

The Pastoral Epistles

The Pastoral Epistles (1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, and Philemon) provide instruction for the church leadership and for the entire church to know what God expects from those in these responsibilities of service.

Matthew 7:15-20 – Each believer must judge who they consider to be his or her minister. The Scriptures provide the standard.

1 Timothy 3:14-15

I am writing these things to you, hoping to come to you before long; but in case I am delayed, *I write* so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth.

Timothy – True Child

Acts 14:1-28 – Paul’s first itinerary included Lystra during which time Timothy’s family apparently first believed.

Acts 16:1 – Timothy was probably a teenager at this time. In 1 Timothy 4:12 and 2 Timothy 2:22, Paul still refers to him as a youth, yet 13-15 years have passed since their meeting in Acts 16.

Acts 16:2 – Timothy’s father was a Gentile, and his mother a Jew. The great message Paul carried with him since the council meeting in Acts 15 was that the Jews and the Gentiles were now equal as one in Christ. Timothy understood by experience how both could be one since he was both from a biological point-of-view. Timothy most likely spoke Hebrew and Greek as did Paul.

2 Timothy 1:5 – His grandmother, Lois, and mother, Eunice, were great believers.

Acts 16:3 – From the beginning, Timothy’s faith and commitment were evident.

1 Timothy 1:2 – Paul calls him “true” (*gnesios* - genuine, lawfully gotten) “child” (*teknon*).

2 Timothy 1:2 – “beloved son”

1 Corinthians 4:15-17 – beloved and faithful child in the Lord

1 Corinthians 16:10-11 – doing the Lord’s work

Philippians 2:19-24 – kindred spirit, like a child serving with his father.

Romans 16:21; 1 Thessalonians 3:2 – fellow worker in the gospel of Christ

Timothy is included in the salutation of these epistles: 2 Corinthians 1:1; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:1; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:1; and Philemon 1:1. Timothy is included in the greeting from Paul.

Titus

Titus 1:4 – Like Timothy, Titus was also considered to be a “true child.”

Acts 15: 1-ff; Galatians 2:1-4 – Titus was with Paul at the church counsel meeting, so he travelled with Paul before Timothy.

Galatians 2:1-16 – He was a Gentile. He was there through the very difficult confrontations with Peter and Barnabas.

2 Corinthians 7:6 -16 – He ministered in Corinth and travelled to Macedonia to meet with Paul reporting how the Corinthians were doing after they received the first epistle.

2 Corinthians 8:6, 16, 23 – My partner and fellow worker

Philemon

Philemon 1:1 – beloved and fellow worker

Leadership Requirements

1 Timothy 3:1-7 – Overseer

“Must be above reproach” is the heading for all that follows. “Reproach” means blameworthy. To be without reproach is not to be called to account, unproveable. “Blameless” is a good word to express this concept. All that follows is what is expected from the overseer so that he remains blameless. He faithfully walks the way every believer is instructed. These fundamentals are required of the one who desires to be an overseer.

Husband of one wife – If a man cannot handle his marriage as instructed in Ephesians 5:22-33, he is disqualified from being an overseer. He must do whatever is necessary to make his marriage work. Instruction is provided for the wife also (2:9-15). We learned from 1 Corinthians 7 a man can be single like Paul was and serve as an overseer.

Temperate – 1 Timothy 3:11; Titus 2:2 Not an extremist, well balanced

Prudent – Sound mind, self-controlled. Titus 1:8; 2:2, 5 translated sensible. Such a one is full of commonsense, therefore practical, realistic, and responsible.

Respectable – The Greek word is *kosmios* meaning orderly, like the universe is orderly. Occurs one other time (2:9 - translated “proper” for wives of overseers).

Hospitable – Friendly and welcoming to strangers or guests, congenial

Able to teach – 1 Corinthians 12:28-29; Ephesians 4:11 All believers are to teach (here with special emphasis for the overseer). James 3:1; Roman 2:21

The most vital exhortation in the Pastoral Epistles is to guard the integrity of God’s Word. Warnings to be aware of false prophets and teachers are often repeated (Acts 20:29; Matthew 24:24; 1 John 4:1).

1:3-7 – Teach right and not strange doctrines.

4:1-4 – Many teachers promote doctrines of devils and not the gospel of God.

6:3-6 – Must teach the right doctrine.

6:20-21 – Overseers must guard the doctrine, or the devil will chip away one piece at a time until there is nothing left of the truth.

2 Timothy 1:8; 13-15; 2:2, 14-19, 23-24; 3:14-4:5; Titus 1:1; 9-16; 2:1, 7-8

Not addicted to wine – Ephesians 5:18-21; 1 Timothy 5:23; Proverbs 31:4-7; Isaiah 5:11-14

Not pugnacious – Eager or quick to argue, quarrel, or fight. Combative, aggressive, antagonistic, belligerent

Gentle – 2 Timothy 2:24-26; Galatians 6:1-10; Titus 3:1-5 In the salutation of Paul’s writing, he consistently writes “grace and peace.” In the epistle to Timothy, he includes “mercy.” Leaders need to receive and give mercy.

