

1-2 TIMOTHY & TITUS

Evangelical Biblical
Theology Commentary

General Editors

T. Desmond Alexander, Thomas R. Schreiner,
Andreas J. Köstenberger

Assistant Editors

James M. Hamilton, Kenneth A. Mathews,
Terry L. Wilder

Andreas J. Köstenberger



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GENERAL EDITORS' PREFACE

In recent years biblical theology has seen a remarkable resurgence. Whereas, in 1970, Brevard Childs wrote *Biblical Theology in Crisis*, the quest for the Bible's own theology has witnessed increasing vitality since Childs prematurely decried the demise of the movement. Nowhere has this been truer than in evangelical circles. It could be argued that evangelicals, with their commitment to biblical inerrancy and inspiration, are perfectly positioned to explore the Bible's unified message. At the same time, as D. A. Carson has aptly noted, perhaps the greatest challenge faced by biblical theologians is how to handle the Bible's manifest diversity and how to navigate the tension between its unity and diversity in a way that does justice to both.¹

What is biblical theology? And how is biblical theology different from related disciplines such as systematic theology? These two exceedingly important questions must be answered by anyone who would make a significant contribution to the discipline. Regarding the first question, the most basic answer might assert that biblical theology, in essence, is *the theology of the Bible*, that is, the theology expressed by the respective writers of the various biblical books *on their own terms and in their own historical contexts*. Biblical theology is the attempt to understand and embrace *the interpretive perspective of the biblical authors*. What is more, biblical theology is the theology of the *entire Bible*, an exercise in *whole-Bible theology*. For this reason biblical theology is not just a modern academic discipline; its roots are found already in the use of earlier Old

¹ D. A. Carson, "New Testament Theology," in *DLNT*, 810.

Testament portions in later Old Testament writings and in the use of the Old Testament in the New.

Biblical theology thus involves a close study of *the use of the Old Testament in the Old Testament* (that is, the use of, say, Deuteronomy by Jeremiah, or of the Pentateuch by Isaiah). Biblical theology also entails the investigation of *the use of the Old Testament in the New*, both in terms of individual passages and in terms of larger Christological or soteriological themes. Biblical theology may proceed *book by book*, trace *central themes* in Scripture, or seek to place the contributions of individual biblical writers within the framework of the Bible's larger overarching *metanarrative*, that is, the Bible's developing story from Genesis through Revelation at whose core is *salvation* or *redemptive history*, the account of God's dealings with humanity and his people Israel and the church from creation to new creation.

In this quest for the Bible's own theology, we will be helped by the inquiries of those who have gone before us in the *history of the church*. While we can profitably study the efforts of interpreters over the entire sweep of the history of biblical interpretation since patristic times, we can also benefit from the labors of scholars since J. P. Gabler, whose programmatic inaugural address at the University of Altdorf, Germany, in 1787 marks the inception of the discipline in modern times. Gabler's address bore the title "On the Correct Distinction between Dogmatic and Biblical Theology and the Right Definition of Their Goals."² While few (if any) within evangelicalism would fully identify with Gabler's program, the proper distinction between dogmatic and biblical theology (that is, between biblical and systematic theology) continues to be an important issue to be adjudicated by practitioners of both disciplines, and especially biblical theology. We have already defined biblical theology as whole-Bible theology, describing the theology of the various biblical books *on their own terms* and *in their own historical contexts*. Systematic theology, by contrast, is more topically oriented and focused on contemporary contextualization. While there are different ways in which the relationship between biblical and systematic theology can be construed, maintaining a proper distinction

² The original Latin title was *Oratio de iusto discrimine theologiae biblicae et dogmaticae regundisque recte utriusque finibus*.

between the two disciplines arguably continues to be vital if both are to achieve their objectives.

The present set of volumes constitutes an ambitious project, seeking to explore the theology of the Bible in considerable depth, spanning both Testaments. Authors come from a variety of backgrounds and perspectives, though all affirm the inerrancy and inspiration of Scripture. United in their high view of Scripture and in their belief in the underlying unity of Scripture, which is ultimately grounded in the unity of God himself, each author explores the contribution of a given book or group of books to the theology of Scripture as a whole. While conceived as stand-alone volumes, each volume thus also makes a contribution to the larger whole. All volumes provide a discussion of introductory matters, including the historical setting and the literary structure of a given book of Scripture. Also included is an exegetical treatment of all the relevant passages in succinct commentary-style format. The biblical theology approach of the series will also inform and play a role in the commentary proper. The commentator permits a discussion between the commentary proper and the biblical theology it reflects by a series of cross-references.

The major contribution of each volume, however, is a thorough discussion of the most important themes of the biblical book in relation to the canon as a whole. This format allows each contributor to ground biblical theology, as is proper, in an appropriate appraisal of the relevant historical and literary features of a particular book in Scripture while at the same time focusing on its major theological contribution to the entire Christian canon in the context of the larger salvation-historical metanarrative of Scripture. Within this overall format, there will be room for each individual contributor to explore the major themes of his or her particular corpus in the way he or she sees most appropriate for the material under consideration. For some books of the Bible, it may be best to have these theological themes set out in advance of the exegetical commentary. For other books it may be better to explain the theological themes after the commentary. Consequently, each contributor has the freedom to order these sections as best suits the biblical material under consideration so that the discussion of biblical-theological themes may precede or follow the exegetical commentary.

This format, in itself, would already be a valuable contribution to biblical theology. But other series try to accomplish a survey of the Bible's theology as well. What distinguishes the present series is its orientation toward Christian proclamation. This is the Evangelical Biblical Theology Commentary series! As a result, the ultimate purpose of this set of volumes is not exclusively, or even primarily, academic. Rather, we seek to relate biblical theology to our own lives and to the life of the church. Our desire is to equip those in Christian ministry who are called by God to preach and teach the precious truths of Scripture to their congregations, both in North America and in a global context.

The base translation for the Evangelical Biblical Theology Commentary series is the Christian Standard Bible (CSB). The CSB places equal value on faithfulness to the original languages and readability for a modern audience. The contributors, however, have the liberty to differ with the CSB as they comment on the biblical text. In the CSB, OT passages that are quoted in the NT are set in boldface type.

We hope and pray that the forty volumes of this series, once completed, will bear witness to the unity in diversity of the canon of Scripture as they probe the individual contributions of each of its sixty-six books. The authors and editors are united in their desire that in so doing the series will magnify the name of Christ and bring glory to the triune God who revealed himself in Scripture so that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved—to the glory of God the Father and his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, under the illumination of the Holy Spirit, and for the good of his church. To God alone be the glory: *solī Deo gloria*.

DEDICATION

*To all faithful pastors, elders, and deacons:
“so that you will know how people ought to conduct
themselves in God’s household,
which is the church of the living God,
the pillar and foundation of the truth.
And most certainly, the mystery of godliness is great:
He was manifested in the flesh,
vindicated in the Spirit,
seen by angels,
proclaimed among the nations,
believed on in the world,
taken up in glory.”
(1 Tim 3:14–16 CSB)*

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The present commentary continues a twenty-five-year-long quest to properly interpret and faithfully live out Paul's letters to Timothy and Titus. In fact, my engagement with these letters reaches back even further to the time when I was converted to Christ in my native Vienna, Austria, in 1983 and listened to a sermon series on 1–2 Timothy by Hans Finzel at the Vienna International Chapel. I am grateful for the mentors in the faith God provided for me since that time until today and for the opportunity to pass on what I have learned from them to others (2 Tim 2:2).

The letters to Timothy and Titus contain vital teaching on many subjects, not least the role of men and women in the church and the related topic of requirements for church leaders. The first book I coedited, *Women in the Church*—originally published in 1995, now in its third edition—addresses these vital issues, with particular focus on 1 Tim 2:9–15. Subsequently, I wrote an expository commentary on 1–2 Timothy and Titus for the revised Expositor's Bible Commentary (published in 2006). The present commentary builds on this earlier effort with a special focus on the biblical-theological dimension of these letters.

I am grateful to my student Chuck Bumgardner for his competent research assistance for this volume, in particular with regard to the biblical-theological exposition §§1 and 2 (originally one section), and portions of §3, as well as for his tireless bibliographic work. Chuck is a capable scholar in his own right and is sure to make a significant contribution to the study of the letters to Timothy and Titus, both in his Ph.D. dissertation and otherwise. Thanks are also due Dave Phillips for his research assistance with parts of §§4 and 5. It is a joy to mentor students like these!

This commentary is not written merely for fellow academicians but also—even primarily—for practitioners in the pulpit, the classroom, and the local and global church. Few scriptural books are as loaded with applicable insights and directions as the letters to Timothy and Titus. It is my hope and prayer that perusing this commentary will not merely result in greater scriptural knowledge but in more faithful practice of the principles enunciated in those letters. I have certainly learned a great deal from working on this volume, in particular with regard to the biblical-theological contribution they make to the NT and biblical canon.

Last but not least, I'd like to express my love and gratitude to my wife Margaret and to my four children—one a college graduate, two currently in college, and one starting high school. I thank God for you! I'd gladly exchange all the books and articles I've written for being your husband, Margaret, and, children, for being your dad. Paul urged Timothy, "Pay close attention to your life and your teaching; persevere in these things, for in doing this you will save [i.e., help preserve from error] both yourself and your hearers" (1 Tim 4:16). Toward this end, I dedicate this book to all pastors, elders, and deacons. May you be faithful in shepherding God's flock!

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Journals, Series, and Reference Works

AB	Anchor Bible
<i>ABD</i>	<i>Anchor Bible Dictionary</i>
ACCS	Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture
AnBib	Analecta Biblica
<i>ANRW</i>	<i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt</i>
ANTC	Abingdon New Testament Commentaries
<i>ASE</i>	<i>Annali di storia dell' esegesi</i>
AzTh	Arbeiten zur Theologie
<i>BBR</i>	<i>Bulletin for Biblical Research</i>
BBRSup	Bulletin for Biblical Research Supplement
BDAG	Bauer, W., F. W. Danker, W. F. Arndt, and F. W. Gingrich. <i>Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i> . 3rd ed. Chicago, 2000
BDF	Blass, F., A. Debrunner, and R. W. Funk, <i>A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i> . Chicago, 1961
BECNT	Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament
BETL	Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium
<i>BGU</i>	<i>Berliner griechische Urkunden</i>
<i>Bib</i>	<i>Biblica</i>
<i>BibInt</i>	<i>Biblical Interpretation</i>

BIS	Biblical Interpretation Series
<i>BK</i>	<i>Bibel und Kirche</i>
BNTC	Black's New Testament Commentaries
<i>BR</i>	<i>Biblical Research</i>
<i>BSac</i>	<i>Bibliotheca Sacra</i>
<i>BT</i>	<i>The Bible Translator</i>
<i>BTB</i>	<i>Biblical Theology Bulletin</i>
<i>BTZ</i>	<i>Berliner Theologische Zeitschrift</i>
<i>BZ</i>	<i>Biblische Zeitschrift</i>
BZAW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
BZNW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft
<i>CBQ</i>	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
CBQMS	Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series
<i>Colloq</i>	<i>Colloquium</i>
ConBNT	Coniectanea Biblica: New Testament Series
<i>CP</i>	<i>Classical Philology</i>
CSB	Christian Standard Bible
<i>CTR</i>	<i>Criswell Theological Review</i>
<i>DBSJ</i>	<i>Detroit Baptist Seminary Journal</i>
<i>DJG</i>	<i>Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels</i> . 2nd edition. Edited by J. B. Green, J. K. Brown, and N. Perrin. Downers Grove, 2013.
<i>DLNT</i>	<i>Dictionary of the Later New Testament and Its Developments</i> . Edited by R. P. Martin and P. H. Davis. Downers Grove, 1997.
<i>DNTB</i>	<i>Dictionary of New Testament Background</i> . Edited by C. A. Evans and S. E. Porter. Downers Grove, 2000.
<i>DPL</i>	<i>Dictionary of Paul and His Letters</i> . Edited by G. F. Hawthorne, R. P. Martin, and D. G. Reid. Downers Grove, 1993.
EBC	Expositor's Bible Commentary
<i>EBib</i>	<i>Etudes bibliques</i>
ECC	Eerdmans Critical Commentary
ECL	Early Christianity and Its Literature

List of Abbreviations

<i>EDNT</i>	<i>Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament.</i> Edited by H. Balz and G. Schneider. ET. Grand Rapids, 1990–1993
EKKNT	Evangelisch-katholischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
<i>EstBib</i>	<i>Estudios bíblicos</i>
ESV	English Standard Version
<i>ETL</i>	<i>Ephemerides Theologiae Lovanienses</i>
ETS	Evangelical Theological Society
<i>EuroJTh</i>	<i>European Journal of Theology</i>
<i>EvQ</i>	<i>Evangelical Quarterly</i>
<i>ExAud</i>	<i>Ex Auditu</i>
<i>Exp</i>	<i>The Expositor</i>
<i>ExpTim</i>	<i>Expository Times</i>
FCNTECW	Feminist Companion to the New Testament and Early Christian Writings
<i>FilNeot</i>	<i>Filologia neotestamentaria</i>
<i>FoiVie</i>	<i>Foi et Vie</i>
HNT	Handbuch zum Neuen Testament
<i>HorBT</i>	<i>Horizons in Biblical Theology</i>
HThKNT	Herders Theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
<i>HUCA</i>	<i>Hebrew Union College Annual</i>
HUT	Hermeneutische Untersuchungen zur Theologie
<i>IBS</i>	<i>Irish Biblical Studies</i>
ICC	International Critical Commentary
<i>IKZ</i>	<i>Internationale kirchliche Zeitschrift</i>
<i>Int</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
IVPNTC	IVP New Testament Commentary
<i>JAC</i>	<i>Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum</i>
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JBMW</i>	<i>Journal for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood</i>
<i>JETH</i>	<i>Jahrbuch für evangelikale Theologie</i>
<i>JETS</i>	<i>Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society</i>
<i>JGRChJ</i>	<i>Journal of Greco-Roman Christianity and Judaism</i>

<i>JJS</i>	<i>Journal of Jewish Studies</i>
<i>JOTT</i>	<i>Journal of Translation and Textlinguistics</i>
JPS	Jewish Publication Society
<i>JR</i>	<i>Journal of Religion</i>
<i>JRA</i>	<i>Journal of Roman Archaeology</i>
<i>JReIS</i>	<i>Journal of Religious Studies</i>
<i>JSNT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>
JSNTSup	Journal for the Study of the New Testament: Supplement Series
<i>JSOT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</i>
<i>JSP</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha</i>
<i>JTS</i>	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
KBW	Katholisches Bibelwerk
KJV	King James Version
L&N	Lou, Johannes P., and Eugene A. Nida, eds. <i>Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains</i> . 2nd ed. New York: United Bible Societies, 1989
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
LEC	Library of Early Christianity
LNTS	Library of New Testament Studies
<i>LS</i>	<i>Louvain Studies</i>
LSJ	Liddell, H. G., R. Scott, and H. S. Jones, <i>Greek-English Lexicon</i> . 9th ed. with revised supplement. Oxford, 1996
<i>LTP</i>	<i>Laval théologique et philosophique</i>
<i>LTQ</i>	<i>Lexington Theological Quarterly</i>
LTT	Letters to Timothy and Titus
LXX	Septuagint
MM	Moulton, J. H., and G. Milligan, <i>The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament</i> . London, 1930. Reprint, Peabody, MA, 1997
NAC	New American Commentary
NASB	New American Standard Bible
NCBC	New Century Bible Commentary
<i>NDBT</i>	<i>New Dictionary of Biblical Theology: Exploring the Unity and Diversity of Scripture</i> . Edited by T. D. Alexander, B. S.

List of Abbreviations

	Rosner, D. A. Carson, and G. Goldsworthy. Downers Grove, 2000
<i>Neot</i>	<i>Neotestamentica</i>
<i>NewDocs</i>	<i>New Documents Illustrating Early Christianity</i> . Edited by G. H. R. Horsley and S. Llewelyn. North Ryde, N.S.W., 1981–
N.F.	Neue Folge
<i>NIB</i>	<i>The New Interpreter’s Bible</i>
NIBCNT	New International Biblical Commentary New Testament
NIBCOT	New International Biblical Commentary Old Testament
NICNT	New International Commentary on the New Testament
<i>NIDNTT</i>	<i>New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology</i> . Edited by C. Brown. 4 vols. Grand Rapids, 1975–1978
<i>NIDNTTE</i>	<i>New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology and Exegesis</i> . Edited by M. Silva. 5 vols. Grand Rapids, 2014
NIGTC	New International Greek Testament Commentary
NIV	New International Version
NKJV	New King James Version
NLT	New Living Translation
<i>NovT</i>	<i>Novum Testamentum</i>
NovTSup	Supplements to Novum Testamentum
<i>NPNF1</i>	<i>Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Series 1</i>
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
NS	New Series
NSBT	New Studies in Biblical Theology
NT	New Testament
NTAbh	Neutestamentliche Abhandlungen
NTL	New Testament Library
NTOA	Novum Testamentum et Orbis Antiquus
<i>NTS</i>	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
OT	Old Testament
PBI	Pontifical Biblical Institute
PE	Pastoral epistles

PL	Patrologia Latina
PNTC	Pillar New Testament Commentary
<i>PRSt</i>	<i>Perspectives in Religious Studies</i>
QD	Quaestiones Disputatae
<i>RB</i>	<i>Revue biblique</i>
<i>ResQ</i>	<i>Restoration Quarterly</i>
<i>RevExp</i>	<i>Review and Expositor</i>
<i>RevScRel</i>	<i>Revue de sciences religieuses</i>
RGRW	Religions in the Graeco-Roman World
<i>RHPR</i>	<i>Revue d'histoire et de philosophie religieuses</i>
RNT	Regensburger Neues Testament
<i>RTR</i>	<i>Reformed Theological Review</i>
<i>SBET</i>	<i>Scottish Bulletin of Evangelical Theology</i>
SBL	Society of Biblical Literature
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBLMS	Society of Biblical Literature Monograph Series
SBLSP	Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers Series
SBS	Stuttgarter Bibelstudien
<i>ScrB</i>	<i>Scripture Bulletin</i>
<i>SEÅ</i>	<i>Svensk exegetisk årsbok</i>
SJLA	Studies in Judaism in Late Antiquity
<i>SJT</i>	<i>Scottish Journal of Theology</i>
SNTS	Society for New Testament Studies
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
SNTSU	Studien zum Neuen Testament und seiner Umwelt
SP	Sacra Pagina
<i>ST</i>	<i>Studia Theologica</i>
StBibLit	Studies in Biblical Literature (Lang)
Str-B	Strack, H. L., and P. Billerbeck, <i>Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch</i> . 6 vols. Munich, 1922–1961
SUNT	Studien zur Umwelt des Neuen Testaments
<i>TD</i>	<i>Theology Digest</i>

