

Course Outline

A Manual on Church Order/Pastoring a Church

Titus 3:1-2/Timothy 4

- I. Concluding Exhortations: Do What Is Good (3:1-11)
 - a. Be submissive to authorities (vv. 1-3)
 - i. Following on from the theme of right role relationships, Paul encourages Titus to remind all the people to be submissive to all duly constituted authorities. This is the opposite of the spirit of our previous, unregenerate natures (vv. 1-3).
 - b. Remember the nature of true salvation (vv. 4-8)
 - i. We must remember the nature of true salvation—God’s gracious cleansing, regenerating, and renewing activity (vv. 4-8).
 - c. Avoid factions and factious people (vv. 9-11)
 - i. This should squelch factiousness. But if church members insist on causing divisions, one should separate from them (vv. 9-11). It is ironic that factiousness is one of the few clearly excommunicable offenses in Scripture. Yet, despite all the commands in the Bible on the unity of the church, if repeated attempts to bring reconciliation where there is division lead nowhere, it is probably better for one group to separate so that at least one part of the church can have unity.
- II. Closing (3:12-15)
 - a. In addition to personal instructions and greetings, the theme of doing good appears yet one more time (v. 14; recall 2:14, 3:8). This is an important summary of the Christian life and not to be confused with Paul’s censures elsewhere for attempts at self-justification via the works of the Law.

Application

- I. Legitimate Debate between Hierarchicalists and Egalitarians

This course is offered through Our Daily Bread University. To learn more, visit us at odbu.org.

Course Outline

- a. Irrespective of the debates between hierarchicalists and egalitarians, the Christian life remains fundamentally one of submission to one another.
- II. All Need to Recognize Countercultural Submissive Attitudes
 - a. This is diametrically opposed to human nature and remains difficult even for redeemed people. We must therefore be ever vigilant in suppressing prideful desires and actions, which seek our benefit at the expense of others.

I TIMOTHY: HOW TO PASTOR A CHURCH AND TURN IT AWAY FROM HERESY

Introduction

- I. Paul to Timothy as Pastor in Ephesus
 - a. Presumably at about the same time as he wrote Titus, Paul also wrote to Timothy in Ephesus. He had perhaps been there himself, had certainly been in Macedonia, and may actually have been writing from that Greek province (1:3).
- II. Combating False Teaching as in Colossae and Crete
 - a. He gives guidelines for helping Timothy combat a form of the Colossian heresy, which may have affected even the eldership of the congregation. He hopes to come soon to help improve the situation further but does not know definitely if he will be able to make it (3:14).

Analysis

- I. The Reason for the Letter: Paul Encourages Timothy to Stand Fast Against False Teaching in Ephesus (1:1-20)
 - a. Greetings (1:1-2)
 - b. The heresy described: A Jewish-Gnostic syncretism (vv. 3-11)
 - i. After brief greetings (vv. 1-2), Paul immediately jumps into the heart

This course is offered through Our Daily Bread University. To learn more, visit us at odbu.org.

Course Outline

of the body of the letter: Timothy's need to resist the heresy afoot in his church (vv. 3-11). The misuse of the Law (vv. 8-11) is almost certainly a reference to Judaizing, and the myths and genealogies of vv. 4-5 could reflect this background too. In light of 4:1-5 (on forbidding marriage) and 6:20 ("what is falsely called *knowledge*"), there is almost certainly a Gnosticizing element as well.