Peaceable – The Greek word *amachos*; only used twice - here and Titus 3:2. It means abstaining from fighting.

Free from the love of money – 1 Timothy 6:1-21 So many ministers are dogged by issues pertaining to money.

Manage his own household well – Children provide a great training for ministers. Parents cannot make their children believe, for all must make their own choice, but fathers must determine what the godly boundaries are for his home and insist that they are obeyed. “God is at the center of this family and home, so you live by my standard or find someplace else to live.” God must come first!

Not a novice – To serve in the position of overseer takes time for maturity. Confident faith-based ministers are not the same as prideful.

Good reputation with those outside – “Reputation” is the Greek word *marturia*, usually translated testimony.

Deacons – 1 Timothy 3:8-13 Greek work *diakonos* is a minister or servant, one who runs to serve.

Men of dignity – Venerable, respectable due to their godly character. 1 Timothy 3:11 wives; Titus 2:2 older men; Philippians 4:8 honorable

Not double-tongued – The Greek word *dilogos* is used only here. Deceitful by saying one thing but meaning another, deliberate misimpression. Taking different sides of an issue whenever it is convenient or expedient.

Holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience

Timothy and Titus were imitators of Paul as we too should be, for in him we have a set, unchanging written standard. 1 Timothy 1:15-16; 1 Corinthians 4:15-16; 11:1; Philippians 3:17; 4:9; 1 Thessalonians 1:6; and 2 Thessalonians 3:7-9

1 Timothy 1:18; 6:11-12 – The pastoral epistles teach and encourage leadership to fight the good fight (as John taught on Sunday).

2 Timothy 4:6-8 – Paul fought a good fight unwavering to the end, and he did so because his hope never died. Right now is our time of competition. Will we fight a good fight unwavering?

2 Corinthians 4:17; Romans 8:18

22 End of the Age

When it comes to the end of this present evil age (Gal 1:4), Paul organized everything around one cosmic event—the coming of Christ. When he returns, we'll be glorified with him (Rom 8:17) in an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison (2 Cor 4:17). In fact, any present sufferings can't even compare to the glory to be revealed in us (Rom 8:18). When Christ appears, then we will appear with him in glory (Col 3:4). This one future event should ground us, enabling us to remain steadfast in difficult times as well as provide motivation for us to live above this age today.

Trouble before Christ Comes

1 Timothy 4:1-3; 2 Timothy 3:1-5; 4:3-4 – Paul mentions several general descriptions of how the world will degenerate in later times.

2 Thessalonians 2:1-4 – Additionally, before Christ comes, a falling away will occur as well as the appearing of the antichrist figure.

Names for the Final Antichrist*

- Man of Lawlessness (2 Thes 2:3)
- Son of Destruction (2 Thes 2:3)
- The Beast (Rev 13:1)
- The Little Horn (Dan 7:8)

*Technically, the word “antichrist” refers to any person who believes in Jesus but doesn't think he came as a human being (1 John 2:18, 22; 4:3; 2 John 1:7).

2 Thessalonians 2:8-10 – Though Satan empowers him to do signs and wonders, ultimately his life will end when Christ returns in judgment.

2 Thessalonians 1:4-10 – In addition to the antichrist, all who persecute God's people will suffer the righteous judgment of God when Jesus appears in heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire.

Christ's Return to Resurrect and Reign

1 Thessalonians 4:15-17 – The resurrection happens when Christ comes. Those Christ-followers who are alive at this time will meet up with those raised from the dead.

1 Corinthians 15:51-57 – Everyone who is in Christ will experience a huge change from a perishable body to an imperishable one. Through resurrection, God will finally and irreversibly defeat death and death's sting.

We know that Christ's resurrection body is the pattern for ours. He will “transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body” (Phil 3:21).

1 Corinthians 15:24-28 – After the resurrection, Christ will go about the work of subjugating the nations. He must destroy every rule and authority and power, reigning until his enemies are all under his feet.

Then, at long last, he'll hand everything over to God. We also will judge the world (1 Cor 6:2), judge angels (1 Cor 6:3), and reign with Christ (2 Tim 2:12).

Anticipating the Future (Prolepsis)

Our citizenship is in heaven from whence we await a savior, the Lord Jesus Christ (Phil 3:20). This means ultimately our allegiance is with the King and his Kingdom.

1 Corinthians 6:1-10 – Our future role of ruling with Christ should influence how we live now. If we will one day reign as God's competent royal family, then we should be able to figure out how to handle ourselves when issues arise.

Philippians 3:8-14 – Just like the Apostle Paul, we should strain forward looking to a future that looks like Christ's experience. We may suffer, but we will also reign. We may die, but we will also come back to life. Let us forget our past failings and press on toward the goal of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

1 Thessalonians 5:23

Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.