List of Abbreviations

<i>TDNT</i>	<i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</i> . Edited by G. Kittel and G. Friedrich. Translated by G. W. Bromiley. 10 vols. Grand Rapids, 1964–1976
TGST	Tesi Gregoriana, Serie Teologia
<i>Them</i>	<i>Themelios</i>
THNTC	Two Horizons New Testament Commentary
<i>TJ</i>	<i>Trinity Journal</i>
<i>TLNT</i>	<i>Theological Lexicon of the New Testament</i> . C. Spicq. Translated and edited by J. D. Ernest. 3 vols. Peabody, MA, 1994
<i>TLZ</i>	<i>Theologische Literaturzeitung</i>
TNTC	Tyndale New Testament Commentaries
<i>TQ</i>	<i>Theologische Quartalschrift</i>
<i>TynBul</i>	<i>Tyndale Bulletin</i>
<i>TZ</i>	<i>Theologische Zeitschrift</i>
<i>VC</i>	<i>Vigiliae Christianae</i>
<i>VE</i>	<i>Vox Evangelica</i>
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
<i>WTJ</i>	<i>Westminster Theological Journal</i>
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
ZECNT	Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament
<i>ZNW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>
<i>ZTK</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche</i>
<i>ZWT</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für wissenschaftliche Theologie</i>

Apocrypha and Septuagint

Sir	Sirach
Bar	Baruch
1–2 Macc	1–2 Maccabees

Old Testament Pseudepigrapha

Let. Aris.	Letter of Aristeas
4 Macc.	4 Maccabees

1–2 TIMOTHY AND TITUS

Sib. Or.	Sibylline Oracles
Sib. Or. frag.	Sibylline Oracles fragments
T. Jud.	Testament of Judah
T. Reu.	Testament of Reuben

Qumran

DSS	Dead Sea Scrolls
1QS	Community Rule
CD	Damascus Document

Targumic Texts

Tg. Ps.-J.	Targum Pseudo-Jonathan
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Rabbinic Works

b.	Babylonian Talmud
B. Bat.	Baba Batra
Ber.	Berakot
m.	Mishnah
Mek. Ex.	Mekilta Exodus

Apostolic Fathers

Barn.	Barnabas
1–2 Clem.	1–2 Clement
Did.	Didache
Diogn.	Diognetus
Ignatius of Antioch	
Ign. <i>Eph.</i>	<i>To the Ephesians</i>
Ign. <i>Magn.</i>	<i>To the Magnesians</i>
Ign. <i>Phld.</i>	<i>To the Philadelphians</i>
Ign. <i>Pol.</i>	<i>To Polycarp</i>
Ign. <i>Smyrn.</i>	<i>To the Smyrnaeans</i>
Ign. <i>Trall.</i>	<i>To the Trallians</i>
Pol. <i>Phil.</i>	Polycarp, <i>To the Philippians</i>

List of Abbreviations

New Testament Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha

Apos. Con. Apostolic Constitutions and Canons

Classical and Ancient Christian Writings

Athenagoras, <i>Leg.</i>	<i>Legatio pro Christianis</i>
Callimachus, <i>Hymn.</i>	<i>Hymns</i>
Cassius Dio, <i>Hist.</i>	<i>Roman History</i>
Cicero, <i>Quint. frat.</i>	<i>Epistulae ad Quintum fratrem</i>
Clement, <i>Exc.</i>	<i>Excerpts from Theodotus</i>
<i>Strom.</i>	<i>Miscellanies</i>
Demosthenes, <i>Halon.</i>	<i>On the Halonnesus</i>
<i>Neaer.</i>	<i>Against Neaera</i>
Epictetus, <i>Diatr.</i>	<i>Diatribai (Dissertationes)</i>
<i>Ench.</i>	<i>Enchiridion</i>
Epiphanius, <i>Pan.</i>	<i>Refutation of All Heresies</i>
Eusebius, <i>Dem. ev.</i>	<i>Demonstration of the Gospel</i>
<i>Hist. eccl.</i>	<i>Ecclesiastical History</i>
Heraclitus, <i>Ep.</i>	<i>Epistles</i>
Hippocrates, <i>Vet. med.</i>	<i>Ancient Medicine</i>
<i>Epid.</i>	<i>Epidemiae</i>
Irenaeus, <i>Haer.</i>	<i>Against Heresies</i>
Jerome, <i>Comm. Tit.</i>	<i>Commentary on Titus</i>
<i>Vir. ill.</i>	<i>De viris illustribus</i>
Josephus, <i>Ant.</i>	<i>Antiquities of the Jews</i>
<i>J.W.</i>	<i>Jewish Wars</i>
Justin, <i>1 Apol.</i>	<i>First Apology</i>
Juvenal, <i>Sat.</i>	<i>Satires</i>
Lucian, <i>Philops.</i>	<i>The Lover of Lies</i>
<i>Tim.</i>	<i>Timon</i>
Origen, <i>Cels.</i>	<i>Against Celsus</i>
Ovid, <i>Am.</i>	<i>Amores</i>
Philo, <i>Alleg. Interp.</i>	<i>Allegorical Interpretation</i>
<i>Creation</i>	<i>On the Creation of the World</i>
<i>Drunkenness</i>	<i>On Drunkenness</i>
<i>Embassy</i>	<i>On the Embassy to Gaius</i>
<i>Flaccus</i>	<i>Against Flaccus</i>
<i>Hypothetica</i>	<i>Hypothetica (Apology for the Jews)</i>
<i>Moses</i>	<i>On the Life of Moses</i>

<i>Spec. Laws</i>	<i>On the Special Laws</i>
Philodemus, <i>Rhet.</i>	<i>Volumina rhetorica</i>
Plato, <i>Gorg.</i>	<i>Gorgias</i>
<i>Phaedr.</i>	<i>Phaedrus</i>
<i>Resp.</i>	<i>Respublica (Republic)</i>
Pliny the Elder, <i>Nat.</i>	<i>Natural History</i>
Pliny the Younger,	
<i>Ep.</i>	<i>Letters</i>
Plutarch, <i>Aem.</i>	<i>Aemilius Paullus</i>
<i>Cat. Min.</i>	<i>Cato the Younger</i>
<i>Is. Os.</i>	<i>De Iside et Osiride</i>
<i>Lys.</i>	<i>Lysander</i>
<i>Mor.</i>	<i>Moralia</i>
<i>Num.</i>	<i>Numa</i>
<i>Quaest. conv.</i>	<i>Quaestionum convivalum</i>
Polybius, <i>Hist.</i>	<i>Histories</i>
Ps.-Phoc.	Pseudo-Phocylides
Ps.-Sophocles	Pseudo-Sophocles
Seneca, <i>Helv.</i>	<i>Ad Helviam</i>
Strabo, <i>Geogr.</i>	<i>Geography</i>
Tacitus, <i>Ann.</i>	<i>Annals</i>
Tertullian, <i>An.</i>	<i>The Soul</i>
<i>Apol.</i>	<i>Apology</i>
<i>Bapt.</i>	<i>Baptism</i>
<i>Praescr.</i>	<i>Prescription against Heretics</i>
Theophilus, <i>Autol.</i>	<i>To Autolytus</i>

INTRODUCTION

Paul's letters to Timothy and Titus (LTT), his apostolic delegates,¹ form a vital part of the Pauline corpus. While many in recent years have questioned Pauline authorship, there is good reason to believe these letters culminate Paul's apostolic ministry, seeking to perpetuate his legacy and to ensure the continuity of faithful gospel ministry for subsequent generations. While Paul's earlier letters, with the exception of Philemon, are directed to local congregations and address a variety of specific issues, the LTT primarily aim to equip individuals who were dispatched by the apostle to establish and maintain proper church governance in conjunction with the false teaching in Ephesus and Crete, respectively.² While it's virtually impossible to determine whether 1 Timothy or Titus was written first, Paul's second letter to Timothy, the most personal of the three, was probably written last, constituting Paul's final appeal to his longtime coworker and protégé. The letter constitutes a

¹ See, e.g., W. D. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, WBC 46 (Nashville: Nelson, 2000), lxxxviii: "Timothy and Titus stand outside the church structure. They are not bishops or elders. . . . They are itinerant, apostolic delegates sent with Paul's authority to deal with local problems. . . . Timothy and Titus are never told to rely on their institutional position in the local church for authority; rather they rely on the authority of Paul and the gospel." Similarly, T. R. Schreiner, "Overseeing and Serving the Church in the Pastoral and General Epistles," in *Shepherding God's Flock: Biblical Leadership in the New Testament and Beyond*, ed. B. L. Merkle and T. R. Schreiner (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2014), 99: "Timothy and Titus were not pastors/overseers/elders. They were temporary delegates for the churches."

² In addition, the plurals "you" in 1 Tim 6:21; 2 Tim 4:22; and Titus 3:15 suggest that Timothy and Titus were to share the contents of the letters with their respective congregations.

moving tribute to the passion and intensity for preaching the gospel that fueled Paul’s ministry until his final hour.

In studying the LTT, it will be vital to adopt a balanced interpretive approach that investigates in depth the matrix of the historical setting, literary character, and theological message of each letter.³ Rather than assuming that the settings are identical, we’ll attempt to determine the background of each letter individually. With regard to literary and linguistic matters, we’ll aim to analyze the genre, literary structure, and meaning of key terms in their ancient context, in conversation with other modern interpreters of the letters.⁴ Since the historical setting and literary structure set the stage for interpreting the theological message of a given book, and since conventional commentaries cover exegetical matters in some detail, the primary focus of this commentary will be on significant theological themes featured in these letters, such as mission, salvation, the church as God’s household, the life of faith, and the end times, and on relating the LTT to the rest of the canon, particularly the OT, the other Pauline letters, Luke-Acts, and the other NT letters.

For those committed to the authority of Scripture, it’s hardly necessary to underscore the relevance of these letters for the church

³ See A. J. Köstenberger and R. D. Patterson, *Invitation to Biblical Interpretation: Exploring the Hermeneutical Triad of History, Literature, and Theology* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2012).

⁴ Although many insightful works on the LTT were produced before the twentieth century, I have chosen in this commentary to limit myself largely to literature produced in the last century, which in turn often takes into account earlier treatments. For those interested in engaging earlier writers, an excellent starting point is P. Gorday, *Colossians, 1–2 Thessalonians, 1–2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon*, ACCS (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2000). The outstanding “History of Interpretation” in L. T. Johnson, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy*, AB 35A (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 2001), 20–54, surveys the gamut of interpreters and interpretive approaches of those letters across the entire sweep of church history. Although there are far too many earlier works—even in English translation—to list here, a few may be profitably noted: John Chrysostom, “Homilies on the Epistles of St. Paul the Apostle to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon,” in *NPNF1* 13, ed. P. Schaff (1899; repr. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1956); Theodore of Mopsuestia, *Commentary on the Minor Pauline Epistles*, trans. R. A. Greer, SBL Writings from the Greco-Roman World 26 (Atlanta: SBL, 2010), 525–772; Thomas Aquinas, *Commentaries on St. Paul’s Epistles to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon*, trans. C. Baer (South Bend, IN: St. Augustine, 2008); Martin Luther, *Lectures on Titus, Philemon, and Hebrews*, Luther’s Works 29 (St. Louis: Concordia, 1968); John Calvin, *1 & 2 Timothy & Titus* (1556, 1549; repr., Wheaton: Crossway, 1998).

today.⁵ While Paul's instructions are firmly embedded in their first-century context, many of the issues addressed in these letters transcend the original occasion and are of perennial value in guiding the governance of local congregations and the lives of individual believers. It is precisely the intricate interweaving of intimate personal details and abiding ecclesiastical realities that roots these letters so firmly in Paul's relationship with his recipients.⁶ In modern times scholars have often noted differences in wording and subject matter between Paul's earlier letters and the LTT, relegating the latter to the post-apostolic period. More likely, as will be argued in greater detail below, they constitute the culmination of Paul's apostolic ministry and theological thought at a time when the aged apostle was seeking to pass on his legacy. Together with his other canonical letters, the LTT therefore provide a rich and indispensable contribution to Pauline and biblical theology.⁷

⁵ Cf. K. P. Donfried, "Rethinking Scholarly Approaches to 1 Timothy," in *1 Timothy Reconsidered*, ed. K. P. Donfried, Colloquium Oecumenicum Paulinum 18 (Leuven: Peeters, 2008), 156: "A serious pastoral problem that only emerged at the end of the last century is that the radically corrective approach has effectively led to the disenfranchisement of these letters in much of mainline Protestantism since they have, for all intents and purposes, been moved to the edge or out of the canon, a process facilitated by much of feminist biblical scholarship." Cf. M. M. Jacobs, "On 1 Timothy 2:9–15: Why Still Interpret 'Irredeemable' Biblical Texts?," *Scriptura* 88 (2005): 85–100, who says this passage reveals "the darker side of the Bible" which at times "rouses acute anger" but may "become a therapeutic exercise, a turning-point and thereby a starting-point for going ahead in a very different way" (p. 99); and G. West, "Taming Texts of Terror: Reading (Against) the Gender Grain of 1 Timothy," *Scriptura* 86 (2004): 160–73.

⁶ See also the interesting observation by R. Wall: "Moreover, the different social locations of the Pastoral Epistles—the urban and urbane Ephesus of Timothy and the uncivilized Crete of Titus (cf. 1:12)—create something of a cultural merism such that readers might accept the similar instructions of both letters as providing guidance for every congregation. The credentials for leaders, the household codes, and the pastoral instructions and exhortations in both letters, directed to disparate places, suggest that the claims of Paul's gospel and his instructions to congregations and their leaders do not change from place to place." R. W. Wall, with R. B. Steele, *1 and 2 Timothy and Titus*, THNTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012), 332.

⁷ Unfortunately, however, the LTT are often excluded from Pauline theologies: see, e.g., J. D. G. Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006); U. Schnelle, *Apostle Paul: His Life and Theology*, trans. M. E. Boring (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005); but cf. F. J. Matera, *God's Saving Grace: A Pauline Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012); H. Ridderbos, *Paul: An Outline of His Theology*, trans. J. R. De Witt (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975); T. R. Schreiner, *Paul, Apostle*

I. Author and Date

The LTT form an integral part of the fabric of early Christian history.⁸ Supplementing Acts, they provide instructions regarding congregational leadership and other important matters related to governing and administering the local church. Most likely they were the last letters Paul wrote during his long missionary career toward the end of his apostolic ministry. As early as in the Muratorian Fragment (ca. AD 180), the special character of these letters is recognized, and they are acknowledged as being concerned with “the regulation of ecclesiastical discipline.”⁹ The often used designation “Pastoral Epistles” dates back to D. N. Berdot, who called Titus a “Pastoral Epistle” in 1703, and P. Anton of Halle, who in 1726 delivered a series of lectures on the LTT entitled “The Pastoral Epistles.”¹⁰ The eighteenth-century phrase has an antecedent in T. Aquinas, who called 1 Timothy “a rule, so to speak, for pastors” (*quasi pastoralis regula*).¹¹ Nevertheless, as we’ll see shortly, the label “Pastorals” is not without its drawbacks.

of God’s Glory in Christ: A Pauline Theology (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2006). For a survey of different approaches to biblical theology, see A. J. Köstenberger, “The Present and Future of Biblical Theology,” *Them* 37 (2012): 445–64.

⁸ For a survey of relevant introductory matters, see A. J. Köstenberger, S. L. Kellum, and C. L. Quarles, *The Cradle, the Cross, and the Crown: An Introduction to the New Testament*, 2nd ed. (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2016), chap. 15. For an expository commentary, see A. J. Köstenberger, “1–2 Timothy, Titus,” in *Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, vol. 12: *Ephesians–Philemon*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006), 487–625.

⁹ Cf. L. T. Johnson, *Letters to Paul’s Delegates: 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus*, The NT in Context (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1996), 3; G. W. Knight, *Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992), 3. See further the discussion under Canonicity below.

¹⁰ P. Anton, *Exegetische Abhandlung der Pastoralbriefe S. Pauli an Timotheum und Titum*, ed. J. A. Maier (Halle, 1753–55); D. N. Berdot, *Exercitatio theologica exegetica in epistulam Pauli ad Titum* (Halle, 1703), 3–4.

¹¹ J. D. Quinn, *The Letter to Titus*, AB 35 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1990), 1, with reference to T. Aquinas, *Commentaria 2.184D*; *Super I Epistolam ad Timotheum, lectio ii in 1:3* (Turin: Marietti, 1929). Johnson, *First and Second Letters to Timothy*, 13n3, also notes that Abraham Scultetus used the term *pastoralis* in the mid-seventeenth century (see also p. 35 regarding Aquinas).

A. Relationship among the Letters

The LTT are often treated as a distinct, self-referential corpus.¹² In fact, 1 and 2 Timothy share the same recipient, and all three letters were written to Paul’s apostolic delegates in Ephesus and Crete, respectively, in order to provide instructions on how to continue Paul’s mission work in a given locale under his overall jurisdiction. All three letters were most likely written toward the end of Paul’s life and ministry subsequent to his ten other letters included in the NT canon. There are also some similarities in the descriptions of the opponents in these letters, particularly 1 and 2 Timothy.¹³ What is more, there is an indisputable broad congruence in conceptuality—even specific vocabulary—and subject matter among the three letters.¹⁴

For example, 1 Timothy and Titus share the following topics in common:

1 Timothy	Titus	Topic
2:1–2	3:1–2	Civic authorities
3:1–13	1:5–9	Church officers
5:1–6:2	2:1–15	Conduct in God’s household *
*This includes specific instructions to slaves: 1 Tim 6:1–2; Titus 2:9–10.		

Similarly, 1 and 2 Timothy share several points of contact:

¹² See especially P. Trummer, “Corpus Paulinum—Corpus Pastorale: Zur Ortung der Paulustradition in den Pastoralbriefen,” in *Paulus in den neutestamentlichen Spätschriften: Zur Paulusrezeption im Neuen Testament*, ed. K. Kertelge, QD 89 (Freiburg: Herder, 1981), 122–45. See also G. Häfner, “Das Corpus Pastorale als literarisches Konstrukt,” *TQ* 187 (2007): 258–73.

