

BETHEL GOSPEL CHAPEL
HOME BIBLE STUDY GUIDES
INTRODUCTION TO THE PASTORAL EPISTLES

Three of Paul's letters are grouped under the general heading "Pastoral Epistles". They are I Timothy, Titus, and II Timothy. These letters were composed for the instruction of men having responsibility for the well being of specific churches. The instructions are for leaders but, as can be seen from I Timothy 3:14-15, Paul clearly teaches that these instructions are essential if the corporate witness for Christ is to be effective. Paul says:

I AM WRITING YOU THESE INSTRUCTIONS SO THAT, IF I AM DELAYED, 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.

The goal of these studies will be to discover how people ought to behave in the church, God's household. The questions have been prepared using the New International translation, but you should be able to answer them using the translation of your choice. You are free to join any neighbourhood Bible study group but it is important to your own spiritual development for you to be consistent in your attendance. The study will be divided into three units:

UNIT I - I TIMOTHY

UNIT II - TITUS

UNIT III - II TIMOTHY

Please read each of these letters through at least once before commencing the detailed study. Remember that the chapter and verse divisions are for our convenience. They must not be allowed to interrupt or obscure the overall unity of Paul's argument that the church only honours the Lord when its individual members behave. Conduct is always the test of our knowledge of the truth.

Paul, the writer, is a servant of God and an Apostle of Jesus Christ for the faith of God's elect and the knowledge of the truth that leads to Godliness. (Titus 1:1)

UNIT I - Study 1 The Church at Ephesus I Timothy

READ: Acts 18:18-28

1. Where does the witness for Christ commence?
2. Why was this an appropriate place to begin?
3. On what is the witness of Paul, Apollos, Priscilla and Aquila based?

READ: Acts 19:1-22

4. Make a list of the events that take place on Paul's return to Ephesus.
5. List the references that indicate the length of time Paul was in Ephesus.

READ: Acts 19:23-41

6. Why was Demetrius able to provoke a riot?
7. On what does Paul base his appeal to these elders?
8. What specific instructions does Paul give to the elders? READ: Acts 20:13-36
9. What two supports do they have available to enable them to fulfill their responsibility?

READ: Revelation 2:1-7

10. List the things for which this church is commended.
11. List the things for which this church is criticized.
12. What means of recovery are given?
13. Review the history of the Church at Ephesus as it is given in these Scriptures and identify two things which you learned that are of practical value to your participation in the church today.

Study 2

I Timothy 1:1-20

READ: I Timothy 1:1-20

1. How does Paul introduce himself and how does he support this claim?
2. What are the blessings of God which Timothy enjoys?
3. Why has Timothy been left at Ephesus?
4. Do you think anyone has this kind of authority today? Support your answer.
5. How may false doctrine be identified? (vs. 3&4)
6. How is true faith characterized? (v.5)
7. What happens when a person neglects these foundational characteristics? (vs. 6 & 7)
8. What is the purpose or function of the law? (vs. 8-10)
9. How may sound doctrine be identified? (v.11)
10. List the reasons Paul gives for being involved in the Lord's service. (vs. 11-16)
11. How will Timothy succeed in his responsibilities? (vs.18-19a)
12. What are the consequences of rejecting these? (vs.19b-20)
13. Explain Paul's statement that he had "handed over to Satan" Hymenaeus and Alexander.
14. Of what practical use to you is the information in this chapter?

Study 3

I Timothy 2

READ: I Timothy 2

1. List the activities that are to have first priority in the church? (vs. 1-2a)
2. Explain in your own words the reasons given for this activity.
3. In what terms does Paul describe his ministry? (v.7)
4. What point is being made in v.8?

Questions 5 and 9 are for women only.

5. What is your reaction to Paul's instructions in vs. 9 and 10?
6. In a paragraph outline what you think compliance with these instructions would require.
7. What is your reaction to Paul's instructions in vs. 11-15?
8. Describe in a paragraph how these instructions modify a woman's role in the church.
9. Can you accept the feminist's argument that Paul's instructions here are:
 1. culturally conditioned, or,
 2. simply wrong. Explain why or why not.

