

THE PASTORAL EPISTLES
FOR THE PRACTICAL MESSIANIC

THE PASTORAL
EPISTLES
1&2 TIMOTHY, TITUS
FOR THE PRACTICAL MESSIANIC

J.K. MCKEE



THE PASTORAL EPISTLES

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ABBREVIATION CHART AND SPECIAL TERMS

The following is a chart of abbreviations for reference works and special terms that are used in publications by Outreach Israel Ministries and Messianic Apologetics. Please familiarize yourself with them as the text may reference a Bible version, i.e., RSV for the Revised Standard Version, or a source such as TWOT for the *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, solely by its abbreviation. Detailed listings of these sources are provided in the Bibliography.

Special terms that may be used have been provided in this chart:

ABD: <i>Anchor Bible Dictionary</i>	ICC: <i>International Critical Commentary</i>
AMG: <i>Complete Word Study Dictionary: Old Testament, New Testament</i>	IDB: <i>Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible</i>
ANE: Ancient Near East(ern)	IDBSup: <i>Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible Supplement</i>
Apostolic Scriptures/Writings: the New Testament	ISBE: <i>International Standard Bible Encyclopedia</i>
Ara: Aramaic	IVPBB: <i>IVP Bible Background Commentary (Old & New Testament)</i>
ATS: ArtScroll Tanach (1996)	Jastrow: <i>Dictionary of the Targumim, Talmud Bavli, Talmud Yerushalmi, and Midrashic Literature</i> (Marcus Jastrow)
b. Babylonian Talmud (<i>Talmud Bavli</i>)	JBK: <i>New Jerusalem Bible-Koren</i> (2000)
B.C.E.: Before Common Era or B.C.	JETS: <i>Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society</i>
BDAG: <i>A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i> (Bauer, Danker, Arndt, Gingrich)	KJV: King James Version
BDB: <i>Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon</i>	Lattimore: <i>The New Testament by Richmond Lattimore</i> (1996)
BECNT: <i>Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament</i>	LITV: <i>Literal Translation of the Holy Bible</i> by Jay P. Green (1986)
BKCNT: <i>Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament</i>	LS: <i>A Greek-English Lexicon</i> (Liddell & Scott)
C.E.: Common Era or A.D.	LXE: <i>Septuagint with Apocrypha</i> by Sir L.C.L. Brenton (1851)
CEV: Contemporary English Version (1995)	LXX: Septuagint
CGEDNT: <i>Concise Greek-English Dictionary of New Testament Words</i> (Barclay M. Newman)	m. Mishnah
CHALOT: <i>Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament</i>	MT: Masoretic Text
CJB: Complete Jewish Bible (1998)	NASB: <i>New American Standard Bible</i> (1977)
DRA: Douay-Rheims American Edition	NASU: <i>New American Standard Update</i> (1995)
DSS: Dead Sea Scrolls	NBCR: <i>New Bible Commentary: Revised</i>
ECB: <i>Eerdmans Commentary on the Bible</i>	NEB: <i>New English Bible</i> (1970)
EDB: <i>Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible</i>	Nelson: <i>Nelson's Expository Dictionary of Old Testament Words</i>
eisegesis: "reading meaning into," or interjecting a preconceived or foreign meaning into a Biblical text	NETS: <i>New English Translation of the Septuagint</i> (2007)
EJ: <i>Encyclopaedia Judaica</i>	NIB: <i>New Interpreter's Bible</i>
ESV: English Standard Version (2001)	NIGTC: <i>New International Greek Testament Commentary</i>
exegesis: "drawing meaning out of," or the process of trying to understand what a Biblical text means on its own	NICNT: <i>New International Commentary on the New Testament</i>
EXP: <i>Expositor's Bible Commentary</i>	NIDB: <i>New International Dictionary of the Bible</i>
Ger: German	NIV: <i>New International Version</i> (1984)
GNT: Greek New Testament	NJB: <i>New Jerusalem Bible-Catholic</i> (1985)
Grk: Greek	NJPS: <i>Tanakh, A New Translation of the Holy Scriptures</i> (1999)
<i>halachah</i> : lit. "the way to walk," how the Torah is lived out in an individual's life or faith community	NKJV: <i>New King James Version</i> (1982)
HALOT: <i>Hebrew & Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> (Koehler and Baumgartner)	NRSV: <i>New Revised Standard Version</i> (1989)
HCSB: <i>Holman Christian Standard Bible</i> (2004)	NLT: <i>New Living Translation</i> (1996)
Heb: Hebrew	NT: <i>New Testament</i>
HNV: <i>Hebrew Names Version of the World English Bible</i>	orthopraxy: lit. "the right action," how the Bible or one's theology is lived out in the world
	OT: <i>Old Testament</i>
	PreachC: <i>The Preacher's Commentary</i>

REB: Revised English Bible (1989)
RSV: Revised Standard Version (1952)
t. Tosefta
Tanach (Tanakh): the Old Testament
Thayer: *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*
TDNT: *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*
TEV: Today's English Version (1976)
TNIV: Today's New International Version (2005)
TNTC: *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries*
TWOT: *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*

UBSHNT: United Bible Societies' 1991 Hebrew New Testament revised edition
v(s). verse(s)
Vine: *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*
Vul: Latin Vulgate
WBC: *Word Biblical Commentary*
Yid: Yiddish
YLT: Young's Literal Translation (1862/1898)