¹³ E.g., the word “myth” (μῦθος) is used in all three letters; see the discussion under Historical Context below. D. T. Thornton, *Hostility in the House of God: An Investigation of the Opponents in 1 and 2 Timothy*, BBRSup 15 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2016), limits his investigation to 1 and 2 Timothy because he believes the opponents are different from those in Titus; Herzer, “Juden—Christen—Gnostiker: Zur Gegnerproblematik der Pastoralbriefe,” *BTZ* 25 (2008): 143–68 believes three different kinds of opponents are in view. See also Herzer, “Abschied vom Konsens? Die Pseudepigraphie der Pastoralbriefe als Herausforderung an die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft,” *TLZ* 129 (2004): 1267–82, arguing for the pseudonymity of all three letters.

¹⁴ See chart 71, “Similarities between the Pastoral Epistles,” in L. Kierspel, *Charts on the Life, Letters, and Theology of Paul* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2012), 133–35; see also pp. 234–35.

1–2 TIMOTHY AND TITUS

1 Timothy	2 Timothy	Topic
1:12–16	1:8–15	Personal recollection
1:18; 4:14; 6:13	1:6; 4:1	Personal commission
1:3–7; 4:1–3; 6:4, 20	2:14, 16, 23; 3:1–5; 4:1–4	Warning against false teaching*
*Cf. J. D. G. Dunn, “The First and Second Letters to Timothy and the Letter to Titus: Introduction, Commentary, and Reflections,” in <i>NIB</i> 11:776–77.		

At the same time, each of these letters has its own original setting, which requires that introductory matters such as recipient, date, purpose, and occasion be adjudicated individually and each letter be read and interpreted in its own right.¹⁵ Also, technically Timothy and Titus were apostolic delegates, not local pastors. For these and other reasons, viewing 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus as a self-contained corpus (“The Pastoral Epistles”) is of limited value.¹⁶ This is the case also because such a procedure sets off these epistles from the other ten

¹⁵ Notably, proponents of authenticity and proponents of pseudonymity alike argue against corpus reading. Among those favoring authenticity while opposing a corpus reading are R. Fuchs, *Unerwartete Unterschiede: Müssen wir unsere Ansichten über “die” Pastoralbriefe revidieren?* (Wuppertal: R. Brockhaus, 2003; see the summary on pp. 222–26); and M. Prior, *Paul the Letter-Writer and the Second Letter to Timothy*, JSNTSup 23 (Sheffield: JSOT, 1989). Another strong proponent of reading the letters separately is L. T. Johnson, *First and Second Letters to Timothy*; Johnson, *Letters to Paul’s Delegates*. Among those advocating pseudonymity and opposing a corpus reading of these letters are B. Ehrman, *Forgery and Counterforgery: The Use of Literary Deceit in Early Christian Polemic* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); J. Herzer, “Rearranging the ‘House of God’: A New Perspective on the Pastoral Epistles,” in *Empsychoi Logoi—Religious Innovations in Antiquity: Studies in Honour of Pieter Willem van der Horst*, ed. A. Houtman, A. de Jong, and M. Misset-van de Weg (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 547–66; and J. Murphy O’Connor, “2 Timothy Contrasted with 1 Timothy and Titus,” *RB* 98 (1991): 403–18.

¹⁶ See P. H. Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 88–89, who believes it’s time to say farewell to the nomenclature “Pastoral Epistles” because it serves as a “restraining device” from studying the letters individually. Towner opposes the tendency to “corpus read” the three letters and to treat them as an indivisible unit. At the same time he recognizes that they form a “cluster” in light of their commonalities. Similarly, Johnson, *First and Second Letters to Timothy*, 63–64; and Thornton, *Hostility in the House of God*, 5, who concurs that “it is best to set aside this sobriquet” since these documents “do not constitute a primer on church polity, and there is little to suggest that the first addressees should be thought of as pastors.” However, Thornton’s substitute, “Pauline Delegates” (PD; p. 6), is problematic as well, since texts such as the LTT cannot easily be thought of as “delegates.”

Pauline letters rather than viewing them as part of the Pauline body of writings at large. What is more, treating 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus as part of the larger Pauline letter collection is in keeping with patristic evidence and early canonical lists (see Canonicity below).

An investigation of the relationship among the three letters calls for judiciousness and balance. Two extremes should be avoided: (1) treating the three letters as completely separate without acknowledging points of contact among them (e.g., same recipient in 1 and 2 Timothy; both Timothy and Titus are Paul's apostolic delegates; the false teachers share some common characteristics); and (2) collapsing the boundaries between 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, and Titus as distinct letters to the extent that their individuality is insufficiently recognized. In the end it seems best to engage the three letters not as a corpus but as a "cluster," being sensitive to both the things that bind them together and the things that make them distinct. The present commentary therefore avoids speaking of "The Pastoral Epistles" while pointing out connections between two or all three of these letters as appropriate.

While caution is called for in designating the three letters as a separate corpus apart from the other NT Pauline letters, the similarities in language and content, not to mention explicit attribution of all three letters to Paul, do seem to indicate common authorship.¹⁷ Keeping 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus distinct from one another and yet viewing them as related and as part of the larger Pauline letter collection has the advantage of placing these letters within the larger Pauline theological orbit and historical chronology and of showing affinities as well as differences in relation to the other ten canonical Pauline letters. This will be particularly helpful in the biblical-theological exposition of major themes in 1, 2 Timothy and Titus later on in this volume.

¹⁷ Against W. A. Richards, *Difference and Distance in Post-Pauline Christianity: An Epistolary Analysis of the Pastorals*, StBibLit 44 (New York: P. Lang, 2002), who claims the three letters are post-Pauline and manifest differences in Christianity toward the end of the first century. But see the critique by I. H. Marshall, "Pastoral Epistles in Recent Study," in *Entrusted with the Gospel: Paul's Theology in the Pastoral Epistles*, ed. A. J. Köstenberger and T. L. Wilder (Nashville: B&H, 2010), 284–85, who objects that Richards has taken too little account of the resemblances between the letters, particularly given that "the theologies expressed in these letters and the way in which they are presented are recognizably the same" (p. 285).

B. Role of Timothy and Titus

Timothy and Titus are often viewed as pastors of local congregations. However, as mentioned, their role is not actually that of permanent, resident pastor of a church. Rather, these men serve as Paul’s apostolic delegates who are temporarily assigned to their present location in order to deal with particular problems that have arisen in their respective churches and require special attention (§1.3).¹⁸ For this reason Paul’s correspondence with Timothy and Titus doesn’t merely contain advice to younger ministers. It records Paul’s instructions to his special delegates toward the close of the apostolic era at a time when the aging apostle feels a keen responsibility to ensure the orderly transition from the apostolic to the post-apostolic period.¹⁹ Toward that end the LTT provide authoritative and relevant apostolic guidance not only for the original recipients but also for the governance of the church at any place and time.

¹⁸ See G. D. Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, NIBCNT 13 (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1988), 21.

¹⁹ Advocates of pseudonymity place the letters at a later point in the Pauline trajectory. See, e.g., J. W. Aageson, “The Pastoral Epistles, Apostolic Authority, and the Development of the Pauline Scriptures,” in *The Pauline Canon*, ed. S. E. Porter, Pauline Studies 1 (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 5–26, who contends that the LTT present Paul as the “defender of correct doctrine and the recipient of divine authority” (p. 11); Aageson, *Paul, the Pastoral Epistles, and the Early Church* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2008); M. Y. MacDonald, *The Pauline Churches: A Socio-Historical Study of Institutionalism in the Pauline and Deutero-Pauline Writings*, SNTSMS 60 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988). M. C. de Boer, “Images of Paul in the Post-Apostolic Period,” *CBQ* 42 (1980): 359–80 believes the LTT are part of the post-Pauline trajectory and present Paul as the paradigmatic apostle to the nations who brought the gospel to the whole world and suffered as the redeemed prosecutor and authoritative teacher of the church (p. 370). R. F. Collins, “The Image of Paul in the Pastorals,” *LTP* 31 (1975): 147–73 contends that the LTT contain traces of an emerging Pauline hagiography and are characterized by “Pauline reductionism,” presenting him as *the* apostle, norm for church doctrine and practice, and as *the* model for Christians to emulate.

NT REFERENCES TO TIMOTHY OUTSIDE 1–2 TIMOTHY

<p>“Paul went on to Derbe and Lystra, where there was a disciple named Timothy, the son of a believing Jewish woman, but his father was a Greek. The brothers and sisters at Lystra and Iconium spoke highly of him. Paul wanted Timothy to go with him; so he took him and circumcised him because of the Jews who were in those places, since they all knew that his father was a Greek.” (Acts 16:1–3)</p>
<p>“But when the Jews from Thessalonica found out that the word of God had been proclaimed by Paul at Berea, they came there too, agitating and upsetting the crowds. Then the brothers and sisters immediately sent Paul away to go to the coast, but Silas and Timothy stayed on there. Those who escorted Paul brought him as far as Athens, and after receiving instructions for Silas and Timothy to come to him as quickly as possible, they departed.” (Acts 17:13–15)</p>
<p>“When Silas and Timothy arrived [in Corinth] from Macedonia, Paul devoted himself to preaching the word and testified to the Jews that Jesus is the Messiah.” (Acts 18:5)</p>
<p>“After these events [in Ephesus], Paul resolved by the Spirit to pass through Macedonia and Achaia and go to Jerusalem. ‘After I’ve been there,’ he said, ‘it is necessary for me to see Rome as well.’ After sending to Macedonia two of those who assisted him, Timothy and Erastus, he himself stayed in Asia for a while.” (Acts 19:21–22)</p>
<p>“[Paul] was accompanied by Sopater son of Pyrrhus from Berea, Aristarchus and Secundus from Thessalonica, Gaius from Derbe, Timothy, and Tychicus and Trophimus from the province of Asia.” (Acts 20:4)</p>
<p>“Timothy, my coworker, and Lucius, Jason, and Sosipater, my fellow countrymen, greet you.” (Rom 16:21)</p>
<p>“This is why I have sent Timothy to you. He is my dearly loved and faithful child in the Lord. He will remind you about my ways in Christ Jesus, just as I teach everywhere in every church.” (1 Cor 4:17)</p>
<p>“If Timothy comes [to Corinth], see that he has nothing to fear while with you, because he is doing the Lord’s work, just as I am. So let no one look down on him. Send him on his way in peace so that he can come to me, because I am expecting him with the brothers.” (1 Cor 16:10–11)</p>
<p>“Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother: To the church of God at Corinth, with all the saints who are throughout Achaia.” (2 Cor 1:1–2)</p>
<p>“For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, whom we proclaimed among you—Silvanus, Timothy, and I—did not become ‘Yes and no.’ On the contrary, in him it is always ‘Yes.’” (2 Cor 1:19)</p>
<p>“Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus: To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, including the overseers and deacons.” (Phil 1:1)</p>

1-2 TIMOTHY AND TITUS

NT REFERENCES TO TIMOTHY OUTSIDE

1-2 TIMOTHY (continued)

“Now I hope in the Lord Jesus to send **Timothy** to you soon so that I too may be encouraged by news about you. For I have no one else like-minded who will genuinely care about your interests; all seek their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ. But you know his proven character, because he has served with me in the gospel ministry like a son with a father. Therefore, I hope to send him as soon as I see how things go with me. I am confident in the Lord that I myself will also come soon.” (Phil 2:19–24)

“Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by God’s will, and **Timothy** our brother: To the saints in Christ at Colossae, who are faithful brothers and sisters.” (Col 1:1)

“Paul, Silvanus, and **Timothy**: To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.” (1 Thess 1:1)

“Therefore, when we could no longer stand it, we thought it was better to be left alone in Athens. And we sent **Timothy**, our brother and God’s coworker in the gospel of Christ, [to Thessalonica] to strengthen and encourage you concerning your faith, so that no one will be shaken by these afflictions. . . . But now **Timothy** has come to us from you and brought us good news about your faith and love. He reported that you always have good memories of us and that you long to see us, as we also long to see you.” (1 Thess 3:1–3a, 6)

“Paul, Silvanus, and **Timothy**: To the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.” (2 Thess 1:1)

“Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and **Timothy** our brother: To Philemon our dear friend and coworker, to Apphia our sister, to Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church that meets in your home.” (Phlm 1–2)

“Brothers and sisters, I urge you to receive this message of exhortation, for I have written to you briefly. Be aware that our brother **Timothy** has been released. If he comes soon enough, he will be with me when I see you.” (Heb 13:22–23)

NT REFERENCES TO TITUS OUTSIDE THE LETTER TO TITUS

“When I came to Troas to preach the gospel of Christ, even though the Lord opened a door for me, I had no rest in my spirit because I did not find my brother **Titus**. Instead, I said good-bye to them and left for Macedonia.” (2 Cor 2:12–13)

“In fact, when we came into Macedonia, we had no rest. Instead, we were troubled in every way: conflicts on the outside, fears within. But God, who comforts the downcast, comforted us by the arrival of **Titus**, and not only by his arrival, but also by the comfort he received from you.” (2 Cor 7:5–7)

**NT REFERENCES TO TITUS OUTSIDE
THE LETTER TO TITUS (continued)**

“In addition to our own comfort, we rejoiced even more over the joy **Titus** had, because his spirit was refreshed by all of you. For if I have made any boast to him about you, I have not been disappointed; but as I have spoken everything to you in truth, so our boasting to **Titus** has also turned out to be the truth. And his affection toward you is even greater as he remembers the obedience of all of you, and how you received him with fear and trembling.” (2 Cor 7:13b–15)

“So we urged **Titus** that just as he had begun, so he should also complete among you this act of grace. . . . Thanks be to God, who put the same concern for you into the heart of **Titus**. For he welcomed our appeal and, being very diligent, went out to you by his own choice. . . . As for **Titus**, he is my partner and coworker for you; as for our brothers, they are the messengers of the churches, the glory of Christ.” (2 Cor 8:6, 16–17, 23)

“Did I take advantage of you by any of those I sent you? I urged **Titus** to go, and I sent the brother with him. **Titus** didn’t take advantage of you, did he? Didn’t we walk in the same spirit and in the same footsteps?” (2 Cor 12:17–18)

“Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking **Titus** along also. I went up according to a revelation and presented to them the gospel I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to those recognized as leaders. I wanted to be sure I was not running, and had not been running, in vain. But not even **Titus**, who was with me, was compelled to be circumcised, even though he was a Greek.” (Gal 2:1–3)

“Make every effort to come to me soon, because Demas has deserted me, since he loved this present world, and has gone to Thessalonica. Crescens has gone to Galatia, **Titus** to Dalmatia.” (2 Tim 4:9–10)

C. Order of the Letters

Most likely, 1 Timothy and Titus were written following Paul’s release from his first Roman imprisonment but prior to a second, more severe Roman imprisonment during which Paul composed 2 Timothy (see Pauline Chronology below). It’s unknown whether Paul wrote 1 Timothy or Titus first.²⁰ In the canon the order is 1 Timothy–2 Timothy–Titus, even though the actual chronological order of writing was almost certainly 1 Timothy–Titus–2 Timothy

²⁰ See Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, lxi, who adds, “It is not possible to determine whether Paul wrote 1 Timothy or Titus first. All that I am comfortable saying is that the similarity of language between 1 Timothy and Titus may suggest that they were written at approximately the same time” (p. lxii).

or Titus–1 Timothy–2 Timothy.²¹ In this volume the canonical order will be followed, and 2 Timothy be discussed prior to Titus and in conjunction with 1 Timothy, since 1 and 2 Timothy share a common recipient and overlap in other respects as well.²²

D. Canonicity

In all probability, Paul’s letters to Timothy were known to Polycarp (ca. 117), who may have cited 1 Tim 6:7, 10 (*Phil.* 4.1).²³ The first unmistakable patristic attestations are found in Athenagoras (*Leg.* 37.1; ca. 180) and Theophilus (*Autol.* 3.14; later 2nd c.), both of whom cite 1 Tim 2:1–2 and allude to other passages. Irenaeus (*Haer.* 1.preface; 1.23.4; 2.14.7; 3.1.1; ca. 130–200) cites the letters and identifies Paul as their author.²⁴ Clement of Alexandria (ca. 150–215) notes that some Gnostics who perceive themselves to be

²¹ Mounce (*ibid.*, lxii) notes that the Muratorian Canon (ca. AD 180) has the order Titus–1 Timothy–2 Timothy, presumably so as to place 2 Timothy last as Paul’s final letter. J. D. Quinn (*Letter to Titus*, 19–20) seeks to make a case for the priority of Titus (cf. W. G. Doty, “The Classification of Epistolary Literature,” *CBQ* 31 [1969]: 192–98). I. H. Marshall, *Pastoral Epistles*, ICC (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1999), 92 hypothesizes that 2 Timothy came first and 1 Timothy and Titus were written by someone other than Paul after his death. Similarly, Johnson (*Letters to Paul’s Delegates*) deals first with 2 Timothy and then with 1 Timothy and Titus. See also M. Engelmann, *Unzertrennlliche Drillinge? Motivsemantische Untersuchungen zum literarischen Verhältnis der Pastoralbriefe*, BZNW 192 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2012), who argues that 1 Timothy was written last and that the author had already received the two other letters as part of the Pauline tradition.

²² The earliest extant manuscript containing portions of Titus is the John Rylands fragment (P³²; 3rd c.) which contains parts of 1:11–15 and 2:3–8. E. Gathergood (“Papyrus 32 Titus as a Multi-text Codex: A New Reconstruction,” *NTS* 59 [2013]: 588–606) offers a reconstruction suggesting that this fragment was part of a multitext codex and that Titus was preceded by at least one other book (possibly 1 Timothy) and may have been part of a collection of thirteen or fourteen Pauline epistles.

²³ See the discussion in Marshall, *Pastoral Epistles*, 3–8 (including the tables on pp. 4–5). Note also P. Hartog, *Polycarp and the New Testament: The Occasion, Rhetoric, Theme and Unity of the Epistle to the Philippians and Its Allusions to New Testament Literature*, WUNT 134 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002), 178–79. On the reception of the LTT in the Apostolic Fathers, see *The Reception of the New Testament in the Apostolic Fathers*, ed. A. F. Gregory and C. M. Tuckett (Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 151 (*1 Clement*), 170–72 (Ignatius), 215–18 (Polycarp), 288–89 (*2 Clement*).