- c. The true salvation: Christ's mercy for even the worst of sinners (1:12-20)
 - i. Verses 12-17 supply a kind of thanksgiving, as Paul is grateful that he was saved out of a background of ignorant rebellion (akin to some of the heretics' situations), and vv. 18-20, then, *succinctly states the purpose of the epistle*: "fight the good fight," not like those who fell into the heresy and had to be disciplined. This chapter also introduces the first of five "faithful sayings" scattered around the Pastoral Epistles (1:15; cf. 3:1; 4:8 [or 10]; II Timothy 2:11-13; Titus 3:4-7 [or 8]). Each seemingly reflects early Christian tradition, perhaps poetic in form, which Paul cites to give his instruction particular weight.¹⁰⁷

II. First Method of Countering the Heresy: Careful Control Over Church Worship and Leadership (2:1-3:16)

- a. Basic principle: Prayers for and peaceful submission to authority (2:1-7)
 - i. Chapter 3:14 shows that Paul is thinking of the practice and organization of the local church throughout this section. The basic principle he enjoins is prayer and peaceful submission to authority as the best testimony to an unsaved world (2:1-7). There is a time and place for civil disobedience, but it is the exception, not the rule.
- b. Role of men and women in church (2:8-15). See lecture on gender roles in Paul
 - i. Secondly, men and women should play their appropriate roles in church worship and leadership (2:8-15 on which see below on gender roles in Paul).
- c. Requirements for church leadership (3:1-13)
 - i. Third, Paul specifies the requirements for church leadership. He

This course is offered through Our Daily Bread University. To learn more, visit us at odbu.org.

Course Outline

recognizes two offices, the overseer (bishop) in vv. 1-7, and the deacon in vv. 8-13.

- ii. Overseers/bishops (vv. 1-7)
 - 1. Comments on various criteria
 - A. Most of the criteria for these two offices are self-explanatory, and the marks of most mature Christians are frequently difficult to find. Often they are inconsistently applied in the contemporary church. For example, some churches pay little attention to Paul's words about overseers managing their family well (v. 4) or not being lovers of money (v. 3) but being well thought of by outsiders (v. 7). Conversely, "the husband of but one wife" (v. 2) has been overly scrutinized and often misinterpreted. The two criteria which have no counterpart among the criteria for deacons are "able to teach" (the mastery of content coupled with the ability to transmit it to others) and "hospitable" (v. 2). The latter has been a key role for ministers, historically, who have been expected to entertain church and community guests, though it is dying out somewhat.
 - 2. "Husband of one wife"
 - A. What then of *mias gunaikos andra* (lit., "a man of one woman")?
 - I. Currently married?
 - 1. It is unlikely that Paul means an overseer must be married, for he would disqualify both himself and Jesus in the process.
 - II. Never remarried?
 - 1. The dominant view in the early church was that he must never have had more than one wife, ruling out all the remarried. But this reflects growing Hellenistic asceticism. Paul permits and even encourages some who have been widowed to remarry in I Corinthians 7 and I Timothy 5, and it is not likely that he would urge something that would

This course is offered through Our Daily Bread University. To learn more, visit us at odbu.org.

Course Outline

bar a person from church leadership. Does he, then, mean those who were never divorced? This works only if one is prepared to exclude the widowed too, since nothing in the expression “one wife” implies “one wife in some circumstances but not in others.”

III. Against polygamy?

1. Perhaps, then, he means one wife at a time, ruling out polygamy. But polygamy was not widespread in the Greco-Roman world, extremely rare in the Jewish world, and the parallel phrase “wife of one husband” in 5:9 becomes almost unintelligible, since polyandry was almost entirely unknown in the Roman Empire.

IV. A “one-woman” kind of man?

1. The only reasonable option remaining is to take the phrase as “currently characterized by marital fidelity if married.” That is, “a one-woman kind of man.” This fits the fact that the other criteria describe one’s current state, not a lifelong practice, and has support from early authorities such as Theodore of Mopsuestia, Theodoret, John Chrysostom, and Callistus.¹⁰⁸ It fits, too, Paul’s contextual emphasis on being a good “family man” (v. 4), though it leaves unanswered how long a person has to have demonstrated fidelity to their current spouse (just as v. 10 leaves open how long a deacon must first be tested).

iii. Deacons (vv. 8-13)

1. The similar criteria for deacons (vv. 8-13) should discourage us from selecting them on the basis of practical skills. They must be equally spiritual, even if the earliest source of such a division of labor follows certain spiritual vs. practical lines (Acts 6:1-6). The most we can say is that this is some kind of subordinate, “helping” or “serving” office.