PROLOGUE

The three letters of 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, and Titus—frequently referred to as the Pastoral Epistles—are three texts that many people within today’s Messianic movement automatically assume they know what they mean. Unlike some of our previous studies conducted to date (Hebrews, Galatians, Ephesians, Colossians-Philemon, Acts 15 and the Jerusalem Council), there has really been no clamor for a detailed Messianic examination of the Pastoral Epistles. The Pastoral Epistles might be some of the least considered of the Pauline corpus among Messianics, as it is sometimes unconsciously thought that there will be very little to gain if we expel the time and effort to analyze and dissect them. So, our level of engagement has often been limited to quoting a few verses here or there—most especially something like “All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness” (2 Timothy 3:16)—but there has been no concentrated effort made to consider 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, or Titus as whole letters. Most disturbingly, there has been no concentrated effort among Messianics, at least to my knowledge, to try to join into some contemporary discussions present regarding the Pastoral Epistles’ ancient background, their proper interpretation, and their right application for men and women in the Twenty-First Century.

For quite some time, there has been a deep stirring in my heart to address the Pastoral Epistles. As I have steadily prepared myself for this study for over a year-and-a-half (2008-2010), acquiring different commentaries and resources, what I have read has only confirmed that a thorough Messianic examination of these letters is long overdue. Ben Witherington III indicates in his commentary how, “one could say that scholarship on these documents in the last fifty years has been something of a growth industry.”ⁱ In consulting some technical commentaries on the Pastorals and scholastic books on related issues, a cursory flip through of their bibliographies and footnotes confirms this! All across the spectrum—from conservative to liberal, and to the Right, Left, and Center—discussions on the Pastoral Epistles have been like a proverbial candy factory that does not stop putting out new confections. One can see trucks lined up delivering tons of sugar, milk, and cocoa to one end of the factory—and then tractor trailers, train cars, and even a few planes all positioned at the other end of the factory, ready to make deliveries to the masses. But, quite contrary to Willy Wonka’s factory where you have to have a golden ticket for entrance, this Pastoral Epistles factory is open to anyone.

It is really hard for me to believe that with all of the information and proposals out there on the Pastoral Epistles, that most of our Messianic faith community—especially in congregational leadership and teaching—has been almost totally unaware of them. *With a huge chocolate factory in the center of town, it is hard to think that many of our leaders and teachers have not smelled the aroma from a distance, or really even noticed one of the delivery trucks.* Much of this has to do with the sad fact that the Pastorals do not get a huge amount of attention in Messianic congregational teaching or general usage. We may rightfully affirm statements about Yeshua the Messiah such as, “He who was revealed in the flesh, was vindicated in the Spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory” (1 Timothy 3:16). However, are we at all informed of the various First Century social issues portrayed in the Pastoral Epistles? I know from my experience in dialoguing with various Messianic congregational leaders—some of whom are voracious readers—that when frequently referring them to scholarly books and articles on the Pastorals, they have not been too enthusiastic to read *or* skim through them (even when some of the material is free).

I was convicted about the strong need for a Pastoral Epistles Bible study in July 2008, on the last full day of my vacation to London. My “British excursion” was my personal gift to myself for completing my M.A.

ⁱ Ben Witherington III, *Letters and Homilies for Hellenized Christians: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on Titus, 1-2 Timothy and 1-3 John* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2006), 50.

from Asbury Theological Seminary, and had been planned for more than a year in advance. Several months or so before leaving, a significant ruckus had erupted in some parts of the independent Messianic community, over the seizure of children from Mormon polygamists in Texas. Why would this be an issue for these people? It was an issue for them because they thought quite strongly that the Torah permitted polygamy, and that today's Messianic movement needed to be more open to the idea. Many people, quite rightfully, spoke against such claims and pointed out that polygamy was never something God explicitly approved of—and that it was riddled with familial problems for those men who practiced it. I myself wrote a lengthy article in November 2008 entitled “Is Polygamy for Today?” where I answered the question with, “**polygamy was never intended for yesterday**, much less for today!”ⁱⁱ

So what does this have to do with the Pastoral Epistles? During my nine day break in the United Kingdom, while away from the hassles of ministry, touring museums and historical sites—I got to really spend some time thinking. I spent much of the final day resting in my hotel room, and knew that *only* addressing the errors of polygamy would not be enough. The reason why polygamy was being entertained was precisely because of a huge gulf and ignorance in Messianic Biblical Studies and Messianic thinking as it regarded gender roles. Up until this point, some of my specific views of men and women in the Body of Messiah had remained closed to myself. I had certainly hinted at some of my views in piecemeal here and there (cf. Acts 16:14ff). But now with some people out there thinking that polygamy, at least in principle, was valid—I **could now be open about my own views** which were the exact opposite.

Understandably, when you are walking streets that you know for a fact that some of your ancestors once walked, you not only reflect on your personal past—but also your personal future. *I knew that one day I would have to specify what I believe about gender roles in the Body of Messiah.* Much of this would have to involve a Pastoral Epistles Bible study, not only informing Messianic Believers on a few of the positions presently proposed in Biblical Studies, but also some of the positions *which I myself hold* regarding their interpretation. Within the broad Messianic world, I do have a few “controversial” ideas regarding passages seen in the Pastoral Epistles. Our ministry needs to demonstrate that we hold the Pastoral Epistles in very high regard, but do think that we need not draw any hasty or quick conclusions regarding what they communicate, because we might have failed to remember that these letters were written to some specific ancient circumstances.

