

### Chronological Order of Paul's Letters

	Letter to...	Approximate date written	Information about the church's origin
	Galatians	48 AD	Acts 14:1-23
	1 & 2 Thes	50 AD	Acts 17:1-9
	1 Corinthians	54 AD	Acts 18:1-17
	2 Corinthians	56 AD	
	Romans	57 AD	unknown
"Prison epistles"	Philippians	60-62 AD	Acts 16:12-40
	Ephesians	60-62 AD	Acts 19:1-41
	Colossians	60-62 AD	Epaphras brought the gospel to Colossae (Col 1:7), perhaps while Paul was at Ephesus?
	Philemon	60-62 AD	
	1 Timothy	62-64 AD? After release from Roman prison?	Timothy joined Paul on his second mission (Acts 16:1-3)
	Titus	62-64 AD? After release from Roman prison?	Titus is mentioned in 2 Cor, Gal, and 2 Tim but not Acts
	2 Timothy	64-67 AD? A second Roman imprisonment?	

4-Feb-24	Intro to the Pastoral Epistles
11-Feb-24	1 Timothy
18-Feb-24	2 Timothy
25-Feb-24	Titus

## New Testament Survey

### Class 20: Introduction to the Pastoral Epistles

**Title:** 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus are known collectively as the "Pastoral Epistles," because they are addressed to individual leaders who were responsible for shepherding the church (Latin *pastor* = "shepherd").

#### Authorship:

- Pauline authorship was universally accepted until the early 1800s. Since that time, the authorship of these three letters have become the most disputed in the Pauline collection.
- The main objections to Pauline authorship are:
  - a. differences of style from Paul's other letters,
  - b. uniqueness of vocabulary from Paul's other letters,
  - c. the difficulty of fitting the Pastorals into the historical framework of Acts,
  - d. and the supposedly advanced development of church organization referred to in the letters.
- But important literary and historical factors mitigate the initial persuasiveness of these claims.
  - a. The genre of these letters (addressed to individuals, not churches; uniquely focused on leadership issues), the possible late date, and the influence of amanuenses in other letters could easily account for stylistic differences.
  - b. Every single letter of Paul's includes some vocab not found in other letters. This, along with the unique focus on leadership-related issues, explains distinct vocab.
  - c. Regarding dating, see below.

- d. The church structures described (criteria for elders and deacons, regularity of teaching, liturgical formulae, etc.) are not as far removed from Acts and the other epistles as some imagine.
- The claim that “all scholars agree” in denying Pauline authorship is farcical. The widespread agreement in the modern, western university system is not a reflection of academic consensus but rather of a new *orthodoxy*. In this system, belief in Pauline authorship is a heresy that receives excommunication. Trained scholars who accept Pauline authorship (or other objectionable beliefs) are simply denied entry. This form of inclusion/exclusion is essentially religious, not academic or objective.
  - Taken together, this data rapidly takes the sting out of these objections. While we should sympathize with those who struggle with doubts about the Pastorals (or any part of Scripture), the case for Pauline authorship is strong enough to withstand serious questioning.

#### Date:

- If we attempt to fit these letters within the timeframe covered by Acts (30-62 AD), then they may have been written while Paul was in Ephesus in 52-55 AD.
- However, Paul’s travels described in these letters (e.g., 1 Tim 1:3; Titus 3:12) do not fit easily into the narrative of Acts. The more likely explanation is that Paul was released from his first Roman imprisonment (c.62 AD), continued his gospel proclaiming work for several years, and was executed in Rome in the mid-60s AD. (See timeline on back cover.)

#### Key Teachings of the Pastoral Epistles

- Praise and joy are due to God because of the mercy and grace he has given through Jesus Christ (1 Tim 1:13-17; 2 Tim 1:9-10; 2:1; Titus 2:11-14; 3:4-7)
- An emphasis on the universality of God our Savior (1 Tim 2:3-6; 4:10; Titus 2:11-13) - that is, there is only one God, and salvation for all the earth comes through him alone
- Reinforcing the centrality of teaching to the work of Christian ministry (1 Tim 1:3-7; 3:2; 4:11-16; 5:17; 6:2c; 2 Tim 2:2, 24; 3:10, 16; 4:1-5; Titus 1:5+9; 2:1, 3, 7, 15)
- Encouraging church leaders in the midst of painful and discouraging circumstances (1 Tim 4:12-15; 6:12; 2 Tim 4:1-7; Titus 2:15)
- Directions for church organization and government (1 Tim 3:1-13; 2 Tim 2:2; Titus 1:5-9)
- Confronting false teaching (1 Tim 1:3-4; 4:1-3; “unhealthy” in 6:4; 6:20-21; 2 Tim 2:16-18; 3:6-8; Titus 1:10-14; 3:9-11) and encouraging sound (lit. “healthy”) teaching (1 Tim 6:3; 2 Tim 1:13; Titus 1:9; 2:1)
- Communicating with dear friends (1 Tim 1:2; 2 Tim 1:2; 2:1; Titus 1:4)
- Applying these truths to all Christians—see the final verse in each book!