This course is offered through Our Daily Bread University. To learn more, visit us at odbu.org.

Course Outline

2. Who are the *gunaikes* (lit., “women”) of v. 11? Some take them to be deacons’ wives. But why then should the wives of overseers (the “higher” office) be left entirely unmentioned? More likely they are women deacons (or deaconesses). Until Catholicism developed monastic orders, somewhat as a substitute, deaconesses were almost universally a part of the early church, not always performing identical tasks as male deacons, and sometimes involved in ministries to which men were forbidden—e.g., visitation, pastoral care, catechizing, and superintending the baptism of other women.¹⁰⁹ A reinstatement of this division of labor might lead to fewer “fallen” male leaders today!
- d. Summary and confession (3:14-16)
 - i. Verses 14-16 close this section and include what was most likely an early Christian creed or confession with key Christology (v. 16).
- III. Second Method: Enjoin True Godliness Rather Than Asceticism (4:1-16)
 - a. The ascetic error (vv. 1-5)
 - i. Instead of promoting the asceticism encouraged by the heresy, ultimately demonic in origin (vv. 1-5), Timothy must nourish the Ephesian church on sound doctrine (vv. 6-7). Bodily training has some value, but spiritual exercise much more (vv. 8-10). If Timothy is faithful in teaching and modeling these truths, he can be encouraged that the situation may well improve (vv. 11-16). It is ironic that the two specific forms of asceticism mentioned here—prohibiting marriage and abstaining from certain foods (and drink?—cf. 5:23) are precisely the two prohibitions that Catholics and Protestants, respectively, have often insisted on for the most “mature” of their members. And people in general today stress physical far more than spiritual fitness. Because of Timothy’s “youth,” he may not have felt up to the task of redressing these problems, but Paul’s words in v. 12 do not allow that as an excuse for anyone.¹¹⁰
 - ii. Verse 10 seems to introduce a strange distinction between two kinds of salvation until we realize that “especially” in its five appearances in

This course is offered through Our Daily Bread University. To learn more, visit us at odbu.org.

Course Outline

the Pastoral Epistles is best translated “namely.”¹¹¹ Verse 14 supplies a rare biblical precedent for the rite of ordination; compare also 5:22 and II Timothy 1:6. These three passages do not appear to reflect uniform procedure, unless we translate v. 14 as “the laying on of hands to make one an elder.”¹¹²

- IV. Third Method: Proper Respect and Rules for Various Other Categories of People in the Church (5:1-6:2)
- a. Respect for the aged and no impure motives toward youth (5:1-2)
 - i. Chapter 5:1-2 insists on respect for the aged and no impure motives toward youth,¹¹³ both badly needed in our day and age.
 - b. Care for widows (5:3-16)
 - i. Chapter 5:3-16 introduces another category of church office—the widow. In a culture that insisted on a husband or father to provide financially and legally for most women, being a widow could threaten one’s very subsistence. Where relatives could care for such women, Paul commands them to do so. For those too old to work (over 60 in those days) and without such help from family, the church was to provide. Early on, such widows also developed special ministries of prayer, visitation, and teaching. Verse 8a therefore says nothing about the man having to be the “breadwinner” in the family, but everything about the need for relatives to care for needy family members lest they have to “sponge” off either church or state. Anything less is as audacious as denying the faith (v. 8b). The order of widows who were truly on their own became an established part of the church for several centuries.¹¹⁴ No valid hermeneutical principle allows us to say that we no longer have similar financial responsibility to the most dispossessed in our midst.
 - c. Elders/teachers worthy of double honor (5:17-25)
 - i. Chapter 5:17-25 turns to support for elders, who are again linked with teaching and directing the affairs of the church. Those who do their job well are worthy of “double honor” (v. 17), which no doubt

This course is offered through Our Daily Bread University. To learn more, visit us at odbu.org.