After the 2008 polygamy discussions, I felt absolutely no hesitation to be quite open about expressing my egalitarian views of husbands and wives, gender roles, and most specifically women in ministry. If there are Messianics out there who believe that men can take multiple wives—it is only appropriate that Messianics who believe in the full equality of the sexes, of wives as co-leaders of the home (obviously in a monogamous marriage relationship), and of women in general occupying positions of teaching and spiritual leadership *can likewise be assertive.* Being Messianic *and* egalitarian, though, is a controversial position to be certain. It is, however, part of ongoing theological discussions and debates present in many branches of Judaism and evangelical Christianity. Over the past several years (since 2008), I have not hidden the fact that my egalitarian convictions are rooted within my own Wesleyan upbringing, and this is an area of longstanding disagreement that my family has had with the Messianic movement since the late 1990s. It is not an area of disagreement limited to any one segment of the broad Messianic movement, either, as it does stretch across our interactions with leaders and teachers in Messianic Judaism, and both the One Law and Two-House sub-movements.

In our examination of the Pastoral Epistles, we will be considering various proposals and perspectives that I find hard to believe that some of today's professionally trained Messianic teachers have never heard, especially regarding 1 Timothy 2:8-15. I have a feeling that they have in fact heard about some of them, but have chosen to keep these things to themselves or consigned to their libraries (even when found in a common resource like the *NIV Study Bible*). *In various cases I suspect that some of the discussions have just been dismissed off hand.* Our study will not do this, especially as some of these proposals have been around for over twenty years, but for various reasons have not found their way into many, or most Messianic discussions of these

ⁱⁱ Also consult Mark Huey's McHuey Blog post from 29 June, 2008, “Tare-erized! Beware!,” available for access at <<http://mchuey.wordpress.com>>.

letters (if any at all). Some of these proposals include consideration for ancient historical background, as well as some translation issues.

As you prepare to read through *The Pastoral Epistles for the Practical Messianic*, I want you to know that I fully accept these letters as genuine works of the Apostle Paul, and consider them to be fully relevant and authoritative for the Body of Messiah today. However, we need to understand what these letters meant to Timothy and Titus, and their unique circumstances in Ephesus and Crete, **before** we try to apply them in a Twenty-First Century context.

I am especially appreciative of William D. Mounce's commentary on the Pastoral Epistles in *WBC*, and I am sorry that so much of it has had to be skipped over, largely due to his significant attention given to Greek language issues and various statistics. His defense of Pauline authorship of the Pastorals is most impressive. Even when disagreeing with him in places, it is hard not to be impressed by the detail. I look forward in my spare time to picking his commentary off of the shelf, and flipping through it as I dissect various verses and issues in greater precision. I am also quite glad that Philip B. Payne's book *Man and Woman: One in Christ* was able to be released in time (2009) for this study, as he summarized many of the issues we will be considering, from an evangelical egalitarian perspective.

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INTRODUCTION

The Pastoral Epistles (sometimes abbreviated as PE)¹ in total make up thirteen chapters of the Apostolic Scriptures. These three letters compose semi-personal correspondence between the Apostle Paul, and two of his closest ministry associates in Timothy and Titus. Those who take the time to read and dig into what these three letters communicate can deduce many positive things about their ministry work together, and how two younger men—at least younger than Paul—have now entered into that season of service to the Lord when they do not need as much direct guidance or oversight as they previously required. The Pastoral Epistles might not be the end-all for the necessary guidelines on how to lead, order, or oversee the inner workings of assemblies of Believers, but they are to doubtlessly be consulted and appreciated. People who serve in full-time ministry should place a very high value on these letters, as they can derive encouragement from them in the diverse circumstances they face in serving the Messiah today.

1&2 Timothy and Titus are commonly called the “Pastoral Epistles” because a major theme witnessed is that they concern the care and order of assemblies of Believers. Referring to these three letters as the Pastoral Epistles is a convenient term that has been employed since the Eighteenth Century. Information about men and women in the assembly (1 Timothy 2), those in positions of authority (1 Timothy 3; 5:17-25; Titus 1:5-16), or other groups within the assembly (1 Timothy 5:1-16; Titus 2) is seen. Instructions about avoiding foolish arguments (i.e., 2 Timothy 2:23; Titus 3:9) clearly have congregational applications. Some warnings on the future are given (2 Timothy 3), and there is a disciplinary tone present in parts of all three letters. Suffice it to say, when the major themes of the Pastoral Epistles are put together, there is much discussion among interpreters as to what should be done with them. Some of what is written is undeniably bound by an ancient context (1 Timothy 1:20; 2 Timothy 4:9-21). How do these letters inform us on how the Body of Messiah is supposed to function?

Should 1&2 Timothy and Titus really be considered the “Pastoral Epistles”? These letters do not exclusively have themes of pastoral care in content, even though they are commonly consulted when matters of congregational structure are in view. They are written to individuals who have pastoral duties, *but* Timothy and Titus served more as superintendents or lieutenants commissioned by Paul to oversee groups of Believers in Ephesus and Crete. Timothy and Titus did not really serve in the capacity of a local pastor or rabbi, either in an ancient or modern context. They are given instruction and encouragement by Paul to function in a calling in which many in full-time ministry do not serve, as it goes beyond the scope of an individual fellowship or assembly of Believers.