²⁴ Cf. Gathergood, “Papyrus 32,” 598, who also discusses the Muratorian fragment and other Fathers such as Tertullian, Theophilus, and Clement of Alexandria.

the targets of the denunciation of 1 Tim 6:20–21 reject Paul’s letters to Timothy (*Strom.* 2.11).

The Muratorian Fragment (ca. AD 180) includes all three letters in the Pauline corpus. The relevant portion reads as follows:

[Paul also wrote] out of affection and love one [epistle] to Philemon, *one [epistle] to Titus, and two [epistles] to Timothy*; and these are held sacred in the esteem of the Church catholic for the regulation of ecclesiastical discipline. There is current also [a letter] to the Laodiceans, [and] another to the Alexandrians, [both] forged in Paul’s name to [further] the heresy of Marcion, and several others which cannot be received into the catholic Church—for it is not fitting that gall be mixed with honey. (Lines 59–67; emphasis added)

This important early document (not so much a canonical list as a kind of introduction to the NT that provides historical information as well as theological reflection) affirms the Pauline authorship of the LTT along with that of Paul’s other NT letters and distinguishes them from several known spurious letters “forged in Paul’s name.”²⁵

Subsequently, all three letters became part of the established NT canon of the church, and Paul’s authorship of 1–2 Timothy and Titus was not seriously questioned for well over a millennium and a half.²⁶ Marshall’s overall assessment of the patristic evidence regarding the LTT is noteworthy especially since he does not affirm Pauline authorship: “It can be concluded that the PE were known to

²⁵ See text and discussion in E. J. Schnabel, “The Muratorian Fragment: The State of Research,” *JETS* 57 (2014): 231–64. See also S. E. Porter, “Paul and the Pauline Letter Collection,” in *Paul and the Second Century*, ed. M. F. Bird and J. R. Dodson, LNTS 412, T&T Clark Library of Biblical Studies (New York: T&T Clark, 2011), 19–36, who discusses the Pauline letter collection with reference to \mathfrak{P}^{46} , Marcion’s canon, the Muratorian fragment, and six collection theories, including the personal involvement theory (whether by Paul himself, Timothy, or Luke).

²⁶ See D. Guthrie (*The Pastoral Epistles*, TNTC, rev. ed. [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990], 19–20) and W. G. Kümmel (*Introduction to the New Testament*, trans. H. C. Kee, 2nd ed. [Nashville: Abingdon, 1975], 370), who point out that from the end of the second century the LTT were regarded as unquestionably Pauline and attested as strongly as most of the other Pauline letters.

Christian writers from early in the second century and that there is no evidence of rejection of them by any writers except for Marcion.”²⁷

E. Authenticity

It was only in the late eighteenth century that the authenticity of Paul’s correspondence with Timothy and Titus began to be challenged.²⁸ A number of commentators claim these letters constitute an instance of pseudonymous writing in which a later follower attributes his work to his revered teacher in order to perpetuate his teaching and influence,²⁹ possibly including some authentic materi-

²⁷ Marshall, *Pastoral Epistles*, 8. For possible early citations and allusions to the LTT, see C. Looks, *Das Anvertraute bewahren: Die Rezeption der Pastoralbriefe im 2. Jahrhundert*, Münchner theologische Beiträge (Munich: H. Utz, 1999); note especially the helpful summary table on pp. 481–90.

²⁸ See J. van Nes, “On the Origin of the Pastorals’ Authenticity Criticism: A ‘New’ Perspective,” *NTS* 62 (2016): 315–20 (319), who notes that E. Evanson alleged Titus’s pseudonymity in his work *The Dissonance of the Four Generally Received Evangelists and the Evidence of Their Respective Authenticity Examined* (Ipswich: Jermyn, 1792), 267–69. See also T. L. Wilder, “Does the Bible Contain Forgeries?,” in *In Defense of the Bible: A Comprehensive Apologetic for the Authority of Scripture*, ed. S. B. Cowan and T. L. Wilder (Nashville: B&H, 2013), 177. A classic defense is J. D. James, *The Genuineness and Authorship of the Pastoral Epistles* (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1906). For a brief survey of the history of scholarship, see R. F. Collins, *Letters That Paul Did Not Write* (Wilmington, DE: M. Glazier, 1988), 89–90, who names as the earliest challengers of the authenticity of the letters J. Schmidt (1804), F. Schleiermacher (1807), J. G. Eichhorn (1812), F. C. Baur (1835), and H. Holtzmann (1885). See also E. J. Schnabel, “Paul, Timothy, and Titus: The Assumption of a Pseudonymous Author and of Pseudonymous Recipients in the Light of Literary, Theological, and Historical Evidence,” in *Do Historical Matters Matter to Faith?*, ed. J. K. Hoffmeier and D. R. Magary (Wheaton: Crossway, 2012), 383–84, whose list is identical to Collins’s; and E. E. Ellis, “Pastoral Letters,” *DPL*, 659. Cf. N. Brox, “Lukas als Verfasser der Pastoralbriefe,” *JAC* 13 (1970): 63, who notes that H. A. Schott (*Isagoge historico-critica in libros Novi Foederis sacros* [Jena, 1830]) was the first to posit Lukan authorship on the assumption of the LTT’s inauthenticity. For a helpful chart summarizing arguments for and against Pauline authorship, see chart 72, “Authorship of the Pastoral Epistles,” in Kierspel, *Charts on the Life, Letters, and Theology of Paul*, 136.

²⁹ E.g., L. R. Donelson, *Pseudepigraphy and Ethical Argument in the Pastoral Epistles*, HUT 22 (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1986), who maintains that the writing of pseudepigrapha was an essential part of the process of defining and establishing the boundaries of the apostolic faith by which Paul was reclaimed for the orthodox position against the false teachers. Similarly, N. Brox, *Falsche Verfasserangaben: Zur Erklärung der frühchristlichen Pseudepigraphie* (Stuttgart: KBW, 1975; see

al.³⁰ At a first glance this contention may appear surprising since all three letters open with the unequivocal attribution, “Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus,” or a similar phrase (1 Tim 1:1; 2 Tim 1:1; Titus 1:1). It’s difficult to imagine someone other than Paul writing these letters and falsely attributing them to the apostle without deceptive intent,³¹ and the church accepting them into the NT canon on the mistaken notion that they were Pauline.³²

further discussion below). See the thorough survey and adjudication in T. L. Wilder, “Pseudonymity and the New Testament,” in *Interpreting the New Testament: Essays on Methods and Issues*, ed. D. A. Black and D. S. Dockery (Nashville: B&H, 2001), 296–335; Wilder, *Pseudonymity, the New Testament, and Deception: An Inquiry into Intention and Reception* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2004); and Wilder, “Pseudonymity, the New Testament, and the Pastoral Epistles,” in *Entrusted with the Gospel*, 28–51. Cf. D. A. Carson, “Pseudonymity and Pseudepigraphy,” *DNTB*, 856–64.

³⁰ E.g., P. N. Harrison, *The Problem of the Pastoral Epistles* (London: Oxford University Press, 1921). Cf. J. van Nes, “The Problem of the Pastoral Epistles: An Important Hypothesis Reconsidered,” in *Paul and Pseudepigraphy*, ed. S. E. Porter and G. P. Fewster, *Pauline Studies* 8 (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 153–69, who chastises modern writers such as Ehrman and Dunn for giving Harrison’s theory an undeserved pass in their works and for failing to take note of the severe criticism Harrison’s statistical data have received over the past ninety years. Cf. A. E. Bird, “The Authorship of the Pastoral Epistles: Quantifying Literary Style,” *RTR* 56 (1997): 118–37. See also J. D. Miller, *The Pastoral Letters as Composite Documents*, SNTSMS 93 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), who argues that the LTT are a disparate anthology of Pauline fragments supplemented by paraenetic material compiled by a later follower of the apostle. Many works arguing for pseudonymous authorship will provide a fairly standard list of objections to authentic authorship; see recently J. D. G. Dunn, *Neither Jew nor Greek: A Contested Identity*, Christianity in the Making 3 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015), 85–89.

³¹ See, e.g., D. G. Meade, *Pseudonymity and Canon: An Investigation into the Relationship of Authorship and Authority in Jewish and Earliest Christian Tradition*, WUNT 39 (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1986), who proposes that a later author wrote the LTT in Paul’s name in order to affirm the significance of Pauline tradition and that the early church was unconcerned with deceptive pseudonymity in the first century and hardened in its rejection of it only at a later point in time. But see A. D. Baum, *Pseudepigraphie und literarische Fälschung im frühen Christentum. Mit ausgewählten Quellentexten samt deutscher Übersetzung*, WUNT 2/138 (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 2001); and Wilder, *Pseudonymity, the New Testament, and Deception*.

³² Contra C. B. Ansberry, C. A. Strine, E. W. Klink III, and D. Lincicum, “Pseudepigraphy and the Canon,” in C. M. Hays and C. B. Ansberry, eds., *Evangelical Faith and the Challenge of Historical Criticism* (London: SPCK/Grand Rapids: Baker, 2013), esp. 154, who contend that evangelicals ought to develop new models of understanding that “make sense of pseudepigraphical compositions that may at

There are essentially three options: (1) Paul wrote 1–2 Timothy and Titus to Timothy and Titus as asserted in the letter openings (authenticity); (2) 1–2 Timothy and Titus were written in Paul’s name by a later author who expected his readers to be aware of the literary device of pseudonymity (transparent fiction); (3) 1–2 Timothy and Titus were written in Paul’s name by a later author who forged the letter (forgery).³³ As will be argued below, the available evidence supports authenticity, while pseudonymity or allonymity is problematic for a number of reasons.³⁴ In adjudicating the issue, several questions arise. Was pseudonymous letter-writing an acceptable first-century practice and, if so, was this practice devoid of deceptive intent?³⁵ Would the church have knowingly accepted pseudonymous letters into the canon? Is pseudonymity more plausible than authenticity?³⁶

The evidence suggests that pseudonymity was exceedingly rare in the case of ancient letters,³⁷ a genre which by its nature entails

some level have an intention to deceive, but still function as canonical Scripture” (p. 154). But see the review by D. A. Carson, *BBR* 25 (2015): 437–39, who calls “the effrontery” of the volume “jaw-dropping,” in particular the argument that “unless one agrees with all the authors’ skeptical conclusions, one is not actually engaging in honest historical criticism” (p. 439).

³³ Schnabel, “Paul, Timothy, and Titus,” 386. These are general options, and variations are certainly possible. For example, some might consider 2 Timothy to be authentic and 1 Timothy and Titus to be pseudonymous or vice versa. Also, among those who consider the LTT to be authentic, some favor Paul’s use of an amanuensis, especially Luke (see further the discussion below).

³⁴ Allonymity or allepigraphy (the view that the LTT were written “under another name” without deceptive intent) is advocated by Marshall, *Pastoral Epistles*, 83–84. For a thorough assessment of literary, theological, and historical arguments advanced in favor of pseudonymity, see Schnabel, “Paul, Timothy, and Titus,” 383–403. See also the discussion “Are the Pastoral Epistles Forgeries?” in Wilder, “Does the Bible Contain Forgeries?,” 172–77.

³⁵ For a forceful argument against this contention, see E. E. Ellis, “Pseudonymity and Canonicity of New Testament Documents,” in *Worship, Theology and Ministry in the Early Church*, ed. M. J. Wilkins and T. Page, JSNTSup 87 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992), 212–24; cf. Wilder, *Pseudonymity, the New Testament, and Deception*.

³⁶ For a still valuable discussion of these issues, see D. Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction*, 2nd ed. (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1990), 607–49, 1011–28. From the standpoint of likely pseudonymity, see D. A. Hagner, *The New Testament: A Historical and Theological Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012), 614–26, who considers language and style; church organization; theology and ethics; nature of opposition; picture of Paul; and personal history of Paul.

³⁷ R. Bauckham notes the rarity of apocryphal or pseudepigraphical apostolic letters in relation to other genres and conjectures that the reason for this “may well have

interpersonal communication.³⁸ Not only is there little evidence for the common acceptance of pseudonymous letters during the apostolic period, but there seems to have been considerable concern that letters might have been forged (2 Thess 2:2: “a letter supposedly from us”).³⁹ Consequently, Paul in his earlier letters repeatedly refers to his own distinctive hand (1 Cor 16:21; Gal 6:11; Col 4:18; 2 Thess 3:17; Phlm 19), though admittedly the LTT do not include such an *autographon*. Later, Tertullian (ca. 160–225) reports that an Asian presbyter was removed from office for forging a letter in Paul’s name (*Bapt.* 17). Both 3 Corinthians and the Epistle to the Laodiceans are transparent attempts to fill in a perceived gap in canonical revelation (see 1 Cor 5:9; 2 Cor 2:4; 7:8; Col 4:16).⁴⁰ Serapion, bishop of Antioch (d. 211), pointedly distinguishes between apostolic writings and those that “falsely bear their names” (*pseudepigrapha*; cited in Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 6.12.3). In light of this evidence, it is unlikely that the early church would have knowingly accepted pseudonymous letters into the Christian canon.⁴¹

been the sheer difficulty of using a pseudepigraphical letter to perform the same functions as an authentic letter.” He concludes that “among the letters surveyed there is no really good example of a pseudepigraphical letter that achieves didactic relevance by the generality of its contents” (“Pseudo-Apostolic Letters,” *JBL* 107 [1988]: 487).

³⁸ The labels “epistle” and “letter” for the Epistle of Jeremiah and the Letter of Aristeas are misleading because neither writing is properly a letter: the former is a homily, the latter an account of the circumstances surrounding the translation of the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek (Bauckham [“Pseudo-Apostolic Letters,” 478] considers it “misclassified” and a “dedicated treatise”). Bauckham also discusses several didactic letters such as 1 Enoch 92–105; Epistle of Jeremiah; Baruch; and 2 Baruch 78–87. See Wilder, “Does the Bible Contain Forgeries?,” 167.

³⁹ Wilder, “Does the Bible Contain Forgeries?,” 170.

⁴⁰ Bauckham (“Pseudo-Apostolic Letters,” 485) calls the Epistle to the Laodiceans “a remarkably incompetent attempt to fill the gap . . . nothing but a patchwork of Pauline sentences and phrases from other letters, mainly Philippians.” Third Corinthians is part of the late second-century Acts of Paul.

⁴¹ See, e.g., T. D. Lea, “The Early Christian View of Pseudepigraphic Writings,” *JETS* 27 (1984): 65–75. This is true despite Metzger’s conclusion that “since the use of the literary form of pseudepigraphy need not be regarded as necessarily involving fraudulent intent, it cannot be argued that the character of inspiration excludes the possibility of pseudepigraphy among the canonical writings” (“Literary Forgeries and Canonical Pseudepigrapha,” *JBL* 91 [1972]: 22). See especially J. Duff, “A Reconsideration of Pseudepigraphy in Early Christianity” (Ph.D. dissertation, Oxford University, 1998), who concludes (1) that the value of a text was closely linked to its true authorship; (2) that pseudonymity was generally viewed as a deceitful practice;

Another factor to consider is the significant number of *historical particularities* featured in these letters. While it's possible that a later imitator of Paul fabricated these pieces of information to lend greater verisimilitude to his writing, there seems to be no compelling reason these references couldn't reflect actual circumstances in Paul's life and ministry.⁴² Some object that the historical details in the LTT cannot be easily fitted into the chronology in Acts. This is true, but they can be accommodated without much difficulty at a later time toward the end of Paul's career (see Pauline Chronology

and (3) that texts thought to be pseudonymous were marginalized. Duff also points out that the question of pseudonymity is important for interpretation because one will interpret the LTT differently if one views them as second-century forgeries rather than first-century authentic compositions. Against J. D. G. Dunn, "The Problem of Pseudonymity," in *The Living Word*, 2nd ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2009), 53–68, who claims that authoritative tradition was not regarded as fixed and static but as living tradition which continued to be reworked. According to Dunn, the criterion for acceptability was not authorship by the one to whom a given piece of writing was overtly attributed but continuity and coherence of the newer expression of a living tradition with preceding ones (Dunn cites Matthew's and Luke's use of Mark and the Chronicler's use of Samuel–Kings as canonical examples). In this vein Dunn views the LTT as "appropriate and authentic reexpression of the Pauline heritage and tradition," which the church acknowledged as such based on the "Jewish understanding and practice of tradition as a living force" (pp. 67–68). However, one looks in vain for confirmation of this understanding of the LTT in the patristic writings.

⁴² Contra Bauckham ("Pseudo-Apostolic Letters," 492), who believes the author of the LTT "has thought himself into situations in Paul's ministry and . . . has filled out whatever historical information was available to him with historical fiction." Bauckham even ventures the conjecture that Timothy might have written 1–2 Timothy himself (p. 494). Also against Dunn ("Problem of Pseudonymity," 66), who believes Paul was "the fountainhead of the Pastorals' tradition" and that 1–2 Timothy and Titus reexpress for a later situation "the voice of the Pauline tradition for a new day"; and N. Brox ("Zu den persönlichen Notizen der Pastoralbriefe," *BZ* 13 [1969]: 76–94), who believes the personal references constitute "typical situations in the ecclesiastical office, which are historicized and attributed to Paul." See also Brox, *Falsche Verfasserangaben*, where Brox claims that pseudonymity is an instance of a noble lie which was justifiable for defending the Pauline heritage; and Ehrman, *Forgery and Counterforgery*, who considers most Christian literature of the first 400 years of the Christian era, including a good portion of the NT, to have been forged and thus inauthentic. Cf. J. Luttenberger, *Prophetenmantel oder Bücherfutteral? Die persönlichen Notizen in den Pastoralbriefen im Licht antiker Epistolographie und literarischer Pseudepigraphie*, *Arbeiten zur Bibel und ihrer Geschichte* 40 (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2012), who suggests 2 Timothy and Titus may be authentic while 1 Timothy may be a literary supplement to these two letters.

below).⁴³ In fact, the notion of pseudonymous authorship is rendered less plausible because it would likely entail a pseudonymous readership as well (double pseudonymity), not to mention the inauthenticity of the plethora of historical details in these letters. Consistency would seem to demand that pseudonymity envelop a given letter in its totality (which seems difficult to sustain in the case of the LTT).⁴⁴ While one might make a case for using “Paul” as the author if the letters are situated firmly in the stream of Pauline tradition, it’s another thing altogether to fabricate historical particularities and to posit false recipients.⁴⁵

One piece of evidence often adduced by those questioning the Pauline authorship of 1–2 Timothy and Titus is *differences in style and vocabulary when compared with other Pauline letters* (see discussion of Vocabulary below under Literary Analysis and Structure).⁴⁶ The LTT feature words not used elsewhere in Paul’s undisputed writings,⁴⁷ while characteristic Pauline terminology is

⁴³ Wilder, “Does the Bible Contain Forgeries?,” 176.

