

## Doctrine of the Pastoral Epistles

1. The Pastoral Epistles are those letters written to Timothy and to Titus.
2. They are called the Pastoral Epistles because Paul is concerned about the administration and orderliness of the local church.
3. On his missionary travels, Paul would establish local congregations. Timothy was put in charge of the church of Ephesus.

### *Special Note.*

Timothy had joined Paul in his missionary journey following the apostle's dispute with Barnabas over John Mark (Acts 15:37 – 16:3). The "firing" of John Mark led to the discovery of Timothy. Good comes out of difficult situations in life. John Mark was freed to write his gospel. Both Timothy and John Mark have been a blessing to the church of all ages. God redirected the labor of John Mark.

4. In the Pastoral Epistles, Paul functions as a theologian, and practical Christian living. False doctrine was of particular concern to the apostle.
5. Time has passed, but the need to be concerned about purity of doctrine remains. Today, relationships are more important than doctrine. Currently, so much emphasis is placed on community and relationships that doctrine is diminished, or set aside, because it is deemed too divisive.
6. Paul always saw a unity between a true understanding of the Word of God, and righteous living.
7. It is a false dichotomy between doctrine and practice. Belief dictates behavior.
8. Where doctrine is neglected, false teaching is victorious.
9. Paul was concerned enough to give guidelines for the qualification for church leadership.
  - *1 Timothy 3:1 This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. 2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; 3 Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; 4 One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; 5 (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) 6 Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. 7 Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.*
10. It is possible that Paul meant for these characteristics to be taken in an absolute sense. But then, who would ever be worthy to serve in church leadership? Who is blameless?

11. It is possible that Paul was writing in a literary style, known as panegyric. A panegyric has its roots in a public acclamation of those who are honored, such as a eulogy at a funeral, or an honorary ceremony. There is a natural tendency to extrapolate the noblest characteristics a person demonstrates, or did demonstrate when alive, and set them forth in an idealized, exaggerated form.
12. Support for this position is found in the fact that a church leader must be found “blameless.”
13. What Paul might be saying is this. “Church, look for people of noble character.”
14. Some of the qualifications have been argued over, specifically by those who believe Paul is saying that in certain areas a person must be found blameless.
- An elder must be the husband of one wife.
  - An elder must be vigilant.
  - An elder must be sober.
  - An elder must be of good behaviour.
  - An elder must be given to hospitality
  - An elder must be apt to teach
  - An elder must not be given to wine.
  - An elder must not be a striker.
  - An elder must not be greedy of filthy lucre.
  - An elder must be patient.
  - An elder must not be a brawler.
  - An elder must not be covetous.
  - An elder must be one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity. “For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?”
  - An elder must not be a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.
  - An elder must have a good report of them which are without, lest he fall into reproach, and the snare of the devil.
15. Much concern has been made about being the husband of one wife. There are several possibilities.
- An elder must be a married man.
  - An elder cannot be divorced, even if they are found to be the victim.
  - An elder cannot be involved in a polygamous relationship. He must be monogamous.
  - An elder cannot be a widower who takes a second wife.
16. The ability to teach, means an elder should be knowledgably of the things of God, and able to communicate that knowledge.

17. The qualifications of deacons is set forth.

- *1 Timothy 3:8 Likewise must the deacons be grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; 9 Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. 10 And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless. 11 Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things.*

18. In the second epistle to Timothy, Paul was facing his execution. His last will and testament was that Paul wanted his spiritual son to be careful about the truth.

- *2 Timothy 3:1 This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. 2 For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, 3 Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, 4 Traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; 5 Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.*

19. A description is given here about individuals in the church, who show an outward display of religion, while maintaining an inward corruption. From such people turn away.

- Individuals will be lovers of their own selves.
- Individuals will be covetous.
- Individuals will be boasters.
- Individuals will be proud.
- Individuals will be blasphemers.
- Individuals will be disobedient to parents.
- Individuals will be unthankful.
- Individuals will be unholy.
- Individuals will be without natural affection.
- Individuals will be trucebreakers.
- Individuals will be false accusers.
- Individuals will be incontinent.
- Individuals will be fierce.
- Individuals will be despisers of those that are good.
- Individuals will be traitors.
- Individuals will be heady.
- Individuals will be high-minded.
- Individuals will be lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God.
- Individuals will have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof.

20. In contrast to those within the church who live an unsanctified life, are those, like Timothy, who have followed in the steps of Christ and the apostles.

- *2 Timothy 3:10 But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience, 11 Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord delivered me. 12 Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. 13 But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived. 14 But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them.*

21. Paul is emphasizing Biblical tradition. Paul is giving over, he is handing down a body of truth. He is transferring it to each subsequent generation. The Scriptures are conservative in holding the church responsible to maintaining the apostolic tradition.

- *2 Timothy 3:16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:*

22. The epistle ends with a solemn charge.

- *2 Timothy 4:1 I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; 2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. 3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; 4 And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. 5 But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry. 6 For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. 7 I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: 8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.*

23. An itching ear is a desire to hear things that distort the truth.

24. Shortly after this epistle, Paul was executed. He was poured out as a drink offering, for his head was cut off under the reign of The Beast, Nero. Paul finished the race, he fought the good fight, he kept the faith.