The grouping of 1&2 Timothy and Titus as the Pastorals is something that is by tradition only, and is necessary likewise only so that interpreters can more adequately join into the modern study of them. They make up the last three letters composed of the Pauline corpus, and give us an important peek into the final years of Paul’s mission. But, if we were to separate out 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, and Titus, it is sometimes thought that one’s reading of these individual letters might be a little different. We might be more apt to pick up on non-pastoral themes, which we can be, admittedly, exclusively inclined to look for if they are just considered the “Pastoral Epistles.” At the very least, we do need to read these letters more in terms of what

¹ Please note that in spite of the common reference these three texts as “the Book of 1 Timothy/2 Timothy/Titus,” I am going to purposefully refer to them as the Epistle of 1 Timothy/2 Timothy/Titus, or Paul’s letters to Timothy and letter to Titus, and not use this reference. By failing to forget that these texts are letters written to specific audiences in specific settings, we can make the common error of thinking that they were written *directly to us*. Our goal as responsible interpreters is to try to reconstruct what these letters meant to *their original audiences first*, before applying their message(s) in a modern-day setting.

I will also at times simply refer to the Pastoral Epistles or letters as the Pastorals.

they personally convey from the Apostle Paul to Timothy and Titus. Gary W. Demarest describes, “There’s every reason to believe that Paul was a prolific letter writer. If so, he must have written letters to people like Barnabas, Silas, Luke, and others. The fact that these are the only three personal letters that either survived or were considered worthy of inclusion in the New Testament canon makes them stand in a class all by themselves.”² We will not only learn about Timothy and Titus in Paul’s writing to them, but also can learn things about Paul himself.

A rather recent commentator (2006), Philip H. Towner, is one who thinks that using the term “Pastoral Epistles” for 1&2 Timothy and Titus should be issued its “farewell.” He thinks, “Its use to describe the contents of the letters is benign enough, but the assumptions about the letters and their intention on which it rests already betray a tendency toward restraint.”³ Many who have used the term “Pastoral Epistles” in their examination of 1&2 Timothy and Titus recognize that these three letters are not exclusively concerned about the ordering of the *ekklēsia*. 2 Timothy itself has very little to say about assemblies of Believers, and is instead a personal message from Paul to Timothy. So, it is probably best that even though the description “Pastoral Epistles” is frequently used in various works, that it be counterbalanced with references such as “these letters” or “Paul’s writing to Timothy/Titus.”

Because of the widespread usage of the term “Pastoral Epistles” seen among commentators, we will be employing it in this commentary, although not exclusively. In reading these three letters, our concerns should be oriented *beyond* just trying to derive congregational-based orthopraxy. A wider variety of issues are encountered in 1&2 Timothy and Titus, ranging from how some Believers are in danger of falling away from the faith (1 Timothy 5:14), and how Believers are to stand in contrast to the world (2 Timothy 4:10). There are issues pertaining to slaves (Titus 2:9-10) and to women teaching (1 Timothy 2:11-15). We probably see some form of proto/pre-Gnosticism referred to and refuted. There is also discussion pertaining to the One God of Creation (1 Timothy 2:5) who made all things (1 Timothy 4:4), and the position of Yeshua in relationship to this One God (1 Timothy 3:16).

In joining into where these letters currently stand within the scope of Biblical Studies, it must be noted that there are debates over authorship, authorial intent, historical background, and translation. While much of this discussion regards contemporary debates over gender roles and specifically women in ministry, some of it also pertains to the degree of possible (incipient) Gnostic influences in Ephesus and Crete. Messianics should be mindful of the role that the Torah played in various false teachings circulating (1 Timothy 1:7-9; Titus 1:14; 3:9).

WHO WAS THE AUTHOR OF THESE LETTERS?

The Pastoral Epistles are part of a collection commonly known as the Deutero-Pauline letters (also including: Ephesians, Colossians, 2 Thessalonians), meaning that not all theologians agree that they were written by the Apostle Paul. The letters themselves do attest to some degree of Pauline authorship, as the opening greetings include references to “Paul, an apostle” (1 Timothy 1:1; 2 Timothy 1:1) and “Paul, a servant of God” (Titus 1:1, RSV). While there is considerable debate today among interpreters as to whether 1&2 Timothy and Titus are authentic works of Paul, the developing Christian Church of the mid-Second Century and onward accepted these three letters as genuinely Pauline. The historian Eusebius, recording the words of Serapion, bishop of Antioch, described how “We, brethren...receive Peter and the other apostles as Christ himself. But those writings which falsely go under their name, as we are well acquainted with them, we reject, and know also, that we have not received such handed down to us” (*Ecclesiastical History* 12.2.3).⁴ The judgment of the Pastoral Epistles being authentically Pauline was reflected early by the Muratorian Canon and by Irenaeus (*Against Heresies* 1.16.3; 2.14.7; 3.14.1), although they were rejected by the heretic Marcion.

² Gary W. Demarest, *The Preacher’s Commentary: 1&2 Thessalonians, 1&2 Timothy, Titus*, Vol 32 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1984), pp 150-151.

³ Philip H. Towner, *New International Commentary on the New Testament: The Letters to Timothy and Titus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 88.

⁴ Eusebius of Caesarea: *Ecclesiastical History*, trans. C.F. Cruse (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1998), 202.

