

New Testament Foundations: Session Seventeen

I Timothy: The Pastor's Handbook

Authorship

1. The Pauline authorship of the Pastoral Epistles (I & II Timothy, Titus) was never doubted until the eighteenth century. Since then, there have been three primary objections to Pauline authorship.
 - The first objection is the Epistles do not fit the known chronology of Paul's life reflected primarily in Acts.
 - The second objection is the church structure reflects a period that is post-Pauline and perhaps even second century.
 - The third objection is the vocabulary is significantly different from the other letters of Paul.
2. Paul wrote his first letter to Timothy after his first Roman imprisonment (62 AD) and before his second Roman imprisonment, probably sometime between 64-66 AD.

Recipient

1. Paul probably led Timothy to Christ in Lystra on his first missionary journey. When Paul returned to Lystra on his second missionary journey, he took Timothy with him. (Acts 16:1, 3)
2. Timothy was with Paul from this point on throughout most of the apostle's journeys and adventures. None of Paul's other companions were as dear to him or as close to his heart.

Philippians 2:19-22

But I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly...For I have no one else of kindred spirit...you know...that he served with me in the furtherance of the gospel like a child serving his father.

3. Timothy was meek, diffident, and timid at times.

I Timothy 4:12:

Let no one look down on your youthfulness...

Background

1. The historical background and chronology of I Timothy is not known with absolute certainty, but probably it was something like this:
 - Paul was acquitted before Caesar in 62 AD.
 - Paul, Luke, and Timothy visited Ephesus and found that "wolves" had entered the church as Paul had predicted.
 - Paul stayed in Ephesus for a season and then departed to Philippi, leaving Timothy in charge.

1 Timothy 1:3

As I urged you upon my departure for Macedonia, remain on at Ephesus, in order that you may instruct certain men not to teach strange doctrines.

2. Paul wrote to Timothy in Ephesus to instruct him how to lead the church in his absence.

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 may 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.

3. Paul's first letter to Timothy is personal, practical, and unsystematic in nature.

Themes

- I. There were four challenges the church in Ephesus was having.

- The church was having doctrinal challenges.

1 Timothy 5:20

Those who continue in sin, rebuke in the presence of all, so that the rest also may be fearful of sinning.

1 Timothy 4:13

Until I come, give attention to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation and teaching.

- The church was having relational challenges.

1 Timothy 5:1, 2

Do not sharply rebuke an older man, but rather appeal to him as a father, to the younger men as brothers, the older women as mothers, and the younger women as sisters, in all purity.

- The church was having ministerial challenges.

1 Timothy 3:1

It is a trustworthy statement: if any man aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires to do.

1 Timothy 5:3

Give proper recognition to those widows who are really in need.

- The church was having financial challenges.

1 Timothy 6:17-19

Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy. Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is life indeed.