⁴⁴ Thornton, *Hostility in the House of God*, 11–12, contends that “whether doubly authentic or doubly pseudonymous, the destination of both letters was most likely Ephesus” (following P. Trebilco, *The Early Christians in Ephesus from Paul to Ignatius*, WUNT 166 [Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 2004], 209). He adds: “While I agree with Trebilco’s conclusion, I acknowledge the fact that he and other proponents of the pseudonymous position are open to the criticism of inconsistency here: the letters were *not really* written by the Apostle Paul to his delegate, Timothy, but the letters *were actually* sent to Ephesus” (p. 12n13).

⁴⁵ See on this Schnabel, “Paul, Timothy, and Titus,” 396–97.

⁴⁶ See Marshall, *Pastoral Epistles*, 60–61; Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, xcix–cxviii; Ben Witherington III, *Letters and Homilies for Hellenized Christians*, vol. 1: *A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on Titus, 1–2 Timothy and 1–3 John* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2006), 54–62 (see also pp. 68–72 on the rhetorical character and substance of the PE and pp. 72–75 for “a cautionary word”); and Schnabel, “Paul, Timothy, and Titus,” 386–91, who points out that “the notion that an author has a consistent style is a romantic notion of the modern Western world” and asserts that “it is the occasion that determines the style adopted” (p. 389). Similarly, A. W. Pitts, “Style and Pseudonymity in Pauline Scholarship: A Register Based Configuration,” in *Paul and Pseudepigraphy*, 113, who avers, “Studies in the Pastoral letters famously employ several (mainly) linguistic criteria to detect shifts in style on the typically unargued assumption that a shift in style necessarily entails a shift in authorship,” and goes on to question that “unargued assumption” on the basis of “theoretical and field research in sociolinguistics.”

⁴⁷ E.g., εὐσέβεια (“godliness”), σώφρων (“self-controlled”), and ἐπιφάνεια in the place of παρουσία (“coming,” referring to Christ’s return).

lacking.⁴⁸ What is more, the LTT include a large number of unique words (*hapax legomena*) not found elsewhere in the NT.⁴⁹ There are also differences in sentence length, word order, and the use of conjunctions and particles.⁵⁰ However, establishing authorship on the basis of stylistic differences is fraught with difficulty and remains notoriously inconclusive.⁵¹ Not only is there a difference between public letters sent to congregations and personal correspondence addressed to individuals,⁵² Paul’s desire to preserve his apostolic legacy would adequately account for the emphasis on church leadership and the faithful passing on of apostolic tradition in these

⁴⁸ E.g., ἐλευθερία (“freedom”), σὰρξ (“flesh,” in contrast to “Spirit”), σταυρός (“cross”), and δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ (“righteousness of God”). Cf. the list in Marshall, *Pastoral Epistles*, 104–6, who discusses themes that some have alleged are missing from or are less prominent in the LTT: (1) the fatherhood of God; (2) the power and witness of the Spirit; (3) union with Jesus Christ and spiritual resurrection from death in sin; and (4) freedom from the law; and the discussion in Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, lxxxviii–xcvii (including the chart on p. xc).

⁴⁹ E.g., ἀνδραποδιστής (“slave-trader”) and ἐπίορκος (“perjurer,” both in 1 Tim 1:10); and ἀφθορία (“integrity,” Titus 2:7). See Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction*, 619, who puts the number at 175; Harrison, *Problem of the Pastoral Epistles*, whose count is 176; and Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, xcix–cxviii, who provides an extensive analysis of the data as well as a critique of Harrison’s work. Kierspel, *Charts on the Life, Letters, and Theology of Paul*, 156, says there are 175 NT *hapax legomena* and 131 additional words not found in the other Pauline letters. See also the lexical data (including special vocabulary) provided in A. Köstenberger and R. Bouchoc, *The Book Study Concordance* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2003), 1172–234.

⁵⁰ See the literature cited in Schnabel, “Paul, Timothy, and Titus,” 387nn14–15.

⁵¹ For an incisive treatment, see B. M. Metzger, “A Reconsideration of Certain Arguments against the Pauline Authorship of the Pastoral Epistles,” *ExpTim* 70 (1958): 91–94 (see especially the four questions on p. 93). See also Wilder, “Does the Bible Contain Forgeries?,” 173: “Stylistic arguments tend to be quite subjective and unimpressive. . . . Furthermore, the Pastoral Epistles are simply too brief to determine with accuracy the writing habits of a particular author”; and the similar assessment by Schnabel, “Paul, Timothy, and Titus,” 387–88. See also A. D. Baum, “Semantic Variation within the *Corpus Paulinum*: Linguistic Considerations Concerning the Richer Vocabulary of the Pastoral Epistles,” *TynBul* 59 (2008): 271–92 (including an extensive word list), who shows that 1–2 Timothy and Titus feature “a much higher percentage of distinctive words than the rest of the Pauline letters” (p. 277).

⁵² See esp. Prior, *Paul the Letter-Writer and the Second Letter to Timothy*; Prior, “Revisiting the Pastoral Epistles,” *ScrB* 31 (2001): 2–19, who raises the fact of coauthorship in most of Paul’s letters (p. 14); and Johnson, *First and Second Letters to Timothy*, 55–99.

letters (§7.3).⁵³ What's more, while Paul's earlier letters owe more to conceptual orality, regularly featuring parentheses and anacolutha (syntactical inconsistencies), the LTT are closer to conceptual writing, which suggests that "their author has expressed himself more carefully and probably had more time at his disposal than the author . . . of the other ten Paulines."⁵⁴

In addition, it is often claimed that the *church structure* in the LTT reflects the church in the early second century rather than the first, most notably as set forth by Ignatius of Antioch (ca. 35–110), who advocates a monarchical episcopate and a three-tiered ecclesiastical hierarchy (see *Eph.* 2.2; *Magn.* 3.1; *Trall.* 2.2; 3.1).⁵⁵ For this reason, the LTT are said to exhibit a form of "early Catholicism."⁵⁶ However, the LTT hardly fit this description. Paul and Barnabas appointed elders in the churches they established as early as AD 50 (Acts 14:23; see 11:30; 15:2; 20:28–31; 21:18), and the terms

⁵³ In addition, Paul may have employed amanuenses, as he did at other occasions (e.g., Rom 16:22). See Ellis, "Pastoral Letters," 663–64; R. N. Longenecker, "Ancient Amanuenses and the Pauline Epistles," in *New Dimensions in New Testament Study*, ed. R. N. Longenecker and M. C. Tenney (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1974), 281–97; E. R. Richards, *The Secretary in the Letters of Paul*, WUNT 2/42 (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1991); Richards, *Paul and First-Century Letter Writing: Secretaries, Composition and Collection* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2004); Schnabel, "Paul, Timothy, and Titus," 390; and Witherington, *Letters and Homilies for Hellenized Christians*, 67–68, who maintains that Luke served as amanuensis, esp. of 2 Timothy (cf. 2 Tim 4:11).

⁵⁴ Baum, "Semantic Variation," 290, with reference to M. Reiser, "Paulus als Stilist," *SEÅ* 66 (2001): 151–65. But see the summary and critique by Marshall, "Pastoral Epistles in Recent Study," 291–92, who objects that the synonyms advanced by Baum aren't close enough and that the vocabulary in the LTT "indicates a process of thought different from that of the other letters" (p. 292). Marshall also notes that Baum's hypothesis doesn't account for the smaller number of particles in the LTT when compared with the undisputed Pauline letters (p. 292). See also Yarbrough's summary of Schlatter's assessment, who attributes new vocabulary to new controversies and situations that had arisen in the church (R. W. Yarbrough, "Schlatter on the Pastorals: Mission in the Academy," in *New Testament Theology in Light of the Church's Mission: Essays in Honor of I. Howard Marshall*, ed. J. C. Laansma, G. R. Osborne, and R. F. Van Neste [Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2011], 307–8).

⁵⁵ See Mounce (*Pastoral Epistles*, lxxxvi–lxxxviii, 186–92), who cites Polycarp, Clement, Clement of Alexandria, and Irenaeus as referring to a two-tiered structure, using *ἐπίσκοπος* and *πρεσβύτερος* interchangeably.

⁵⁶ See, e.g., E. Käsemann, "Paul and Early Catholicism," in *New Testament Questions of Today*, trans. W. J. Montague (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1969), 237–50.

“overseer” (ἐπίσκοπος) and “elder” (πρεσβύτερος) are used interchangeably with reference to the same office (Titus 1:5, 7; see Acts 20:17, 28).⁵⁷ Paul’s instruction to Titus to “appoint elders in every town” (Titus 1:5) is therefore hardly novel. What’s more, the fact that Titus is to appoint elders in *every* town also speaks against the presence of a monarchical episcopate at the time of writing.⁵⁸ Elsewhere, Paul addresses one of his letters to the “overseers and deacons” at Philippi (Phil 1:1), which coheres well with the two-tiered structure presupposed in 1 Timothy. Finally, the emphasis on qualifications for overseers and deacons in 1 Timothy and Titus speaks decisively in favor of a first-century date because a second-century writer would almost certainly have expected his readers already to be familiar with this pattern.⁵⁹

Proponents of pseudonymity also maintain that there are insurmountable *theological and conceptual differences* between Paul’s earlier letters and the LTT.⁶⁰ Some argue that references to the gospel as “sound teaching,” “the faith,” or “the truth” (1 Tim 1:10, 19; 3:9, 13; 4:1, 6; 6:3, 10; 2 Tim 1:13; 4:3; Titus 1:9, 13; 2:1) reflect a later point in time when the body of Christian teaching had shifted from a dynamic expression of faith in Christ to a fixed set of creedal beliefs. However, there’s no reason Paul toward the end of his life shouldn’t look at the gospel as a precious stewardship to be passed on to the next generation of leaders. What’s more, there are some indications that Paul even earlier viewed the gospel in similar terms (e.g., Rom 16:17; 1 Cor 4:17; 11:2; 15:1–3). Others contend that the references to “godliness” (εὐσέβεια) in the LTT indicate a more advanced stage subsequent to Paul’s martyrdom. However, it’s much more likely that Paul here upholds a virtue that was highly valued in the surrounding Greco-Roman culture in the belief that it was “truly attainable only in Christ.”⁶¹ Similar arguments can be made with regard to

⁵⁷ B. L. Merkle, *The Elder and Overseer: One Office in the Early Church*, StBibLit 57 (New York: P. Lang, 2003). F. M. Young (“On ἐπίσκοπος and πρεσβύτερος,” *JTS* 45 [1994]: 142–48) ventures the “admittedly tentative” hypothesis that the origins of ἐπίσκοπος and πρεσβύτερος are distinct. However, her interpretation of the LTT in light of Ignatius (died ca. 110) rather than vice versa is of doubtful merit.

⁵⁸ Wilder, “Does the Bible Contain Forgeries?,” 174.

⁵⁹ See A. J. Köstenberger, “Church Government,” in *The Encyclopedia of Christian Civilization*, vol. 1: A–D, ed. G. T. Kurian (Oxford: Blackwell, 2011), 543–51.

⁶⁰ See Schnabel, “Paul, Timothy, and Titus,” 391–96.

⁶¹ Towner, *Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 174.

references to both God and Christ as Savior (§3.3), to the church as “God’s household” (§4.1), and to “epiphany” (ἐπιφάνεια) language (§§3.2, 6.6).⁶²

The theology of the LTT is not identical in form to that of Paul’s other letters, but it can plausibly be viewed as complementary rather than contradictory and as no less Pauline than the earlier undisputed letters (see Pauline Chronology below).⁶³ As E. Schnabel contends,

The absence of Pauline theological themes from the Pastoral Epistles (e.g., the cross, the Holy Spirit, the flesh/spirit dichotomy) does not prove inauthenticity. There is no reason why Paul should mention the whole range of basic theological topics in all of his letters, particularly in letters to coworkers who know his theology. It is only if it could be shown that the theology of the Pastoral Epistles *contradicts* Paul’s undisputed letters that we would have a serious problem.⁶⁴

In light of this set of historical, literary, and theological considerations, the conclusion seems reasonable that the LTT “are much more akin to the accepted letters of Paul than they are to the known pseudonymous documents that circulated in the early church.”⁶⁵ This is not to deny that there are legitimate differences between Paul’s

⁶² Schnabel, “Paul, Timothy, and Titus,” 393–95. See, e.g., D. C. Verner, *The Household of God: The Social World of the Pastoral Epistles*, SBLDS 71 (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1983), who argues that the metaphor of the “household of God” is used to enforce the traditional patriarchal structure of the household within the church in response to the charge that the church is subverting the political structures of the state; and D. G. Horrell, “From ἀδελφοί to οἶκος θεοῦ: Social Transformation in Pauline Christianity,” *JBL* 120 (2001): 293–311, who contends that whereas Paul addresses believers as “brothers,” the pseudo-Pauline letters use the model of a hierarchically structured household.

⁶³ Another possible reason for alleging pseudonymity is that the chronology of the LTT seems to be incompatible with Acts.

⁶⁴ Schnabel, “Paul, Timothy, and Titus,” 392.

⁶⁵ D. A. Carson and D. J. Moo, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), 563. Similarly, D. Guthrie, “The Development of the Idea of Canonical Pseudepigrapha in New Testament Criticism,” *VE* 1 (1962): 43–59. See already the similar assessment by Schlatter, who “reads the PE as an artifact of Paul’s final [sic] years of apostolic ministry based on linguistic, literary, and concrete historical considerations” (Yarbrough’s summary: “Schlatter on the Pastorals,” 309).

earlier undisputed letters and the LTT. Clearly the LTT are written at a later juncture in the history and mission of the early church and aim to contextualize the Christian message in the midst of a unique set of circumstances. This is the genuine insight underlying pseudonymity proposals. However, there seems to be no compelling evidence to push the LTT beyond Paul’s lifetime into the post-Pauline period. Historically, literarily, and theologically, these three letters fit at least as comfortably toward the end of Paul’s ministry as they do in the period following his death.⁶⁶

F. Pauline Chronology

At what point in his ministry did Paul write the LTT? A brief survey of Pauline chronology will help set the stage for adjudicating this question.⁶⁷ Paul hailed from “the thriving commercial and intel-

One further argument is mentioned by G. D. Fee (“Reflections on Church Order in the Pastoral Epistles, with Further Reflection on the Hermeneutics of *Ad Hoc* Documents,” *JETS* 28 [1985]: 141): the lack of a satisfactory answer to the question, “Why three letters? That is, given 1 Timothy, why did a pseudepigrapher write Titus, and given 1 Timothy and Titus and their concerns, why 2 Timothy at all?” Similarly, T. Manabu, “Der zweite Timotheus als letzter Gefangenschaftsbrief,” *Kwansei Gakuin University Humanities Review* 11 (2006): 2.

J. D. Quinn and W. C. Wacker, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy*, ECC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 20, respond by pointing to the genre of letter collections, maintaining that the LTT “as a collection would have been received and read not as individual letters from the Paul of history but as a ‘characterization’ of the great apostle and his teaching for the new generation.” Manabu (“Der zweite Timotheus,” 2) also draws attention to the fact that 2 Timothy never refers to 1 Timothy, which would be curious if the three letters were intended as a letter collection (he cites 1–2 Peter and 1–2 Thessalonians as contrasting examples; cf. 2 Pet 3:1; 2 Thess 2:2).

⁶⁶ Cf. P. H. Towner, “Pauline Theology or Pauline Tradition in the Pastoral Epistles: The Question of Method,” *TynBul* 46 (1995): 287–314.

⁶⁷ For helpful discussions setting the general framework, see Köstenberger, Kellum, and Quarles, *The Cradle, the Cross, and the Crown*, chap. 9; and C. L. Quarles, *Illustrated Life of Paul* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2014). For a detailed discussion of the question of chronology in relation to Acts, see C. S. Keener, *Acts: An Exegetical Commentary*, vol. 3: 15:1–23:35 (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2014), 3023–26. Keener favors the traditional view of a second Pauline imprisonment and of the events mentioned in the LTT subsequent to those referenced in the book of Acts. A rather idiosyncratic set of proposals comes from B. Adamczewski, *Heirs of the Reunited Church: The History of the Pauline Mission in Paul’s Letters, in the So-Called Pastoral Letters, and in the Pseudo-Titus Narrative of Acts* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2010), who claims the LTT develop in an ethopoeic way the information

lectual center” of Tarsus of Cilicia (Acts 9:11; 21:39; 22:3).⁶⁸ He studied under the eminent first-century Jewish rabbi Gamaliel I (Acts 22:3; see 5:34–39) and zealously persecuted the early Christians (Acts 7:56–8:3; 9:1–2; 1 Cor 15:9; Phil 3:6). An encounter with the risen Christ on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:1–9; 22:6–10; 26:12–18) caused a radical reorientation of Paul’s life and a paradigm shift in his thinking. Up until that moment Paul had considered Jesus to be a messianic pretender cursed by God; now he recognized him as the Messiah sent by God (Gal 3:10–14; 2 Cor 5:21). With this the church’s most committed nemesis (see 1 Tim 1:15–17) became its most fervent propagator.

After a quiet period of preparation (Gal 1:21–24), Barnabas recruited Paul to participate in the early church’s mission to the Gentiles (Acts 11:25–26). Paul quickly rose to assume a leadership role and gathered a group of coworkers including Timothy and Titus. While assuming responsibility for the churches he established, Paul delegated certain tasks to his trusted associates.⁶⁹ This became a necessity especially toward the end of Paul’s life, which was characterized by imprisonments (Acts 24:22–27; 28:11–31; 2 Cor 11:23; Eph 6:20; Phil 1:14; 2 Tim 1:8), ailments (Gal 4:13–15; 2 Cor 12:7–10), and advancing age.⁷⁰ If Paul is the author of the LTT, the setting of these writings, as mentioned, is most likely his desire to ensure continuity between the apostolic and the post-apostolic period, to pass on the message of the Christian faith, and to provide sound principles for church governance.⁷¹

contained about Timothy and Titus in the other letters of Paul and the book of Acts, presenting Titus as a model Gentile Christian (p. 74) and Timothy as a model Jewish Christian (p. 75) and implying that Paul died in AD 49 (p. 82).