Pauline authorship of 1&2 Timothy and Titus went unchallenged until the Nineteenth Century. This extends today as liberal scholarship continues to deny Pauline authorship, with the Pastorals most often reckoned to be the most “inauthentically” Pauline writings in the Apostolic Scriptures. The Pastoral Epistles are often considered to be the result of a later generation either expanding upon previous Pauline traditions, or writing something in the name of Paul as a definitive authority to address some complicated circumstances facing themselves. It is very true that pseudepigraphy or writing a composition to honor the legacy of a deceased person in his name, did exist in the ancient world.⁵ So, were the Pastoral Epistles actually written to either honor Paul, or to preserve some fragments of his teaching? Known frauds in Church history include 3 Corinthians, the Letter to the Laodiceans, and the Letters of Paul and Seneca.⁶ At the same time, some extra-Biblical literature, known to be pseudepigraphal like *1 Enoch*, has had a degree of consideration at times in theology. What are the criteria for something to be consulted, and something to be accepted as a prime work of a real apostle? William D. Mounce points out,

“It is one thing to write a book and claim someone wrote it (e.g., *1 Enoch*, in the name of one who had been dead for thousands of years); it is another to write a personal letter filled with personal and historical references and claim that it was written by someone in the recent past.”⁷

The difficulty, with accepting pseudepigraphal authorship of the Pastoral Epistles, is that from a literary standpoint they are clearly to be regarded as personal correspondence between the Apostle Paul and Timothy and Titus. The Pastoral Epistles are not written as some kind of memoirs of the Apostle Paul, either transcribed forms of some oral traditions of him, or written by one of his close associates following his death. While various liberal scholars do mention the possibility that among the Pastorals, 2 Timothy might have some authentic Pauline elements,⁸ the fact remains that from a canonical standpoint Bible readers are to view them as real letters written by the Apostle.

While the Pastoral Epistles are commonly categorized in the Deutero-Pauline list, almost all Messianic teachers that I know of and have interacted with are agreed that 1&2 Timothy and Titus are genuinely Pauline (myself included). This does not mean that we should be unaware of the main arguments levied in favor of pseudepigraphal origin, because you will often encounter them in a study Bible, theological encyclopedia, or in various commentaries. You do need to be aware of the principal claims made by those who deny Pauline authorship or involvement with the Pastoral Epistles. In considering the points made by those who propose pseudepigraphy, versus those who believe that the Pastorals are genuinely Pauline, Mounce asks us,

“Is it more credible to see Paul writing the PE at the end of his life in a unique historical situation or to see an admirer of Paul, either shortly after his death or toward the end of the first century, perhaps with scraps of authentic material, writing three letters in an attempt to make Paul’s message relevant to the specific issues that arose in that generation?”⁹

Claims Made in Support of Pseudonymity for the Pastoral Epistles

There are four principal claims made by proponents of pseudepigraphy for the Pastorals:

1. The events of 1&2 Timothy and Titus are not witnessed in the record of the Book of Acts, and so they are fictional, even though they are plausible.
2. The theology of 1&2 Timothy and Titus is a bit more developed, specifically as the offices administering the *ekklesia* appear to be more advanced.
3. The warnings seen in 1&2 Timothy and Titus reflect the circumstances of Second Century Gnosticism, not any First Century religious errors. (These letters might also refute Second Century Marcionism as well.)

⁵ Consult some of the useful discussions in Witherington, pp 26-38.

⁶ Cf. Towner, 21 fn#52; Witherington, 51.

⁷ William D. Mounce, *Word Biblical Commentary: Pastoral Epistles*, Vol. 46 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2000), cxxiv.

⁸ PHEME PERKINS, “Pastoral Epistles,” in James D.G. Dunn and John W. Rogerson, eds., *Eerdmans Commentary on the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 1428.

⁹ Mounce, xlvii.

4. The composition of 1&2 Timothy and Titus demonstrates some differences in vocabulary and writing style not seen in some of the other Pauline Epistles.

A fifth, although not always offered claim, is that the Pastoral Epistles are not present in the Chester Beatty Papryi (P⁴⁶), dating from the Third Century C.E., which contained most of Paul's letters. This is thought to indicate that some Church traditions regarded them to possibly be "sub-Pauline."

Of course, if the Pastoral Epistles are not authentic products of the Apostle Paul, then why would these letters have really been written? Even more importantly, who wrote them?

Advocates of pseudepigraphy for the Pastoral Epistles have made various proposals regarding the reasons why they were written, and who actually composed them. It is common to hear about members of a so-called Pauline school, followers and students of Paul's successors, who would have wanted to see his legacy maintained and applied for succeeding generations. Writing pieces of composition like 1&2 Timothy is quite easy to see, as Timothy was a trusted associate of Paul, and one can imagine Paul actually writing to Timothy. Likewise, Titus was a faithful partner of Paul, and depicting a scene of Paul writing to Titus could be mimicked in an effort to honor the Apostle. In some commentary written by advocates of pseudepigraphy, or those at least friendly to it, they still recognize that they have to deal with the text as though Paul really writes to Timothy and Titus—with the participants in the letter even viewed as "Paul" and "Timothy"¹⁰ and "Titus" in quotations marks.