Course Outline

included financial remuneration (v. 18—an important text too in that it juxtaposes the words of Deuteronomy and Luke as equally “Scripture”) but extended also to the courtesy of not being hastily accused of malfeasance (v. 19). Nevertheless, they are to be held accountable and disciplined if necessary (v. 20).

- d. Slaves honor their masters (6:1-2)
 - i. After related exhortations (vv. 21-25), Paul closes with the reminder that slaves too must honor their masters (6:1-2).

V. Concluding Warnings (6:3-21)

- a. A root problem of the heretics: Love of money (vv. 3-10)
 - i. Arguably the root problem of the heresy was love of money (vv. 3-10). But the most accurate translation of v. 10 is “the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil.” Money itself is morally neutral, but it can easily become a blasphemous idol. The key to preventing it from doing so is for the rich to be generous in giving it away (vv. 17-19).
- b. A key to opposing false gnosis: Moral behavior (vv. 11-21)
 - i. More generally, even as one opposes falsehood with the truth, one must exhibit moral behavior—love, righteousness, obedience, and the like (vv. 11-16). As Paul closes, he warns Timothy one last time to guard against the heresy (vv. 20-23).

Application

- I. Theological Issues as in Colossians and Practical Issues as in Titus
 - a. Much here is repeated and expanded from the theology of Colossians and the practical applications of Titus.
- II. Particular Emphasis on Leadership Quality
 - a. But there is a particular emphasis on the importance of the quality of Christian leaders--an absolutely vital element for healthy churches.

This course is offered through Our Daily Bread University. To learn more, visit us at odbu.org.

Course Outline

III. Important Glimpses into Distinctive Women's Ministries

- a. Plus there are important glimpses into distinctive women's ministries which perhaps should be recultivated—deaconesses, older women, and widows, in particular. And, of course, as in so many of Paul's letters, a clear contrast shines through between external lists of dos and don'ts vs. inwardly generated holiness as the difference between heretical and true spirituality, a lesson the conservative church today still desperately needs to learn.

II TIMOTHY—"PASS IT ON"

Introduction

I. Paul Re-imprisoned Under Nero Between AD 64-68 and Soon to Die

- a. Paul is once again in prison, presumably for the second time in Rome, this time thanks to Nero's program between AD 64 and 68. Conditions are more austere; he is in chains and hard to find (1:16-17). Early church tradition speaks of the Mamertine underground prison in Rome. Paul feels sure death is near (4:6).

II. Last Testament and Passing of Torch to Spiritual Son Timothy

- a. He has already gone through one preliminary hearing which did not go well, humanly speaking (4:16; but cf. v. 17). So he writes to pass the torch of his teaching ministry in Ephesus on to Timothy in a final charge to bold witness for the Gospel. The letter has been called Paul's last "testament."

Analysis

I. Greetings, Thanksgiving, and Memorial to Faithfulness (1:1-18)

- a. Concerning Timothy (vv. 1-14)
 - i. Paul greets Timothy (vv. 1-2) and thanks God for three generations of Jewish and then Christian faithfulness in Timothy's family (vv. 3-5). He encourages Timothy to exercise his spiritual gift faithfully (vv.

This course is offered through Our Daily Bread University. To learn more, visit us at odbu.org.

Course Outline

6-7), a reference either to preaching and teaching (I Timothy 4:13), evangelism (II Timothy 4:5) or both. Verses 8-14 continue this charge to Spirit-filled boldness, notwithstanding the hardships of ministry, for which Paul himself is awaiting execution.