All commentators agree that verse 15 affirms salvation for women, even though they may not hold positions of authority in the congregation. However, the interpretation of the phrase through the childbearing is difficult and has produced variety of opinion. The different renderings of this passage in the common English versions indicates something of the problem. The KJV says "saved in childbearing," and the marginal reading is "through the childbearing." The RSV says "through bearing children," and the marginal reading is "by the birth of the child." This writer has encountered the following:

Four views on childbearing (I Tim.2:13).

1. *Physical salvation in childbirth view. This view explains the reference as physical salvation for women through the sufferings of childbirth.*
2. *Spiritual salvation through childbirth view. This view explains the verse as teaching salvation of the soul through bearing children.*
3. *Spiritual salvation in the home view. A great host of commentators hold that this*

verse teaches that women will experience salvation equally with men through fulfilling their function in the home, just as men function publicly in leadership in the church.

4. Spiritual salvation through the Incarnation of Christ view. This view holds that the reference is to salvation through the Incarnation of Christ, as promised to Eve (Gen.3:15).

The verb saved is more probably to be understood in this passage of spiritual salvation. Although it is true that saved can be used in the sense of physical safety, and is so used in the New Testament, Paul does not so use it in his epistles. In not one of his thirty-one uses of the word (including Hebrews and this passage) can it be shown indisputably that physical saving is meant, unless this be the exception. This would eliminate the first view.

To finish his sentence, Paul widens his thought from Eve, his illustration, to all women, who are the subjects of his practical exhortation. Just as Eve was saved through faith in the "seed" to come, so all women may experience full salvation through this same channel (that is, faith in the "seed"), even though they are not leaders in the church.

Inasmuch as salvation in Scripture is not a theological abstraction but an intensely practical matter as well, Paul adds the clause: "if they remain in faith and love and holiness with sobriety." These women under discussion are already believers and part of the church. They have been saved by faith in Christ. Saved women will manifest their condition in daily conduct. Thus these qualities of life are the evidence to all observers that such women are truly saved, just as certainly as are the men.

(Excerpt from The Pastoral Epistles by H.A. Kent)

Study 4

I Timothy 3:1-16

READ: I Timothy 3:1-16

1. How is the work of an overseer described? (v.1)
2. What are the prerequisites of this ministry (vs.2-7)
3. Since the Ephesian church already had a group of overseers or elders (see Acts 20:17) why does Timothy need these instructions?
4. List what you think are the three most important qualifications and explain why you chose them.
5. Compare the requirements for deacons with your list in question 2. What are the similarities and differences? What is the primary emphasis?
6. Why is the behaviour of the leaders' wives to be taken into consideration?
7. Put verses 14 and 15 into your own words.
8. What do you learn about the church in this lesson?
9. Identify the essential factors which will be included in any true witness for the Lord Jesus Christ.
10. On what basis should elders and deacons be appointed today?

Study 5

I Timothy 4

READ: I Timothy 4:1-16

1. What are the results of abandoning the faith? (vs.1-3)
2. Teachers of this kind can be identified by the content of their ministry. What two examples are given? (v.3)
3. What is the basis of Christian liberty from dietary laws? (vs.4,5)
4. What is the job of a good minister of Christ Jesus? (v.6)
5. List the activities which you think are essential to training yourself to be godly.
6. Explain Paul's motivation in your own words. (v.10)
7. Authoritative teaching needs what kind of support? (v.12)
8. Why do you think the public reading of the Scriptures receives special mention? (v.13)
9. Timothy had received a special confirmation of his gift, but what response was required on his part? (vs.14-16)
10. Identify the factors which contributed to Timothy's continuing spiritual growth.
11. Which of the above "duties" do you need to focus on?