Among figures who would be more familiar to us than someone in an unknown Pauline school, Luke is sometimes considered by pseudepigraphal advocates to be the author of the Pastoral Epistles, and the Second Century Christian leader Polycarp is also proposed.¹¹ Some pseudepigraphal advocates have even suggested that Timothy and Titus themselves were preservers and/or editors of Pauline material written to them. Various liberal scholars have pointed out what they consider might be a core of genuine Pauline elements (2 Timothy 1:16-18; 3:10-11; 4:1-2a, 5b-22; Titus 3:12-15), which could have been elaborated upon for theological purposes by others.

There are some advocates of pseudepigraphy for the Pastoral Epistles who are motivated entirely by their disagreements with some of what is seen in these three letters, pitting these letters against the agreed-upon genuine Pauline letters. But, this by no means includes all. Pheme Perkins describes her view, "we agree with defenders of Pauline authorship that these letters remain part of the apostle's own legacy."¹² James D.G. Dunn also summarizes, "if they were written during some period subsequent to Paul's death, that should not allow us to justify their being devalued and treated as sub-Pauline. They are *also* Pauline and show how the Pauline churches perceived and evaluated their great founding apostle and the heritage he left with them."¹³ Some advocates of pseudonymity look to Luke's presence with Paul near the time of his death (2 Timothy 4:11) as an indication that something was written by Paul, to then spur on the composition of the three canonical letters we now see in our Bibles.

Responses Made to the Claims of Pseudonymity for the Pastoral Epistles

While many liberal Biblical scholars advocate that the Pastoral Epistles are pseudonymous works, written sometime in the late First Century to early Second Century, **there have been many defenses offered** by conservative Biblical scholars in favor of traditional Pauline authorship.

The claim that since the Pastoral Epistles do not appear in the Chester Beatty Papryi, that they are probably Deutero-Pauline, is one that is easily answered. Donald Guthrie observes, "The very fact that all that remains comprises some fragments of a codex containing the gospels and Acts, most of one containing Paul's epistles and parts of one containing Revelation, is a sufficient indication of the precariousness of this method

¹⁰ Abraham Smith, "The Second Letter of Paul to Timothy," in Walter J. Harrelson, ed., et. al., *New Interpreter's Study Bible*, NRSV (Nashville: Abingdon, 2003), 2137.

¹¹ Perkins, in *ECB*, 1430.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ James D.G. Dunn, "The First and Second Letters to Timothy and the Letter to Titus," in Leander E. Keck, ed., et. al., *New Interpreter's Bible* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2000), 781.

of argument. It is not the pastorals alone that would be suspect but all the other books of the New Testament which are not represented in the papyri."¹⁴ Mounce further states, "The absence of Philemon may suggest that the codex included only Paul's public letters, omitting letters to individuals such as Timothy, Titus, and Philemon...Thus, the omission of the PE and Philemon from P⁴⁶ may have no significance in terms of the authenticity of the PE."¹⁵ Towner, who himself is not totally convinced of Pauline authorship of the Pastorals, has to agree that omission from P⁴⁶ is not evidence of non-Pauline authorship, summarizing:

"Some suggest that P⁴⁶ contained only Paul's letters to churches, and other papyri (lost) were devoted to the letters to individuals. Against this others propose that P⁴⁶ did in fact contain the whole Pauline corpus, or at least that the scribe intended this; his tendency to increase the number of characters per page as the writing progressed, combined with the possibility that pages were added to the original number, in any case makes it impossible to judge from the omission whether the scribe knew of the letters or how he may have regarded them. No firm conclusions about the dating and/or canonicity of the letters to Timothy and Titus can be based on what cannot be known about P⁴⁶."¹⁶

What concerns us the most, to be certain, is whether the four main claims offered for pseudonymity of the Pastoral Epistles really have a firm basis.

1. Advocates of pseudonymity claim that the record of the Book of Acts does not mention any departure of Paul from Ephesus to Macedonia (1 Timothy 1:3), or of any visit by Paul and Titus to Crete (Titus 1:5), possibly making these fictional circumstances. One could respond that the Book of Acts does not include all of the events of Paul's ministry career, and that 1&2 Timothy and Titus reflect things that Luke did not include in his record. Making note of 2 Corinthians 11:23-29, Towner states in passing, "Paul mention[s] activities and adventures that have escaped Luke's attention or interest."¹⁷ But, he then rightfully cautions interpreters to hear the traditional view of these three letters' composition first.

Those who accept the Pastoral Epistles as genuine works of the Apostle Paul make the point that although Paul is expecting to soon die (2 Timothy 4:6-7), Paul's death is not recorded in Acts 28. It is proposed that Paul was released from his confinement in Rome depicted at the end of Acts, as he was anticipating, especially given his desire to revisit the East again (Philippians 1:19, 25; 2:24; Philemon 22). The setting in 1&2 Timothy and Titus, of Paul having left Timothy in Ephesus and Titus in Crete, should then be considered post-Acts 28:30. Paul was acquitted before Caesar in 62 C.E., inferable from Agrippa's remark "This man might have been set free if he had not appealed to Caesar" (Acts 26:32), and continued with other ministry activities.

One of the main ministry activities that Paul wanted, as he had written the Romans, was to visit Spain (Romans 15:24, 28). *1 Clement* 5:7, from the late First Century and around thirty years after Paul's death, does record how Paul had "come to the extreme limit of the west,"¹⁸ which could very well have been Spain—and Clement was mentored by the Apostle himself (Irenaeus *Against Heresies* 3.3.3). E.E. Ellis describes how this description is similar to "the remotest part of the earth" in Acts 1:8, and referred "in the usage of the time to the region of Spain around Gades (= Cadiz), where the apostle probably traveled after he was set free from his first Roman imprisonment."¹⁹ Also referencing a possible visit by Paul to Spain are the Second Century works *Acts of Peter* 1-3, 40 and the Muratorian Canon.