- b. Concerning those in Asia (v. 15)
 - i. By way of illustration, Paul contrasts everyone in Asia who have deserted him (v. 15), with the household of Onesiphorus which has faithfully and sacrificially ministered to him (vv. 16-18). Verse 15 is either hyperbole, a reference to Asians who had been with Paul in Rome or, perhaps most probably, an allusion to their refusal to identify with Paul in his current ignominy.
- c. Concerning Onesiphorus' household (vv. 16-18)

II. The Commitment Which Faith Requires (2:1-26)

- a. Keep the chain of good leadership unbroken (vv. 1-2)
 - i. The thesis of the letter is encapsulated in vv. 1-2, especially v. 2: "keep the chain of good leadership unbroken." Teaching and discipleship require the training of faithful successors who will in turn "pass it on."¹¹⁵
- b. Avoid entangling commitments (vv. 3-7)
 - i. This responsibility, like faithful ministry more generally, means avoiding entangling commitments, like the single-minded devotion of soldiers, athletes and farmers (vv. 3-7). This will mean, as with Paul, that we work harder than many, while also not "spreading ourselves too thin."
- c. Recall Christ's example of suffering (vv. 8-13)
 - i. We are encouraged to remain steadfast, too, by recalling Christ's example of suffering for our sakes (vv. 8-13), with his promise to remain faithful even when we are faithless, at least in ways that fall short of full-fledged apostasy (cf. v. 12b with 13).
- d. Be an approved workman for the Lord (vv. 14-26)

This course is offered through Our Daily Bread University. To learn more, visit us at odbu.org.

Course Outline

- i. Thus we must be approved workmen for the Lord (vv. 14-26). The key verse in this section is v. 15—not a call for verse-by-verse “division” of the Bible (a phenomenon that was not instituted until the Middle Ages) but for hermeneutically responsible exegesis and exposition. Verse 18 recalls the Gnostic side of the heresy afflicting Ephesus at the time of I Timothy and of the problems in Corinth that lay behind I Corinthians 15. Indeed, the Hymenaeus of v. 17 may be the same individual as in I Timothy 1:20. The serum for this infectious teaching lies in understanding the sovereignty of God (v. 19) and encouraging those who have fallen into evil ways that there still is time for redemption (vv. 20-26).
- III. Godlessness Described and Opposed (3:1-17)
 - a. False teaching characterizing the last days (vv. 1-9)
 - i. Verses 1-9 describe the false teaching that will in fact get worse and characterize “the last days,” the New Testament’s term for the period of time inaugurated by Christ’s death. The self-centeredness, hunger for money, lack of discipline, and rebellion against proper authority (vv. 1-4), all still with the pretense of being religious (v. 5), have indeed characterized the worst side of the church in virtually every age. The key thought that ties these verses together is that of misdirected love—the self made central to every aspect of life.
 - b. Faithfulness to the gospel as the antidote (vv. 10-17)
 - i. Verses 10-17 counter with the antidote: faithfulness to the Gospel. Follow Paul’s lifestyle (vv. 10-13), including the acceptance of persecution when it becomes necessary (v. 12); and follow the Scriptures (vv. 14-17), recognizing their divine origin (“God-breathed,” v. 16a) and relevance and ability to produce spiritual maturity (vv. 16, 17).¹¹⁶
- IV. Final Charge (4:1-22)
 - a. Call to faithful use of gifts regardless of circumstances (vv. 1-5)
 - i. Paul closes the last letter he ever wrote by calling Timothy again to

This course is offered through Our Daily Bread University. To learn more, visit us at odbu.org.

Course Outline

the faithful use of his gifts regardless of the circumstances (vv. 1-5): “in season and out of season” (v. 2a).¹¹⁷ This will require different tactics for different situations: “correct, rebuke, encourage”—reasoned argument, direct confrontation, and positive help, all with great patience and careful teaching (v. 2b).

- b. Paul recognizes his end is near and is prepared for it (vv. 6-8)
 - i. Paul recognizes the end for him is near (vv. 6-8). He has fought the good fight, a noble contest—it is the race or match which is “good,” not Paul’s approach to it (v. 7). So he awaits the crown which is the righteousness of eternal life (v. 8).
- c. Closing, personal remarks (vv. 9-22)
 - i. Verses 9-22 conclude with various personal marks and closing greetings. Of particular note is Paul’s triumphant affirmation, in spite of it all, that the Lord will rescue him, not from dying, but for his eternal kingdom (v. 18).

This course is offered through Our Daily Bread University. To learn more, visit us at odbu.org.