⁶⁸ R. N. Longenecker, *The Ministry and Message of Paul* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1971), 24.

⁶⁹ See M. M. Mitchell, “New Testament Envoys in the Context of Greco-Roman Diplomatic and Epistolary Conventions: The Example of Timothy and Titus,” *JBL* 111 (1992): 641–62, who focuses on 1 Thessalonians 3 and 2 Corinthians 7; and “The Role of Paul’s Delegates” in Johnson, *First and Second Letters to Timothy*, 94–96.

⁷⁰ See A. J. Malherbe, “*Paulus Senex*,” *ResQ* 36 (1994): 197–207.

⁷¹ Regarding the appropriateness of speaking of first-century “orthodoxy,” see A. J. Köstenberger and M. J. Kruger, *The Heresy of Orthodoxy: How Contemporary Culture’s Fascination with Diversity Has Reshaped Our Understanding of Early Christianity* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2010). Cf. J.-D. Dubois, “Les pastorales, la gnose et l’hérésie,” *FoiVie* 34 (1995): 41–48, who argues that it’s best to situate the LTT on

There are essentially three possibilities as to when the LTT were written:⁷² (1) during Acts;⁷³ (2) after the end of Acts;⁷⁴ or (3) after Paul’s death.⁷⁵ Dating the letters to the years covered in Acts was common in the early centuries of the church and into the nineteenth century.⁷⁶ The view was rejected not on the basis of contrary evidence but in favor of inauthenticity and non-Pauline authorship

a Pauline trajectory halfway between the Corinthian controversies and the Gnostic movements known to Irenaeus.

⁷² For a survey, see S. E. Porter, “Pauline Chronology and the Question of Pseudonymity of the Pastoral Epistles,” in *Paul and Pseudepigraphy*, 65–88, who concludes that “there is and can be no final and definitive solution to the issue of Pauline authorship and pseudepigraphy of the Pastoral Epistles on the basis of Pauline chronology” (p. 88). Porter believes 2 Timothy was probably written from a Roman imprisonment, most likely during one of the missionary journeys recorded in Acts. For a tentative reconstruction, see Ellis, “Pastoral Letters,” 661–62; cf. Köstenberger, “1–2 Timothy, Titus,” 596–98. For a comparison, see chart 73, “Locating the Pastoral Epistles within Paul’s Ministry,” in Kierspel, *Charts on the Life, Letters, and Theology of Paul*, 137, 235.

⁷³ See, e.g., J. van Bruggen, *Die geschichtliche Einordnung der Pastoralbriefe* (Wuppertal: R. Brockhaus, 1981); R. Fuchs, “Eine vierte Missionsreise des Paulus im Osten? Zur Datierung des ersten Timotheosbriefs und des Titusbriefts,” *JETH* 25 (2011): 33–58; Fuchs, *Unerwartete Unterschiede*, 5–30; B. Reicke, “Chronologie der Pastoralbriefe,” *TLZ* 101 (1976): 81–96; D. A. deSilva, *An Introduction to the New Testament: Contexts, Methods & Ministry Formation* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2004), 734–35; Towner, *Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 10–15; Towner, *1–2 Timothy & Titus*, IVPNTC 14 (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1994), 14–20; P. Walker, “Revisiting the Pastoral Epistles: Part I,” *EuroJTh* 21 (2012): 4–16; Walker, “Revisiting the Pastoral Epistles: Part II,” *EuroJTh* 21 (2012): 120–32.

⁷⁴ See, e.g., Ellis, “Pastoral Letters,” 661–62; Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, 3–4; Keener, *Acts*, 3:2023–26; J. B. Lightfoot, “The Date of the Pastoral Epistles,” in *Biblical Essays* (London: Macmillan, 1893), 399–410; and J. B. Polhill, *Paul and His Letters* (Nashville: B&H, 1999), 405.

⁷⁵ See, e.g., R. I. Pervo, *The Making of Paul: Constructions of the Apostle in Early Christianity* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2010); Quinn and Wacker, *Letters to Timothy*, 1–23; and the discussion of pseudonymity above. See also R. Riesner, who believes Luke served as the redactor of the LTT which serve as “a kind of third volume to Luke-Acts” (“The Pastoral Epistles and Paul in Spain [2 Timothy 4:16–18],” in *Rastreado Los Origenes: Lengua y exegesis en el Nuevo Testamento*, ed. J. M. G. Perez [Madrid: Ediciones Encuentro/CEU Ediciones/Fundacion San Justino, 2011], 316–35). Riesner believes “Luke redacted 2 Timothy right after the apostle’s death as his spiritual testament using personal memories and even some written Pauline material” (p. 334). As Yarbrough points out, “No one suggests, of course, that the PE might precede the undoubted Pauline letters” (“Schlatter on the Pastorals,” 307n36).

⁷⁶ Kierspel, *Charts on the Life, Letters, and Theology of Paul*, 235.

(pseudonymity).⁷⁷ In light of the difficulties of accommodating the information contained in the LTT within the Acts chronology, postulating a date after the end of Acts may be the “simplest solution,”⁷⁸ but this, too, is not without its difficulties. First, the ministry locations mentioned in the LTT may presuppose ministry in the East, such as Ephesus (1 Tim 3:14–15), Troas (2 Tim 4:13), and Miletus (2 Tim 4:20), a region Paul had left after the third missionary journey and didn’t expect to revisit (cf. Acts 20:25). Second, Paul speaks of Timothy’s “youth” in 1 Timothy 4:12, which may point to an earlier date. Third, the detailed instructions regarding church order and qualifications for church leaders in 1 Timothy and Titus suggest a time when the church was still being established. In addition, it’s possible to accommodate the information included in the LTT within the Acts chronology. J. van Brugge, followed by R. Fuchs and P. Towner, suggests Paul may have interrupted his three-year ministry in Ephesus on his third missionary journey (Acts 19; cf. 20:31) and embarked on an “interim journey” to Macedonia (1 Tim 1:3) and Crete (Titus 1:5) during that time.⁷⁹

Nevertheless, on balance it seems that a date after the end of Acts but prior to Paul’s death is preferred.⁸⁰ Any reconstruction

⁷⁷ Van Brugge, *Geschichtliche Einordnung*, 21.

⁷⁸ Polhill, *Paul and His Letters*, 405.

⁷⁹ Van Brugge, *Geschichtliche Einordnung*, 91–96; Fuchs, “Vierte Missionsreise des Paulus im Osten?,” 33–58; Fuchs, *Unerwartete Unterschiede*, 5–30; Towner, *Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 10–15; Towner, *1–2 Timothy & Titus*, 14–20. See also Walker, “Revisiting the Pastoral Epistles: Part I”; Walker, “Revisiting the Pastoral Epistles: Part II,” who proposes that Paul wrote 1 Timothy and Titus in the period between September AD 55 and January AD 57 when he left Ephesus and went into Macedonia and Illyricum before wintering in Corinth (Acts 20:1–3; Rom 15:19) and that he wrote 2 Timothy when arriving in Rome in March AD 60 (Acts 28:14) prior to writing his other “prison epistles,” Colossians, Ephesians, Philemon, and Philippians. Cf. Walker, *In the Steps of Paul* (Oxford: Lion, 2008), 12–13, which stipulates AD 56 as the date for 1 Timothy and Titus (both prior to Romans!) and early AD 60 as the date for 2 Timothy. Walker essentially reiterated his proposal in “1 Timothy and Titus: Reimagining the Connections (with Other Pauline Letters),” a paper presented at the annual meeting of the ETS in Atlanta, Georgia (November 18, 2015).

⁸⁰ See the discussion by J. M. G. Barclay, “The Last Years of Paul: What Are the Issues?,” in *The Last Years of Paul: Essays from the Tarragona Conference, June 2013*, ed. Armand Puig i Tàrrach, John M. G. Barclay, and Jörg Frey, WUNT 352 (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 2015), 1–14. But note his proposal that Paul’s ministry ended not in “triumph and success” but in “disappointment and failure” (pp. 11, 14) and that Paul was convicted and martyred as early as AD 62 for *seditio* or *maiestas* in relation to the

within Acts is essentially an argument from silence (though to some extent this is the case for every type of chronological reconstruction), and it's far from certain that Luke would have omitted reference to such an "interim journey" to Macedonia and Crete in his account of Paul's whereabouts in Acts. On the other hand, if such a journey took place after Acts, its noninclusion in Acts would be plausible if Luke chose to end his account with Paul's arrival in Rome. While Paul in Romans envisioned traveling west, not east (Rom 15:24, 28), and while Acts reports that Paul didn't expect to visit Ephesus again following his "Ephesian farewell" (Acts 20:25), this doesn't rule out subsequent travels to the Aegean region; Paul's plans were known to change (see, e.g., 2 Cor 1:16–24; 1 Thess 2:18).

Most likely, therefore, Paul engaged in a second Aegean ministry after his release from his first Roman imprisonment, which may have occurred in AD 62 (Acts 28).⁸¹ He wrote the first letter to Timothy from Macedonia (1 Tim 1:3) sometime after the year 62 but before 65 or 66 (the likely date of his second Roman imprisonment, issuing in his martyrdom under Nero who died in 68).⁸² Timothy, who was at that time stationed in Ephesus, needed counsel on how to deal with

Roman emperor (p. 13; see also H. Omerzu, *Der Prozess des Paulus: Eine exegetische und rechtshistorische Untersuchung der Apostelgeschichte* [Berlin: de Gruyter, 2002], 508). If so, of course Paul didn't write 2 Timothy. If so, too, Paul's expectation in Phil 1:19–26 and Phlm 22 that he would shortly be released proved unfounded. One wonders if this "deliberately provocative" proposal (Barclay's own words, p. 14) is in fact the best reading of the evidence. See, e.g., Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 2.25.5; Jerome, *Vir. ill.* 5.9–10 and other ancient and patristic evidence adduced by V. Marotta, "St. Paul's Death: Roman Citizenship and *summa supplicia*," in *Last Years of Paul*, 259.

⁸¹ Cf. A. Scriba, "Von Korinth nach Rom. Die Chronologie der letzten Jahre des Paulus," in *Das Ende des Paulus. Historische, theologische und literargeschichtliche Aspekte*, ed. F. W. Horn (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2001), 157–73, who argues that a date of AD 59 or 60 for Paul's arrival in Rome is most likely. See also R. Riesner, "Paul's Trial and End according to Second Timothy, 1 Clement, the Canon Muratori, and the Apocryphal Acts," in *Last Years of Paul*, 395, who cites relevant evidence and concludes that "according to the most probable chronological reconstruction, the apostle was in captivity in Rome from 60 to 62" (with reference to Riesner, *Paul's Early Period: Chronology, Mission Strategy, Theology* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998], 218–28); see Riesner, "Paul's Trial," 406, citing other scholars holding this view in n. 93.

⁸² See Köstenberger, Kellum, and Quarles, *Cradle, the Cross, and the Crown*, 394–95. Thornton, *Hostility in the House of God*, 11 (following M. Gill, *Jesus as Mediator: Politics and Polemic in 1 Timothy 2:1–7* [New York: P. Lang, 2008, 71–78]), posits a range of ca. AD 64–100 for the writing of both 1 and 2 Timothy." However, this range seems too restrictive on the front end since composition earlier

false teachers in the Ephesian church, which provided the occasion for Paul to issue a series of instructions.⁸³ Paul likely wrote the letter to Titus either between 1 and 2 Timothy or prior to 1 Timothy from an unknown location (possibly Macedonia or Achaia).⁸⁴ He probably wrote 2 Timothy from Rome subsequent to 1 Timothy and Titus during his second, more severe imprisonment in 65 or 66.⁸⁵

Date(s)	Event(s) in Paul's Last Years
59/60	Arrival in Rome, two-year imprisonment/house arrest, writes "prison epistles" (Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Philemon; cf. Acts 28:11–31)
62	Release from first Roman imprisonment
62–65	Second Aegean ministry (cf. 2 Tim 4:9–18), possible trip to Spain (cf. Rom 15:24, 28),* writes 1 Timothy from Macedonia and Titus from an unknown location

in the AD 60s prior to AD 64 seems like a real possibility in the case of 1 Timothy; also, a date in or close to AD 100 seems highly unlikely.

⁸³ So Johnson (*Letters to Paul's Delegates*, 106–7, 168), who calls this the *mandata principis* ("commandments of the ruler") letter, citing several ancient parallels.

⁸⁴ So Quarles, *Illustrated Life of Paul*, 259. For a more detailed discussion, see introduction to Titus below.

⁸⁵ For theories that Luke wrote or redacted the LTT or served as Paul's amanuensis, see §7.3 below. For an attempted reconstruction of Paul's last two years, see Riesner, "Paul's Trial," 406–8. However, Riesner's reconstruction is highly conjectural if not often implausible; Herzer rightly assigns it to the "genre" of *Vermutungswissenschaft* ("guesswork"; M. Hengel's term). See Jens Herzer, "The Mission and the End of Paul between Strategy and Reality: A Response to Rainer Reiser," in *The Last Years of Paul: Essays from the Tarragona Conference, June 2013*, ed. J. Barclay et al., *Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament* (Tubingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2015), 411–31 (with reference to the classic essay [originally an SNTS presidential address] by M. Hengel, "Aufgaben der neutestamentlichen Wissenschaft," *NTS* 40 [1994]: 321–57, esp. 334).

1–2 TIMOTHY AND TITUS

Date(s)	Event(s) in Paul's Last Years (continued)
65/66/67	Second Roman imprisonment; writes 2 Timothy from Rome, martyrdom (beheaded by the sword)**
68	Death of Nero
<p>*On the question of whether Paul ever realized his goal of evangelizing Spain, see the essays by Barclay, Puig i Tàrrach, and Karakolis in <i>Last Years of Paul</i>. See also discussion in the commentary at Titus 1:5 below.</p> <p>** See Tertullian, <i>Praescr.</i> 36; Eusebius, <i>Hist. eccl.</i> 3.1.3. Tradition commemorates Paul's death on June 29. See Barclay, "Last Years of Paul," 7–8, with reference to H. W. Tajra, <i>The Martyrdom of St. Paul</i> (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1994); D. L. Eastman, <i>Paul, the Martyr: The Cult of the Apostle in the Latin West</i> (Atlanta: SBL, 2011); and H. G. Thümmel, <i>Die Memorien für Petrus und Paulus in Rom: Die archäologischen Denkmäler und die literarische Tradition</i> (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1999). Cf. Tacitus, <i>Ann.</i> 15.41.3, who states that the fire of Rome broke out on July 19, AD 64. On the manner of Paul's death and the circumstances surrounding it, see esp. Marotta, "St. Paul's Death"; and J. G. Cook, "Roman Penalties Regarding Roman Citizens Convicted of Heavy Charges in I CE," in <i>Last Years of Paul</i>, 271–303 (see esp. pp. 298–99 detailing other known executions under Nero). As Riesner, "Paul's Trial," 407, documents, scholars date Paul's martyrdom anywhere between AD 62 and 68 (he himself favors 63/64); the exception is R. Penna, who proposes AD 58 (R. Penna, "The Death of Paul in the Year 58," in <i>Last Years of Paul</i>, 533–52).</p>	

As J. M. G. Barclay points out, the available sources provide a fascinating set of portrayals of the apostle's final years.⁸⁶ Luke depicts Paul as the triumphant, albeit persecuted, messenger of the gospel, who preaches the gospel of God's kingdom unhindered for two whole years (Acts 28:31). Second Timothy, which I believe Paul wrote himself (though Barclay considers the letter pseudonymous), casts Paul as a "lonely hero, but a heroic figure nonetheless," who in "this last will and testament . . . announces the fulfillment of his task," not unlike Jesus himself (2 Tim 4:7; cf. John 17:4; 19:30), and who thus is able to point to his apostolic teaching, conduct, and suffering as an example for others to follow (2 Tim 3:10–11).⁸⁷ For Clement of Rome, Paul is an example of endurance who "taught righteousness to the whole world" (1 Clem. 5:7). Finally, the

⁸⁶ Barclay, "Last Years of Paul," 7.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

Martyrdom of Paul, the conclusion of the Acts of Paul, casts the apostle as the quintessential martyr.⁸⁸

**Internal Evidence in the Letters to Timothy and Titus:
Toward an Integration with Pauline Chronology**

Internal Evidence	Comments
“As I urged you when I went to Macedonia, remain in Ephesus.” (1 Tim 1:3)	The most natural reading is that Paul wrote 1 Timothy from Macedonia.
“I write these things to you, hoping to come to you soon. But if I should be delayed . . .” (1 Tim 3:14–15a)	
“Until I come, give your attention to public reading, exhortation, teaching.” (1 Tim 4:13)	
“So don’t be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, or of me his prisoner. . . . May the Lord grant mercy to the household of Onesiphorus, because he often refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chains.” (2 Tim 1:8a, 16)	A literal understanding of “prisoner” and “chains” suggests Paul is in prison when writing 2 Timothy.
“For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time for my departure is close. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. There is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me on that day.” (2 Tim 4:6–8)	At the time of writing 2 Timothy, Paul believes he is nearing the end of his life.
“Crescens has gone to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia.” (2 Tim 4:10b)	

⁸⁸ Barclay (ibid., 7–9) notes the striking diversity of these portraits (though we should note that they aren’t necessarily contradictory) and argues that these sources attest to the emergence of “the Paul of faith” (p. 9). Cf. M. de Boer, “Images of Paul in the Post-Apostolic Period,” *CBQ* 42 (1980): 359–80; R. Pervo, *The Making of Paul: Constructions of the Apostle in Early Christianity* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2010).