¹⁴ Donald Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1990), 611.

¹⁵ Mounce, lxxv.

¹⁶ Towner, pp 6-7.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp 22-23.

¹⁸ BibleWorks 8.0: Schaff, *Early Church Fathers*. MS Windows Vista/7 Release. Norfolk: BibleWorks, LLC, 2009-2010. DVD-ROM.

¹⁹ E.E. Ellis, "Pastoral Letters," in Gerald F. Hawthorne, Ralph P. Martin, and Daniel G. Reid, eds., *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1993), 661.

There is evidence to suggest that while Paul visited Spain, this may have been very short and unsuccessful. There might have been some language barriers that Paul was unable to overcome, as Greek was not readily employed in the Western Roman Empire. With a Spanish mission not having met Paul's original goals, he would have found it much easier to return to the more successful ministry activity he had conducted in the East. The Pastoral Epistles would have then been written during this post-release ministry period, sometime between 62-67 C.E.

While it is very appealing to think that Paul made it to Spain as he desired, not all who accept genuine Pauline authorship of the Pastoral Epistles think that he made it to the far West. Referencing how Paul left Titus in Crete, Mounce indicates, "It seems unlikely that it took place after Paul's journey to Spain if in fact Paul went to Spain."²⁰ Paul's desire to go to Spain may have just been a desire, and there are some who have taken *1 Clement* 5:7 to refer to Rome, and not to Spain. When released from confinement in Rome, and acquitted before Caesar, there might have been appropriate reasons for Paul to change his plans of going to new ministry territory in Spain, and instead return to old ministry territory in the East to correct some circumstances that had arisen. Gordon D. Fee indicates,

"The most probable solution holds that Paul went to Crete with Titus and (probably) Timothy soon after his release from Roman custody. There they evangelized most of the towns, but they also encountered some opposition from Hellenistic Jews...Paul...left Titus on the island to regulate things by putting the churches in order....Meanwhile, Paul and Timothy were on their way to Macedonia by way of Ephesus when the stopover at Ephesus turned out to be a small disaster."²¹

Whether one thinks Paul went to Spain, and that the Spanish mission was unsuccessful and so he returned to the East to minister with Timothy and Titus—or whether he was unable to go to Spain entirely and ministered with Timothy and Titus immediately after his release—the witness of Church tradition is that Paul was released from his confinement in Acts 28 and continued in evangelistic activities. At a later date, Paul would be arrested again and then martyred at Rome, the scene witnessed in 2 Timothy 4:6:

"After pleading his cause, he is said to have been sent again upon the ministry of preaching, and after a second visit to the city, that he finished his life with martyrdom...We have said this to show that the martyrdom of the apostle did not take place at that period of his stay in Rome when Luke wrote his history" (Eusebius *Ecclesiastical History* 22.2.2, 7).²²

Defenders of Pauline authorship are correct in asserting that there is ample reason for us to believe that there were additional ministry activities, after being released from prison, which Paul was able to conduct with Timothy and Titus.

2. Advocates of pseudonymity claim that the organization of the *ekklesia*, as witnessed in the Pastoral Epistles (i.e. 1 Timothy 3, 5; Titus 1), is more advanced than that present in the agreed-upon genuine Pauline letters. But is the mentioning of bishops, elders, deacons, and widows anything unique to the record of the Scriptures? These same groups are mentioned in the agreed-upon genuine Pauline letters (1 Corinthians 7:8; Philippians 1:1) and in the record of Acts (6:1; 9:39, 41). Certainly, in the latter stages of Paul's ministry, we might expect him to elaborate more on the qualifications of those who can be designated as leaders of the *ekklesia*, not at all requiring these letters to reflect a post-Pauline situation. Ellis is keen to state, "The church at Jerusalem with its leadership of resident apostles, especially Peter...and James...had a more structured organization," further remarking how "The Pastorals give more prominence

²⁰ Mounce, lix.

²¹ Gordon D. Fee, *New International Bible Commentary: 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1988), 4.

²² *Ecclesiastical History*, 58.

to appointed ministries and to the qualifications for them because, among other things, of the increasing threat to Paul's churches by false teachers."²³

Defenders of Pauline authorship are correct to point out how it would be only natural for an elderly Paul to specify some definite things in writing about how he expected Timothy and Titus to manage the groups of Believers they would oversee. This would be most especially true as various congregations had become more established in the Eastern Mediterranean.

3. Advocates of pseudonymity claim that the errors refuted in the Pastoral Epistles reflect a developed, Second Century Gnosticism. Commonly ignored, though, are the facts that the roots of much of Second Century Gnosticism were already present in the First Century. Dualistic attitudes about immaterial spiritual things being pure and physical things being evil, combined with ascetic practices and gross speculation and allegorization from the Tanach Scriptures, were already present in some fringe branches of Judaism. The admonition, "Avoid the godless chatter and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge" (1 Timothy 6:20, RSV), need not be directed only against Second Century circumstances.

Defenders of Pauline authorship are correct to point out that warnings against errant spiritual trends can very much apply to a First Century religious environment in the Mediterranean (discussed further).