Study 6

I Timothy 5

READ: I Timothy 5:1-16

1. Interpersonal relationships are an important part of our corporate witness. Think of practical ways in which you can implement the instructions of verses 1 and 2 regarding:

- a. Older men
- b. Younger men
- c. Older women
- d. Younger women

2. Who has first responsibility for widows, parents and grandparents?

3. Why is a failure to accept this responsibility regarded by Paul to be a denial of the faith?

4. List the requirements which are to determine which widows qualify for assistance?

5. Support is to be limited for what reasons?

6. Do these instructions have any meaning in our society where pensions and social assistance are available?

READ: I Timothy 5:17-25

7. What does "double honour" mean in v.17?

8. To whom are the elders accountable for their actions?

9. What are leaders to avoid? (v.22)

10. Why do you think leaders are to be careful in what they sanction?

11. Put verses 24 and 25 into your own words.

Study 7

I Timothy 6

READ: I Timothy 6:1-2

1. Give an illustration of how the principles behind these verses apply today.

READ: I Timothy 6:3-10

2. How is a false teacher to be identified?

3. Godliness and contentment are linked together. Why?

4. Identify some of the problems that accompany the desire to be rich.

READ: I Timothy 6:11- 16

5. How would you recognize each of the characteristics listed in v.11?

6. What two encouragements are offered as reasons for continuing in the faith?

READ: I Timothy 6:17-21

7. What temptations of the rich is Timothy commanded to oppose?

8. List the activities which receive the Lord's commendation.

9. Do you have a responsibility similar to Timothy's to guard what has been entrusted to you?

10. How do you discharge this responsibility?

Unit II - Study 8
TITUS
Titus 1

READ: Titus 1:1-10

1. List the purposes for Paul's call and commission cited in v.1-3.
2. What responsibility was given to Titus?
3. Compare the qualifications of an elder in I Timothy 3:1-7 with those given in Titus 1:6-9. Make some general comments in preparation for discussion.
4. Why is sound doctrine important for an elder?

READ: Titus 1:11-16

5. How can false doctrine ruin whole households, v.11? Give an example.
6. In v.12, Paul makes reference to Cretian culture. Why?
7. What effect does culture have on Christian attitudes?
8. Explain the statement "to the pure, all things are pure."
9. The claim to know God is voided by the action of false teachers. Is this possible today?
10. What sorts of actions are most likely to void a Christian claim in the eyes of the onlooker?

Study 9

Titus 2

READ: Titus 2:1-10

1. Suggest why each characteristic mentioned in v.2 is important for an older man. What effects would be created by the absence of one or all of these characteristics.
2. How does the list of characteristics in v.3 qualify an older woman to teach younger woman.
3. Suggest how Titus could go about fulfilling the responsibility given him in vs. 2 and 3.
4. Note the list given in vs. 4 and 5. If these were lacking in the life of a younger woman how would it "malign the Word of God?"
5. Feminists have great difficulty with some of the concepts presented in vs. 4 and 5. Be prepared to discuss male and female roles in the home.
6. How was Titus to accomplish the encouragement of young men commanded in v.6?
7. How can we avoid being the subject of gossip?
8. What is to be the outcome of teaching slaves to live well?
9. List some things that will accomplish the same purpose today?

READ: Titus 2:11-15

10. What is Paul referring to in v.11?
11. List what God's message teaches.
12. What is the goal of Christian living?

Study 10

Titus 3

READ: Titus 3:1-15

1. V.1 and 2 speak about the Christian and civil authority. How can we as citizens of Canada fulfill these responsibilities? Give examples if possible.
2. Paul reminds his readers about "what they were" in v.3. In what ways can such reflection be helpful?
3. Put v.5 in your own words.
4. What is the outcome of the work of God in the life of the believer?
5. How can we avoid controversy without compromising truth?
- 6a.) What is a "divisive person?"
 - b) How does he operate?
 - c) Why is the admonition so severe?
7. Review Titus 2:7 & 14; and Titus 3:1, 8 & 14. Notice the emphasis on doing good. Why is this so important?
8. Review the book of Titus and suggest what specific things are said to help Titus fulfill his commission given in ch. 1:5.
9. Review your notes on Titus and be prepared to discuss the points that have become important to you in Titus.

Unit III - Study 11

II TIMOTHY

II Timothy 1:1-18

READ: II Timothy 1:1-7

1. Compare II Timothy 1:1-2 with I Timothy 1:12. Make a careful note of the differences and similarities and be prepared to discuss the implications.