**Internal Evidence in the Letters to Timothy and Titus:
Toward an Integration with Pauline Chronology (continued)**

<p>“I left Trophimus sick at Miletus.” (2 Tim 4:20b)</p>	<p>Trophimus accompanies Paul on his third missionary journey (Acts 20:4, 15) and arrives with him in Jerusalem (Acts 21:29).</p>
<p>“Make every effort to come before winter.” (2 Tim 4:21)</p>	
<p>“The reason I left you in Crete . . .” (Titus 1:5)</p>	<p>“Left you in Crete” may, but need not necessarily, imply that Paul went with Titus to Crete and left him there. No mission to Crete is mentioned in Acts (though see the reference to sailing along the south side of Crete and to Cretan cities in Acts 27:7–8, 12).</p>
<p>“Appoint elders [πρεσβύτερος] in every town . . . an overseer [ἐπίσκοπος] . . . must be . . .” (Titus 1:5, 7)</p>	<p>The terms “elder” and “overseer” are used interchangeably (cf. Acts 20:17, 28), which differs from the three-tiered ecclesiastical hierarchy mentioned in the second-century letters of Ignatius.</p>
<p>“Make every effort to come to me in Nicopolis, because I have decided to spend the winter there.” (Titus 3:12)</p>	

EXPOSITION OF 1 TIMOTHY

Occasion and Purpose

The occasion for 1 Timothy is stated at the outset of the letter as follows: “As I urged you when I went to Macedonia, remain in Ephesus so that you may command certain people not to teach false doctrine” (1 Tim 1:3–4; see vv. 18–20).¹ The question is whether this occasion constitutes the purpose for the letter in its entirety or Paul has other purposes besides instructing Timothy on how to deal with these false teachers. Contrary to those who emphasize the *ad hoc* nature of the LTT, it is likely that Paul’s purpose is broader than merely dealing with the opponents.²

¹ Note that Ephesus was the third largest city in the Roman Empire (smaller only than Rome and Alexandria), boasting a population of 200,000–250,000. Cf. P. Trebilco, *The Early Christians in Ephesus from Paul to Ignatius*, WUNT 166 (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 2004), 17.

² G. W. Knight, “The Scriptures Were Written for Our Instruction,” *JETS* 39 (1996): 3–13; contra G. D. Fee, “Reflections on Church Order in the Pastoral Epistles, with Further Reflection on the Hermeneutics of *Ad Hoc* Documents,” *JETS* 28 (1985): 141–51; Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, NIBCNT 13 (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1988), 5–14, who claims that “the whole of 1 Timothy . . . is dominated by this singular concern” of refuting the false teachers and that “the whole of chs. 2–3 is best understood as instruction vis-à-vis the behavior and attitudes” of the false teachers (“Reflections,” 142–43). See also the critique by A. J. Köstenberger (“1–2 Timothy, Titus,” in *Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, vol. 12: *Ephesians–Philemon*, rev. ed. [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005], 514), who observes that Fee unduly diminishes the structural markers in 2:1 and 3:15–16 that set off chaps. 2 and 3 from chaps. 1 and 4–6, respectively (see the further interaction under the heading “Reflections”; Köstenberger, “1-2 Timothy, Titus,” 520). See also F. A. Tomlinson, “The Purpose

While chapters 1 and 4–6 are concerned primarily with the challenge of the false teachers, chapters 2–3 focus on general ecclesiastical matters. This is indicated by the phrase introducing 2:1–3:16 (“First of all, then”; 1 Tim 2:1), which suggests the beginning of a new unit,³ as well as the closing words of the same unit: “But if I should be delayed, *I have written so that you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God’s household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth*” (1 Tim 3:15; emphasis added). This solemn affirmation, as well as the following hymn in 1 Tim 3:16, suggests that Paul’s instructions in this letter possess abiding relevance for the church rather than being limited to the specific occasion.

Also, in keeping with the genre of these letters, Paul’s apostolic office (1 Tim 1:1; 2 Tim 1:1; Titus 1:1) requires that his letters be applicable to the church as a whole, transcending the scope of any one local congregation. As Paul writes elsewhere, the church, “God’s household,” is “built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone” (Eph 2:20). For this reason, the LTT should be considered foundational documents for the church, not merely *ad hoc* instructions dealing with local circumstances that lack lasting implications for the church overall.⁴

Following the confession in 1 Tim 3:16, Paul returns to the matter of false teachers (4:1). Yet even where the apostle addresses local circumstances requiring resolution, such as principles for the care of needy widows (5:3–16) or sinning elders (5:17–25), the truths and principles Paul enunciates as an apostle are true and therefore binding—not merely for Timothy and the church of Ephesus at the time of writing but also for every church, “the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth” (3:15).⁵ For this reason Paul’s

and Stewardship Theme within the Pastoral Epistles,” in *Entrusted with the Gospel: Paul’s Theology in the Pastoral Epistles*, ed. A. J. Köstenberger and T. L. Wilder (Nashville: B&H, 2010), esp. 52–53.

³ The verb *παρακαλέω* (“I urge”), which is found in 1 Tim 2:1, is used regularly by Paul in transitioning to the “business portion” of a letter (1 Cor 1:19; 2 Cor 2:8; 6:1; Eph 4:1; 1 Thess 4:1; Phlm 10).

⁴ See the discussion of genre in III. A. of the introduction.

⁵ See A. J. Köstenberger, “Women in the Church: A Response to Kevin Giles,” *EvQ* 73 (2001): 205–24; in response to K. Giles, “A Critique of the ‘Novel’ Contemporary Interpretation of 1 Timothy 2:9–15 Given in the Book, *Women in the Church*. Parts I and II,” *EvQ* 72 (2000): 151–67, 195–215.

purpose for writing 1 Timothy is *both* to instruct Timothy on how to deal with false teachers *and* to provide guidelines on a variety of matters of perennial significance for the church.⁶

The Opponents

In keeping with Paul's prediction (Acts 20:28–31), the opposition in Ephesus may have arisen from within the church's ranks rather than having invaded it from the outside.⁷ It is even possible, if not likely, that some of the false teachers were former or current elders.⁸ Alternatively, the scenario envisaged by Paul in his farewell to the Ephesian elders in Acts 20 may have materialized at a later time.⁹

In dealing with these false teachers, Timothy finds himself confronted with ascetic elements such as the prohibition of marriage¹⁰

⁶ This raises the issue of hermeneutical consistency. If an interpreter were to relativize Paul's instructions regarding women in church leadership in 1 Tim 2:11–15, he or she, to be consistent, would need to view Paul's instructions on qualifications for church leaders in 1 Tim 3:1–12 as relative and nonbinding for the church as well. See W. D. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, WBC 46 (Nashville: Nelson, 2000), 185. See also Col 4:16.

⁷ See 1 Tim 1:3; 6:2; 2 Tim 2:14; 4:2; Titus 1:13; 3:10; cf. 1 Tim 1:20; 2 Tim 2:17–18.

⁸ So Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, 7–9.

⁹ D. T. Thornton, "Hostility in the House of God: An 'Interested' Investigation of the Opponents in 1 and 2 Timothy" (Ph.D. thesis, University of Otago, 2015), 56–57.

¹⁰ The practice of forbidding marriage is found in both Judaism (especially among the Essenes; see Philo, *Hypothetica* 380) and later Gnosticism (Irenaeus, *Haer.* 1.24.2). Even Paul at times extols the advantages of celibacy (1 Cor 7:1–7), though he never forbids marriage; to the contrary, he highly extols it (e.g., Eph 5:21–33). See P. H. Towner, *1–2 Timothy & Titus*, IVPNTC 14 (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1994), 25, who argues that perhaps there was a "growing suspicion that marriage belonged to the old order which had passed away, or that the model for living in the resurrection age was to be found in descriptions of life before the fall into sin."

See also R. B. Hays, *1 Corinthians*, Interpretation (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1997), 114, who comments with regard to 1 Cor 7:1–7,

This sort of [sexual] asceticism was "in the air" in ancient Mediterranean culture. The Stoic and Cynic philosophical schools . . . debated whether a philosopher should marry or whether the unmarried state was more conducive to the pursuit of wisdom. In Greek popular religion, virginity and sexual purity were often associated with those set aside for the service of the gods, particularly for women who were prophets—the priestess of the oracle at Delphi, for example. In Paul's day, even Judaism, which classically had celebrated procreation as the duty of everyone, developed ascetic movements such as the Essenes and the Therapeutae about whom Philo of

and of certain foods (1 Tim 4:1–5; cf. Titus 1:15; see also Col 2:8, 18–23), as well as with the teaching that the resurrection has already taken place (1 Tim 1:19–20; cf. 2 Tim 2:17–18; see also 1 Cor 15:12, 34).¹¹ What Paul apparently opposes is teachings and practices that may have been motivated in part by an unduly narrow application of the Mosaic law and in part by a form of Greek dualism¹² that misunderstood the Christian teaching on the nature of believers' resurrection.¹³

Alexandria wrote glowingly. . . . Sexual abstinence was widely viewed as a means to personal wholeness and religious power.

Though the LTT were written against ascetic practices, they were subsequently reinterpreted to justify the asceticism that characterized much of the early church, a practice documented in E. A. Clark, *Reading Renunciation: Asceticism and Scripture in Early Christianity* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999), 353–70. These exegetical maneuvers may suggest ways the opponents in Ephesus justified their teaching in a Pauline church.

¹¹ See P. H. Towner, “Gnosis and Realized Eschatology in Ephesus (of the Pastoral Epistles) and the Corinthian Enthusiasm,” *JSNT* 31 (1987): 95–124, who argues that Paul’s teachings on “eventual dissolution of certain social distinctions and barriers within the New Community” (e.g., Gal 3:28; 1 Cor 12:13; Col 3:11) were apparently claimed in the present day. Cf. D. A. Mappes, “The Heresy Paul Opposed in 1 Timothy,” *BSac* 156 (1999): 452–58.

¹² Many describe the false teaching in terms of Gnosticism. E. E. Ellis speaks of “Judaism crossed with Gnosticism” (“Pastoral Letters,” *DPL* 663, with reference to Lightfoot; cf. Ignatius [died ca. 110], *Magn.* 8–11; *Trall.* 9). G. W. Knight describes the false teaching as a “Gnosticizing form of Jewish Christianity” (*Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, NIGTC [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992], 27–28). Mounce labels it as “a form of aberrant Judaism with Hellenistic/Gnostic tendencies” (*Pastoral Epistles*, lxix–lxxvi). R. F. Collins calls it “Jewish proto-Gnosticism” (*Letters That Paul Did Not Write* [Wilmington, DE: M. Glazier, 1988], 100, referring to A. T. Hanson and M. Dibelius). See also J. Roloff, “Der Kampf gegen die Irrlehrer. Wie geht man miteinander um?,” *BK* 46 (1991): 114–20; and T. Söding, “*Mysterium fidei*: Zur Auseinandersetzung mit der ‘Gnosis’ in den Pastoralbriefen,” *IKZ* 26 (1997): 502–24.

Against this phalanx of scholars, however, it’s doubtful that proto-Gnosticism stands behind the false teaching. See esp. the analysis by Thornton, *Hostility in the House of God*, 24–25, 38, 62–70, 86–87, 257–59. I. H. Marshall (“Identifying the Opposition,” in *Pastoral Epistles*, ICC [Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1999], 46–51) posits a combination of Jewish, Christian, and ascetic elements. Similarly, Towner (“Gnosis and Realized Eschatology in Ephesus,” 114) contends that “gnosis in the Pastorals seems to lack the salvific power that was associated with it in later Gnosticism.” Mounce notes that while some (e.g., A. T. Hanson, *Pastoral Epistles*, NCBC [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982], 25) adduce a connection between “(endless) genealogies” (γενεαλογίαις [ἀπεράντοις]) in 1 Tim 1:4 and Titus 3:9 and the progression of aeonic emanations characteristic of Gnostic teaching, there are no examples of γενεαλογία being used by Gnostics to describe this phenomenon (*Pastoral Epistles*, lxx).

¹³ So S. Westerholm, “The Law and the ‘Just Man’ (1 Tim 1, 3–11),” *ST* 36 (1982): 82. Cf. the overview of scholarly opinions from the Reformation onward by E. E. Ellis, “Paul and His Opponents: Trends in the Research,” in *Christianity, Judaism and*

J. Sumney observes, “The central issue that causes the author to reject these opponents is their interpretation of the Law, an interpretation that requires Gentile Christians to adopt the Torah’s dietary laws. They impose stricter regulations about marriage than 1 Timothy thinks is proper, but this does not necessarily mean they think the material world is evil.”¹⁴ As Thornton notes, what links the opponents in 1 and 2 Timothy seems to be their overrealized view of the resurrection (see esp. 2 Tim 2:18), which may also lead them to reject marriage and childbearing as belonging to a bygone era (1 Tim 2:15; 4:3).¹⁵

Structure

W. D. Mounce divides 1 Timothy as follows:

- I. Salutation (1:1–2)
- II. The Ephesian problem (1:3–20)
- III. Correction of improper conduct in the Ephesian church (2:1–4:5)
- IV. Personal notes to Timothy (4:6–16)
- V. How Timothy is to relate to different groups in the church (5:1–6:2a)
- VI. Final instructions (6:2b–21).¹⁶

Other Greco-Roman Cults: Studies for Morton Smith at Sixty, vol. 1: *New Testament*, ed. J. Neusner, SJLA 12 (Leiden: Brill, 1975), 264–98, who views the false teachers as “‘teachers of the law’ who engage in disputes about it and, in haggadic fashion, expound Jewish ‘fables’ . . . and genealogies” (p. 297). According to Ellis, the opponents are pneumatics and promote “a perverse asceticism that issues, perhaps, in a subtle licentiousness” (p. 297).

¹⁴ J. L. Sumney, “Studying Paul’s Opponents: Advances and Challenges,” in *Paul and His Opponents*, ed. S. E. Porter, Pauline Studies 2 (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 42.

¹⁵ See esp. Thornton, *Hostility in the House of God*.

¹⁶ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, cxxxv (note that the numbering is off in that Mounce has 2 II.s and 2 IV.s). Similarly, D. Guthrie (*The Pastoral Epistles*, TNTC, rev. ed. [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990], 63–64) has these major divisions: I. 1:1–20; II. 2:1–4:16; III. 5:1–6:2; IV. 6:3–21. Even fewer units are discerned by T. Lea and H. P. Griffin Jr. (*1, 2 Timothy, Titus*, NAC [Nashville: B&H, 1992], 17), who divide the letter into I. 1:1–2; II. 1:3–20; and III. 2:1–6:21.

On the whole, this outline is sound, especially in drawing a line of demarcation between 1:20 and 2:1¹⁷ and in identifying 5:1–6:2a as a separate literary unit. However, it seems preferable to view 3:16 as concluding Paul’s instructions that began in 2:1 and to regard 4:1 as starting a new major unit with reference to the last days.¹⁸ If so, the discussion of the literary plan of 1 Timothy may proceed as follows:¹⁹

¹⁷ Against P. H. Towner (*The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, NICNT [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006], ix), who keeps 1:3–3:16 as a single unit and gives insufficient attention to the markers “first of all” and “then” at 2:1. But Towner (unlike Mounce) rightly discerns a break between 3:16 and 4:1 (ibid., x).

¹⁸ See the interaction with G. D. Fee, “Reflections on Church Order,” 145 in Köstenberger, “1–2 Timothy, Titus,” 504, 509–10.

¹⁹ See Köstenberger, “1–2 Timothy, Titus,” 497. Cf. the proposed structure by Marshall (*Pastoral Epistles*, 30), who divides the letter between 1:3–3:16 and 4:1–6:21a. Thornton, “Hostility in the House of God,” 19, structures the letter with special focus on the opponents:

The Problem of the Opponents and Timothy’s Task of Correction: Part 1 (1:3–20)

The House of God: Orderly Worship and Qualified Leaders (2:1–3:13)

The Problem of the Opponents and Timothy’s Task of Correction: Part 2 (3:14–4:16)

The House of God: Ministering to Different Groups (5:1–6:2a)

The Problem of the Opponents and Timothy’s Task of Correction: Part 3 (6:2b–21a)

Note that Thornton’s outline is virtually identical to Yarbrough’s (see the next note), except that Thornton doesn’t use the word “chiasm” but simply refers to “a noteworthy pattern of oscillation” (p. 19).

Structurally speaking, we may note as well the clear *inclusio* of ἑτεροδιδασκαλέω in 1:3 and 6:3. As well, R. F. Collins suggests that the doxologies of 1 Tim 1:17 and 6:15–16 “form a loose *inclusio* that encompasses the core of the document” and “are the theological bookends that provide a framework for [1 Timothy’s community] regulations” (*1 and 2 Timothy and Titus: A Commentary*, NTL [Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2002]), 45; cf. R. Van Neste, *Cohesion and Structure in the Pastoral Epistles*, JSNTSup 280 (New York: T&T Clark, 2004), 136–41. These two parallels, among others, point to the possibility of 1:3–20 and 6:2b–21 acting as an *inclusio* for the entire letter; see C. O. Hetzler, “Our Savior and King: Theology Proper in 1 Timothy” (Ph.D. diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2008), 55–56 with further references.

- I. Opening (1:1–2)
- II. Personal Charge (1:3–20)
 - A. The Challenge of the False Teachers (1:3–11)
 - B. Paul’s Testimony (1:12–17)
 - C. Exhortation to Timothy (1:18–20)
- III. Congregational Matters: Promoting Unity and Order in God’s Household, Qualifications for Church Officers (2:1–3:16)
 - A. On Prayer (2:1–8)
 - B. Regarding Women (2:9–15)
 - C. Qualifications for Leaders (3:1–13)
 - 1. Overseers (3:1–7)
 - 2. Deacons (3:8–13)
 - D. Purpose of Paul’s Letter and Concluding Confession (3:14–16)
- IV. Further Charges (4:1–6:2a)
 - A. Latter-day Apostasy (4:1–5)
 - B. Being a Good Servant of Jesus Christ (4:6–16)
 - C. Further Congregational Matters: Dealing with Different Age Groups, Widows, Elders, and Slaves (5:1–6:2a)
 - 1. Relating to Older and Younger Men, Older and Younger Women (5:1–2)
 - 2. Ministering to Widows (5:3–16)
 - 3. Dealing with Elders (5:17–25)
 - 4. Instructions for Slaves (6:1–2a)
- V. Extended Final Exhortation (6:2b–19)
- VI. Closing (6:20–21)²⁰

²⁰ Note also M. M. Yarbrough, *Paul’s Utilization of Preformed Traditions in 1 Timothy: An Evaluation of the Apostle’s Literary, Rhetorical, and Theological Tactics*, LNTS 417 (London/New York: T&T Clark, 2009), 158 and app. 4, who proposes the following chiasm:

- (A) Timothy and the False Teachers (1:3–20)
 - (B) Church Order for Various Groups (2:1–3:13)
 - (C) Timothy and the False Teachers (3:14–4:16)
 - (B’) Church Order for Various Groups (5:1–6:2)
 - (A’) Timothy and the False Teachers (6:3–21a)
- He posits another chiasm for the central unit (p. 152):
- (A) The Christological Hymn (3:14–16)
 - (B) The Prophecy of False Doctrine (4:1–5)

Paul's first letter to Timothy immediately turns to the subject at hand: the need for Timothy to "instruct certain people not to teach false doctrine" in the church at Ephesus (1:3-4). The customary thanksgiving follows after initial comments regarding these false teachers, which is in fact a thanksgiving to God for Paul's own conversion since he himself at one point persecuted the church of God (1:12-17). At the end of the first chapter, Paul mentions two of these false teachers by name, Hymenaeus and Alexander (1:20).