4. Advocates of pseudonymity claim that there are noticeable differences in vocabulary and writing style between the Pastoral Epistles, and the agreed-upon genuine Pauline letters. Is this really evidence that 1&2 Timothy and Titus are not products of the Apostle Paul, or are there some other factors that could possibly explain what appear to be compositional differences? There are many reasons, in fact, for us to consider 1&2 Timothy and Titus as originating from the Apostle Paul—and that it is not at all unimportant to forget how these would be the *last letters* of his ministry.

Supposed differences in vocabulary and writing style between one set of earlier Pauline letters, and another set of later (claimed) Pauline letters, are affected by a number of changing conditions. Differences may be accounted for by the audience to whom Paul is writing, his experiences in ministry over the passage of time,²⁴ changes in environment, and most of all the likely use of an amanuensis or secretary in composition (cf. Romans 16:22). Guthrie validly indicates, "the evidence shows that there is no reason to suppose that the language of the pastorals was not the current language of Paul's own time."²⁵ Just about any writing, of any person from over a twenty year or longer period, can actually see some later writings, being challenged as "inauthentic" when compared against older "authentic" writings. Demarest exclaims, "I'm sure that my preaching and writing today have some nuances in vocabulary and style different from twenty years ago."²⁶ Towner further states,

"It is far too convenient...to elevate the areas of alleged Pauline dissimilarity as evidence of discontinuity while dismissing the points of similarity as part of a fiction. This is a methodological flaw. On the same basis any undisputed Pauline writing could be found wanting."²⁷

About half of the terms believed to be "foreign" to the agreed-upon Pauline letters are actually found in the Greek Septuagint.²⁸ Various rhetorical techniques, as seen in the agreed-

²³ Ellis, "Pastoral Letters," in *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*, 660.

²⁴ Cf. Mounce, pp xcix-c.

²⁵ Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction*, 635.

²⁶ Demarest, 151.

²⁷ Towner, 24.

²⁸ Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction*, 634.

upon Pauline letters, would not have really been needed, as Paul was writing to close friends as opposed to congregations riddled with problems. Certainly, some differences may be accounted for via the employment of secretarial license. Luke's name is frequently offered as being a possible amanuensis for the Pastoral Epistles, notably as Paul's final letter was written from prison with Luke closely beside him (2 Timothy 4:11). Ellis asserts how "the pseudepigraphal viewpoint was undermined by three new insights of twentieth-century criticism: the role of the secretary; the function of cosenders; and the presence of a considerable number of preformed, non-Pauline pieces in almost all of Paul's letters."²⁹ Advocates of pseudonymity for the Pastoral Epistles may be insisting upon some things that do not take into consideration the full array of indicators that would have had a bearing on First Century letters.

Defenders of Pauline authorship are correct to point out that there is strong support for the differences between the agreed-upon and Deutero-Pauline letters, to not be differences of author, but stylistic differences acquired by the Apostle over the course of his ministry.

Approaching the Authorship of the Pastoral Epistles

A defense of Pauline authorship for the Pastoral Epistles does not at all mean that the Apostle Paul himself sat down with his papyrus and writing wedge and put his letters together word by word. We have every legitimate reason to believe that Paul *or any of the Biblical writers* never actually transcribed that much. Concurrent with ancient letter writing techniques, Paul probably dictated his words to trusted secretaries. In Galatians 6:11 we see him state, "See with what large letters I am writing to you with my own hand," an indication that he would include only a small part of his own personal transcription. This would have been an excellent way to authenticate many of his letters as being his (cf. 2 Thessalonians 3:17), and Paul's reference to "large letters" is a clue that he probably had very poor handwriting and/or eyesight. Because he has stayed with Paul until the end of his life, it is appropriate for us to consider Luke as the most likely candidate for being Paul's amanuensis. Mounce is willing to acknowledge Luke as Paul's secretary for the composition of all three letters:

"Paul could have used another amanuensis for 1 Timothy and Titus since the historical situation for each is different. But since Luke was with Paul during his final journey to Rome and subsequent imprisonments and the style of all three epistles is consistent, it is possible that Luke was Paul's amanuensis for all three letters and was given considerable freedom in writing to two men who, mostly likely, were also Luke's friends."³⁰

George W. Knight III, who accepts genuine Pauline authorship of the Pastorals, is also willing to concede the possibility of some kind of Lukan influence on their vocabulary and composition, even if Paul wrote the letters himself:

"In their companionship Luke would have used his own vocabulary and style in conversation and would probably have shared with Paul any travel notes he might have made, which would come to be used in the composition of Acts, and any written material that would be used in his Gospel. Even if there were no sharing of written materials, it is to [be] expected that some of Luke's vocabulary and style would have an effect on Paul and that as the companionship was extended and became more constant this would have been more and more a factor in Paul's linguistic reservoir."³¹

Obviously, if the Pastoral Epistles were actually written to some degree by Luke, with Paul's direct oversight and approval, then all three letters may be considered authentic works of the Apostle. Perhaps there was some literary or compositional license taken here or there, but if so the letters would still bear enough of Paul's own personality. In the case of 2 Timothy, we can definitely see an imprisoned Paul ask Luke to write a

²⁹ Ellis, "Pastoral Letters," in *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*, 659.

³⁰ Mounce, lxiv.

³¹ George W. Knight III, *New International Greek Testament Commentary: The Pastoral Epistles* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992), pp 50-51.