2. In v.5, Paul implies that Timothy's mother and grandmother had a marked influence on his faith and development. (compare ch.3:15).

a) What did Lois and Eunice possess that resulted in their effectiveness?

b) How do you think this quality was achieved?

c) What steps can we take to prepare to be a positive influence on our families and friends.

3. In v.7, Paul refers to the spirit of fear. In the context the spirit of fear is responsible for Timothy's anxiety about persecution.

a) Where does the spirit of fear come from?

b) How is this spirit evidenced in us today?

c) How can we be overcomers in the area of anxiety?

READ: II Timothy 1:8-18

4. a) What two results are said to be the result of the Gospel in vs. 8 and 9 and which is the most important to God and to us?

b) Should we be thinking of them as separate entities?

5. V.13 commands, "What you heard from me, keep as the pattern of sound teaching."

a) What does this mean?

b) Why is this important?

c) How can it be accomplished?

6. a) Make a list of the specific ways Onesiphorus cared for Paul.

b) Describe Onesiphorus

c) How can we follow his example? Be specific

STUDY 12

II TIMOTHY 2:1-26

READ: II Timothy 2:1-13

1. V.2 challenges Timothy and others who are taught in the word to teach others.

a) Why?

b) How can "faithfulness" be identified?

c) What procedures could you suggest to fulfill this challenge?

2. a) What three activities are used by Paul in vs. 3-7 to illustrate Christian responsibility?

b) What can we learn from each illustration?

3. Note V.4. How far should we go in attempting to fulfill this command? Are there any limitations to be considered?

4. The trustworthy sayings of v.11-13 are clearly illustrated in Paul's experience summarized in vs. 8-10; we don't have the same opportunity to prove ourselves, or do we?

READ: II Timothy 2:14-26

5. Quarrels and futile discussions are denounced in vs.14-18.

a) What kind of discussions are being depreciated?

b) Is there a need to upgrade the quality of Christian discussion and conversation today?

c) If so, how can this be achieved?

6. Note the statement of v.19 "Everyone who confesses the name of the Lord must turn away from wickedness."

a) How can we identify wickedness?

b) How can we successfully turn away from it?

7. Put vs. 20-21 in your own words.

8. The Lord's servants are commanded in v.24-26 not to be quarrelsome or argumentative.

a) Make a list of what they should and should not do.

b) What is the expected result?

c) Why do you think we are sometimes unkind, impatient and harsh to those who do not agree with us?

STUDY 13

II TIMOTHY 3:1-17

READ: II Timothy 3:1-17

1. Read vs. 1-5 carefully. Choose three of the "last day" characteristics listed and illustrate each with a present day event or experience.
2. Define the phrase "a form of godliness."
3. Verse 7 says; "always learning but never able to acknowledge the truth." What does this statement mean?
4. a) Review v.12: What does "live a Godly life" mean?

b) Is persecution still a direct result of this lifestyle? Explain.
5. In v.14 Paul talks about learning and being convinced. What is the difference between these words? Illustrate your answer from experience.
6. Paul says in v.16-17 that the Word of God is both inspired and profitable.
 - a) How can the full profitableness of the Word of God (doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction) be experienced in the ministry of the church?
 - b) Why is it necessary?

STUDY 14
II TIMOTHY 4:1-22

READ: II Timothy 4:1-8

1. Put Paul's charge of v. 1, into your own words.
2. Why was the admonition of v.2 so important to Paul and Timothy?
3. Is there any evidence that what Paul foresees in vs. 3-4 became a reality? If so please give some specific examples.
4. Are some aspects of "sound doctrine" more vulnerable to abandonment than others? If so why?
5. What is Paul's view of the Christian life according to v.7?
6. In v. 8, Paul anticipates "a crown of righteousness." Some have criticized this expectation of reward as mercenary. What is your reaction to this criticism?

READ: II Timothy 4:9-22

7. In verse ten the apostle comments on the departure of Demas? What meaning can we place on the words "because he loved the world?"
8. Paul, in all his letters, expresses a deep concern for his friends and their spiritual development. What are some ways we could help our friends spiritually? Please be specific.
9. a) Explain Paul's attitude toward opposition as indicated in v.14-18.
b) How can Paul's attitude help us?