Paul then transitions ("First of all, then," 2:1) to a section where he sets forth instructions for the church, in keeping with his purpose: "I write these things to you, hoping to come to you soon. But if I should be delayed, I have written so that you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God's household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth" (3:14-15). As mentioned, this suggests that 2:1-3:16 constitutes a separate unit devoted to positive instructions for Timothy on how to govern the church, including directions on prayer (2:1-8), women's roles (2:9-15), and qualifications for church leaders (3:1-13). The unit concludes with the "mystery of godliness," possibly drawing on a liturgical piece (3:16).

Chapter 4 opens with the dramatic phrase, "Now the Spirit explicitly says" (4:1), setting the work of the false teachers in an end-time context during which matters will move from bad to worse. In this context Timothy must set himself apart by giving close attention to his personal life and doctrine, preserving both himself and his hearers (4:11-16).²¹ Additional instructions are given regarding the care of widows (5:3-16), dealing with elders, including those who sinned (5:17-25), the proper conduct of Christian slaves (6:1-2), and the rich (6:3-10, 17-19). Timothy, for his part, must guard what has been entrusted to him, as Paul's final charge makes clear (6:11-16, 20-21).²²

(B') The Charge to Minister (4:6-10)

(A') Timothy's Ordination Affirmed (4:11-16)

²¹ R. A. Gibson, "The Literary Coherence of 1 Timothy," *RTR* 55 (1996): 53-66, believes he detects a chiasm in 1 Timothy, with 4:6 ("If you point these things out to the brothers and sisters, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, nourished by the words of the faith and the good teaching that you have followed") at the center. Since 2:1-10 has no parallel in Gibson's structure, he proposes that this passage contains "theological first principles that inform the whole letter." However, the macro-chiasm Gibson proposes is unconvincing, and a linear structure is more likely.

²² P. G. Bush, "A Note on the Structure of 1 Timothy," *NTS* 36 (1990): 152-56, finds an *inclusio* in 1:12-20 and 6:11-16, 20-21.

Commentary

I. Opening (1:1–2)

¹ Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the command of God our Savior and of Christ Jesus our hope:

² To Timothy, my true son in the faith.

Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

1:1 The letter opening follows the standard pattern for first-century salutations: sender-recipient-greeting. Paul’s self-reference, “an apostle of Christ Jesus by the *command* of God our Savior” (cf. Titus 1:3), slightly modifies his customary “by the *will* of God” (see 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Ephesians, Colossians, 2 Timothy). He may use “command” rather than “will” to allude to the fact that Timothy, too, is under orders (v. 18). Paul’s apostolic consciousness (cf. 1 Cor 15:8–10) led him to view his ministry as grounded in the will and command of God rather than in mere human appointment (Acts 9:1–31; Gal 1:1). Consequently, Timothy and the readers of the letter should receive it as an authoritative apostolic missive.²³ Paul’s apostolic calling involves the worldwide proclamation of the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ (Rom 16:26).

The phrase “God our Savior” brings together the Jewish and Hellenistic contexts interfacing in the present letter (cf. 2:3; §3.3).²⁴ The OT frequently speaks of God as Savior.²⁵ In the first century

²³ On the character of 1 Tim 1:1–20, see L. T. Johnson, “First Timothy 1,1–20: The Shape of the Struggle,” in *1 Timothy Reconsidered*, ed. K. P. Donfried, Colloquium Oecumenicum Paulinum 18 (Leuven: Peeters, 2008), 25–26, who writes that “the personal and filial language Paul addresses to Timothy, the identification of the would-be teachers, and the recollection both of Paul’s and Timothy’s call to ministry, make this passage an appropriate introduction to the specific *mandata* that Paul begins to enumerate in 2,1.”

²⁴ In the present context, the passage may echo Ps 65:5, which speaks of the “God of our salvation, the hope of all the ends of the earth” (ὁ θεὸς ὁ σωτὴρ ἡμῶν ἢ ἐλπίς πάντων τῶν περάτων τῆς γῆς; cf. 1 Tim 1:1: θεοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν καὶ Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ τῆς ἐλπίδος ἡμῶν). Towner understands Ps 65:5 as a “reference to God as the hope of Israel” (*Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 98), while Wieland argues for “some continuity between what God is and does for Israel and what he can be for all” (*The Significance of Salvation: A Study of Salvation Language in the Pastoral Epistles* [Milton Keynes, UK: Paternoster, 2006], 25). See also K. Salisbury, “Paul’s First Letter to Timothy: An Example of Missional Contextualization,” *Colloq* 44 (2012): 89.

²⁵ See, e.g., 2 Sam 22:3; Ps 106:21; Isa 43:3, 11; 45:15, 21; 49:26; 60:16; 63:8. OT language is also reflected in Luke 1:47.

“Savior” was a title regularly attributed to rulers, including Roman emperors such as Nero (AD 54–68).²⁶ Paul, by contrast, maintains that the Christian God, and he alone, is “our Savior” (including himself within the purview of salvation), rejecting competing claims by contemporaneous savior figures. “God our Savior” is linked with “Christ Jesus our hope.”²⁷ In NT terms hope is much more than a vague wish; it is a confident expectation of the fulfillment of God’s promises.²⁸ In the present passage Paul may refer to the expectation of Christ’s second coming (Titus 2:13), eternal life (Titus 1:2; 3:7), or both.

1:2 This is the first of only four instances in the letters to Timothy where Timothy is mentioned by name (cf. v. 18; 6:20; 2 Tim 1:2).²⁹ Paul tenderly refers to Timothy as his “true (γνήσιος) son in the faith” (Titus 1:4; Phil 4:3; 2 Cor 8:8; cf. 1 Cor 4:17). The cognate adverb is used in Phil 2:20, where Paul announces his intention to send Timothy to the Philippians and writes, “For I have no one else like-minded who will *genuinely* (γνησίως) care about your interests.” The expression “true son” could, but need not necessarily, imply that Paul led Timothy to faith in Christ (cf. 2 Tim 1:5; 3:15). In Acts 16:1–2, upon his initial encounter with Paul (AD 49–50), Timothy is already referred to as “a disciple” (μαθητής), though it’s possible that Timothy had contact with Paul at an earlier occasion, such as Paul’s first visit to Lystra (Acts 14:8–20). Most likely, “true son in the faith” means Timothy genuinely reproduces Paul’s own spiritual characteristics as a natural son would reflect the natural characteristics of his father.

Paul’s first letter to Timothy was written about fifteen years after Paul’s initial encounter with Timothy. If Timothy was a young man in his mid-twenties when he first met the apostle, he would have been about forty years of age at the time of writing (cf. the reference to Timothy’s “youth” in 1 Tim 4:12). The apostle would have been in his late fifties or early sixties. The respective designations “apostle . . . son” therefore indicate both the different degrees of authority (nowhere is Timothy called “brother”) and the affectionate relationship between these two men of God. As his life and ministry draw to

²⁶ See W. Foerster, “σωτήρ,” *TDNT* 7:1003–21.

²⁷ Jesus is called “our Lord” in v. 2; cf. Col 1:27.

²⁸ Heb 11:1: “reality”; 1 Pet 1:3: “living hope.”

²⁹ For a short study of the patristic reception of the references to Timothy in Acts and Paul’s letters including the LTT, see M. Meiser, “Timothy in Acts: Patristic Reception,” *Annali di Storia dell’Esegesi* 32 (2015): 325–32.

a close, Paul seeks to preserve his legacy through his adoptive son in the faith. The phrase “true son” thus legitimizes Timothy as Paul’s rightful successor in the church (cf. Titus 1:4) without imposing on their relationship a tight formal doctrine of apostolic succession as later became characteristic of Roman Catholic dogma (§1.3). “The faith,” a common expression in the LTT, refers to the Christian faith and the body of teaching it encompasses.³⁰

The blessing “grace, mercy, and peace” (cf. 2 Tim 1:2; 2 John 1:3) takes the place of the more common “grace and peace.” “Grace” (χάρις) corresponds to the Greek word for “greeting” (χαίρειν), yet Paul uses it in the distinctly Christian sense of “God’s unmerited favor.” “Mercy” (ἔλεος, which may echo the Hebrew *hesed*, “loving-kindness”) is added here as well as in 2 Timothy, possibly reflecting the difficult nature of Timothy’s assignment. Note that later in the letter it’s implied that Timothy wasn’t awarded the respect due him owing to his relative youth (1 Tim 4:12) and that in the second letter Paul seems to intimate that Timothy is timid and needs encouragement (2 Tim 1:7). Mercy also features prominently later in the chapter when Paul recites his own testimony (vv. 13, 16). “Peace” (εἰρήνη) corresponds to the Hebrew *shalôm*, expressing the notion of a wholesome relationship with God and others. The final phrase “from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord” points to the source of all blessings (cf. 2 Tim 1:2; Titus 1:4). The threefold reference to Christ Jesus in the opening greeting attests to the strong Christological focus of the letter.³¹

In biblical-theological terms, the letter opening sounds the foundational theme of Paul’s apostleship (v. 1) and his vital connection with Timothy, his apostolic delegate and “son in the faith” (v. 2). It also starts out with the central affirmation that God is “our Savior” and Jesus Christ “our hope” (v. 1). “God the Father” and “Christ Jesus our Lord” are also featured in parallel fashion in the following verse (v. 2). In this way the themes of mission, salvation, and theology/Christology are inextricably intertwined, as they will continue to be in the remainder of the letter and the LTT.

³⁰ Cf. 1 Tim 1:4, 5, 14, 19; 2:7, 15; 3:9, 13; 4:1, 6, 12; 5:8, 12; 6:10, 11, 12, 21; 2 Tim 1:5, 13; 2:18, 22; 3:8, 10, 15; 4:7; Titus 1:1, 4, 13; 2:2, 10; 3:15.

³¹ Compare the reference to God as “God our Savior” (v. 1) and “God the Father” (v. 2) and the lack of reference to the Spirit in the opening greeting.

II. Personal Charge (1:3–20)

A. The Challenge of the False Teachers (1:3–11)

³As I urged you when I went to Macedonia, remain in Ephesus so that you may instruct certain people not to teach false doctrine ⁴or to pay attention to myths and endless genealogies. These promote empty speculations rather than God’s plan, which operates by faith. ⁵Now the goal of our instruction is love that comes from a pure heart, a good conscience, and a sincere faith. ⁶Some have departed from these and turned aside to fruitless discussion. ⁷They want to be teachers of the law, although they don’t understand what they are saying or what they are insisting on. ⁸But we know that the law is good, provided one uses it legitimately. ⁹We know that the law is not meant for a righteous person, but for the lawless and rebellious, for the ungodly and sinful, for the unholy and irreverent, for those who kill their fathers and mothers, for murderers, ¹⁰for the sexually immoral and homosexuals, for slave traders, liars, perjurers, and for whatever else is contrary to the sound teaching ¹¹that conforms to the gospel concerning the glory of the blessed God, which was entrusted to me.

Relation to Surrounding Context

Immediately after the opening in vv. 1–2, Paul gets to the occasion for writing. The fact that he progresses straight from the opening to the occasion without further delay and without the customary opening pleasantries, thanksgiving, and/or prayer conveys a sense of considerable urgency on the part of the apostle. Certain men are teaching false doctrine (v. 3); the goal of Paul’s instruction is in jeopardy (v. 5); some alleged teachers of the law have veered from the heart of the saving gospel message and turned to fruitless discussions about the minutiae of the Mosaic law (vv. 6–7; cf. v. 11). Paul thus gets straight to the point: these people who are at cross-purposes with Paul’s gospel must be told to stop.

Structure

Verses 3–4 plainly state the occasion for the letter. Verses 5–7 enunciate the purpose of Paul’s instruction and how the opponents, self-styled “teachers of the law,” fall short. Verses 8–11 then contain an aside elaborating on the false teachers’ improper use of the law in contrast to “sound teaching” in keeping with the “gospel concerning the glory of the blessed God” with which Paul had been entrusted.

1:3 The occasion for writing is stated at the outset: the challenge of the false teachers.³² Rather than engage in opening pleasantries, Paul is “all business” (cf. Titus 1:5), conveying a sense of urgency in addressing the problem (note the term “urged,” παρακαλέω; cf. 2:1; 5:1; 6:2). He recalls the time when Timothy and he parted ways, Paul moving on to Macedonia and Timothy remaining in Ephesus, at which time the task of purging the church from false teachers fell to Timothy.³³ The rendering “instruct” (παραγγέλλω) is a bit weak; the term is better understood as “command” by virtue of Paul’s delegated apostolic authority.³⁴

“Certain people” is Paul’s customary way of referring to the opponents in this letter (cf. vv. 6, 19; 4:1; 5:15, 24; 6:3, 10, 21).³⁵ The effect of this designation is to establish a clear distinction between the false teachers and the propagators of the true gospel (Paul and Timothy).³⁶ While the reference is generic, the named teachers in 1–2 Timothy are all men (1 Tim 1:20; 2 Tim 2:17). Paul likely didn’t

³² The opening phrase in v. 3, “As [καθώς] I urged you,” lacks an apodosis and is syntactically ambiguous, though the meaning is clear enough. See Towner, *Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 106. Cf. Marshall, *Pastoral Epistles*, 362–63.

³³ M. Dibelius and H. Conzelmann, *The Pastoral Epistles*, Hermeneia, trans. P. Buttolph and A. Yarbro (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1972), 15, believe the natural inference is that Paul was in Ephesus with Timothy; but see the critique in Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 16–18. Timothy would have been familiar with Ephesus and Macedonia from his previous evangelistic work with Paul. On ancient Ephesus, see Trebilco, *Early Christians in Ephesus*, who provides a comprehensive history of the development of Christianity in the city of Ephesus from AD 35 to 110.

³⁴ Cf. 1 Cor 7:10; 11:17; 1 Thess 4:11; 2 Thess 3:4, 6, 10, 12; 1 Tim 4:11; 5:7; 6:13, 17. Thornton, *Hostility in the House of God*, 34–36, has an interesting discussion on whether Paul’s telling Timothy to “command” the false teachers means they had at one time been members in good standing in the Ephesian church and were therefore still expected to submit to apostolic authority. In any case it would seem that these men needed to be told authoritatively to stop propagating their false message in the environs of the Ephesian church.

³⁵ Cf. the use of indefinite pronouns to refer to Paul’s opponents in his undisputed letters: 1 Cor 15:12; 2 Cor 10:12; Gal 1:7; 2:12; Phil 1:15.

³⁶ Cf. Marshall, *Pastoral Epistles*, 365. The indefinite reference to the opponents allows any sympathizers in the congregations to change their allegiance back to the true gospel in a face-saving manner (B. Fiore, *The Pastoral Epistles: 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus*, SP 17 [Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2007], 117–18) while depicting “the troublemakers as shadowy figures with an indistinct past” obscuring “their actual numbers and influence” (J. M. Bassler, *1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus*, ANTC [Nashville: Abingdon, 1996], 38).

know the name of every single individual who perpetrated false doctrine in Ephesus; in any case, he was less concerned with the specific *individuals* than with preserving the purity of the Christian *message*.

The term “teach false doctrine” (one word in the original, ἑτεροδιδασκαλεῖν; lit. “other-teach,” i.e., teach a message other than the apostolic gospel) forms an *inclusio* with 6:3 (the term’s only other NT use) and may have been coined by Paul.³⁷ Together with “teachers of the law” (νομοδιδάσκαλοι) in v. 7, the designation identifies the opponents as *teachers* (cf. the contrast with “sound teaching” in v. 10 and “the gospel” in v. 11). Similar to his earlier charge that the Judaizers preached a “different gospel” (Gal 1:6; cf. 2 Cor 11:4), the apostle is concerned that the gospel be preserved from anything that detracts from its truth or dilutes its saving power (cf. Rom 1:16–17).³⁸

1:4 The false teachers didn’t merely dabble in alternatives to the apostolic gospel; they were strongly devoted (προσέχειν) to their teaching.³⁹ The reference to “myths and endless genealogies” most

³⁷ “Teach false doctrine” seems to imply the existence of a standard body of Christian teaching (cf. Gal 1:6–9: “a different gospel,” “another gospel,” “a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you,” “a gospel contrary to what you received”; Jude 3: “the faith that was delivered to the saints once for all”: see esp. A. J. Köstenberger and M. J. Kruger, *The Heresy of Orthodoxy: How Contemporary Culture’s Fascination with Diversity Has Reshaped Our Understanding of Early Christianity* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2010). Contra F. Wisse, “Heterodidaskalia: Accounting for Diversity in Early Christian Texts,” in *The Changing Face of Judaism, Christianity, and Other Greco-Roman Religions in Antiquity*, Studien zu den Jüdischen Schriften aus hellenistisch-römischer Zeit 2, ed. I. H. Henderson and G. S. Oegema (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 2006), 265–79, who places the LTT in the post-Pauline period and claims that “heterodoxy preceded orthodoxy” (p. 277); and K. Zamfir, *Men and Women in the Household of God: A Contextual Approach to Roles and Ministries in the Pastoral Epistles*, NTOA/SUNT 103 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2013), 170–71, who contends that we shouldn’t label the opponents “heretics” because we lack independent primary sources delineating their teaching.

³⁸ This “preservation theme” pervades the LTT (§3.5.7). See A. J. Köstenberger, “Ascertaining Women’s God-Ordained Roles: An Interpretation of 1 Timothy 2:15,” *BBR* 7 (1997): 107–44, esp. 130–32.

³⁹ The particle μηδέ conjoins the two actions ἑτεροδιδασκαλεῖν and προσέχειν. The term προσέχειν conveys strong control or influence in all of its instances in the LTT, whether exerted by deviant or demonically inspired teaching (1 Tim 4:1; Titus 1:14), Scripture (1 Tim 4:13), or wine (1 Tim 3:8).