical references impossible of harmonization. On the other hand, assuming the release of Paul in A.D. 62 after the two years of the first imprisonment, and a trip to the East, particularly Macedonia (I Tim. I: 3), it is likely that I Timothy was written during the years A.D. 62 or 63. Other chronologies may differ slightly because of variation in dating the release from A.D. 60 to 63.



END OF SAMPLE

