

1 TIMOTHY

1. Author: Paul.

- a. Internal proof.
 - (1) The autobiographical details in the letter fit very well with what we know about Paul.
- b. External proof.
 - (1) Polycarp, Clement of Rome, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, and the Moratoria Canon all attest Paul as the author.

2. Recipient: Timothy.

- a. See *Timothy*.

3. Date and Setting: ad 62-63.

- a. When Paul was released from his first Roman imprisonment, he sent Timothy to Philippi to relate the good news (Php 2:19-23). Paul himself went to Ephesus and other Asian churches. Eventually Timothy joined Paul in Ephesus. When Paul journeyed on to Macedonia, he left Timothy in Ephesus (1 Ti 1:3). Being delayed in Macedonia, he wrote this letter to Timothy. After re-visiting Timothy in Ephesus (1 Ti 3:14), Paul went to Crete with Titus (Tt 1:5). Paul was later re-imprisoned and eventually executed in Rome (2 Ti 4:7).
 - (1) Alternative view: For two years, ad 61-62, Paul was held under house arrest in Rome, at the end of which time, he was released. From ad 62-67 Paul traveled more or less freely, leaving Timothy in Ephesus and Titus in Crete, and then subsequently writing each of them a letter. Thus the approximate dates for *1 Timothy* and *Titus* are perhaps ad 63-66. After being recaptured and once again imprisoned, Paul wrote Timothy a second letter, *2 Timothy*. Thus *2 Timothy*, dated approximately ad 67.¹
- b. Paul is nearing the end of his ministry. Timothy is in the middle of his. Paul has a naturally forceful personality. Timothy has naturally weak personality. Timothy is unsure of himself as a leader.
- c. There are significant problems within the Ephesian church. Timothy must deal with these problems in Paul's absence. It will take all the spiritual courage Timothy can muster. Timothy isn't going to make everyone happy. Some will no doubt leave the church.
- d. Christianity is about to become an illegal religion in the Roman empire. Nero's burning of Rome will take place around ad 64.

4. Theme and Purpose.

- a. This letter offers important instructions from an older, experienced church leader to a younger, more inexperienced church leader. It is a letter from a disciple maker to a disciple charging him to advance in the five C's: conviction, character, competence, chemistry, and calling.

¹ A. Duane Litfin, "[1 Timothy](#)," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 729.

- b. Two things distinguish the three pastoral epistles from Paul's other letters: (1) they reflect the concerns that burdened Paul near the end of his ministry; and (2) they are addressed not to churches but to his younger lieutenants. They are highly personal, practical, and unsystematic in nature, and they deal with matters of church order. The developing need for structure in the churches, combined with Paul's awareness that he would soon be passing from the scene, prompted him to treat with these practical church and pastoral topics.²
- c. If Timothy receives any opposition in the Ephesian church, this letter will serve as Paul's public warrant for Timothy to assert his authority to order things rightly in the church. It is Timothy's trump card.

5. Key Verse.

- a. **1 Ti 3:14-15** 14 I hope to come to you soon, but I am writing these things to you so that, 15 if I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth.

6. Jesus in 1 Timothy.

- a. **1 Ti 1:12** 12 I thank him who has given me strength, Messiah Jesus our Lord, because he judged me faithful, appointing me to his service...
- b. **1 Ti 1:15-16** 15 The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Messiah Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost. 16 But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Messiah might display his perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life.
- c. **1 Ti 2:5-6** 5 For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Messiah Jesus, 6 who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time.
- d. **1 Ti 3:16** 16 Great indeed, we confess, is the mystery of godliness: He [Jesus] was manifested in the flesh, vindicated by the Spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory.
- e. **1 Ti 6:3-4** 3 If anyone teaches a different doctrine and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Messiah and the teaching that accords with godliness, 4 he is puffed up with conceit and understands nothing.
- f. **1 Ti 6:13-15** 13 I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Messiah Jesus, who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, 14 to keep the commandment unstained and free from reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Messiah, 15 which he will display at the proper time....

7. Contribution to the Bible.

- a. Along with 2 Timothy and Titus, 1 Timothy is rich in principles for churches and church leaders. It's primary concern is with the practical outworking of Christian truth within a local church.

8. Key Words.

² A. Duane Litfin, "[1 Timothy](#)," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 726-727.

a. Charge.

- (1) **1 Ti 1:3-5** 3 As I urged you when I was going to Macedonia, remain at Ephesus so that you may **charge** (παραγγέλλω) certain persons not to teach any different doctrine, 4 nor to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies, which promote speculations rather than the stewardship from God that is by faith. 5 The aim of our **charge** (παραγγελία) is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.
 - (a) παραγγέλλω: “to make an announcement about someth. that must be done, *give orders, command, instruct, direct* of all kinds of persons in authority, worldly rulers, Jesus, the apostles” (BDAG, 760).
 - (b) παραγγελία: “an announcement respecting someth. that must be done, *order, command, precept, advice, exhortation*” (BDAG, 760).
- (2) **1 Ti 1:18** 18 This **charge** (παραγγελία) I entrust to you, Timothy, my child, in accordance with the prophecies previously made about you, that by them you may wage the good warfare....
- (3) **1 Ti 5:21** 21 In the presence of God, of Messiah Jesus, and of the elect angels, I **charge** (διαμαρτύρομαι) you to keep these rules without prejudging, doing nothing from partiality.
 - (a) διαμαρτύρομαι: “to exhort with authority in matters of extraordinary importance, freq. w. ref. to higher powers and/or suggestion of peril, *solemnly urge, exhort, warn*” (BDAG, 233).
- (4) **1 Ti 6:13** 13 I **charge** (παραγγέλλω) you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Messiah Jesus, who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession....
- (5) **1 Ti 6:17** 17 As for the rich in this present age, **charge** (παραγγέλλω) them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy.

9. Controversy.

- a. Several statements by Paul in 1 Timothy are controversial in today's culture. How do we handle these controversial statements?

Bibliography

Marshall, I. Howard. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles. The International Critical Commentary*. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1999.

Mounce, William D. *Pastoral Epistles. Vol. 46. Word Biblical Commentary*. Dallas: Word, 2000.

Towner, Philip H. *The Letters to Timothy and Titus. The New International Commentary New Testament*. 2006.