

**FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT**  
**PREACH THROUGH THE BIBLE: I TIMOTHY**  
**I Timothy 6:12**

**I. BACKGROUND**

**A. LATE PAULINE CHRONOLOGY**

- Second Missionary Journey—49-52? AD
  - Wrote I and II Thessalonians from Corinth—about 50-51 AD
- Third Missionary Journey—52-57 AD
  - In Ephesus—wrote I & II Corinthians and Galatians
  - In Greece—probably Corinth—wrote Romans
- To Jerusalem—arrested—57 AD
- To Caesarea—house arrest—57-59 AD
- To Rome—59 AD
  - Prison Epistles—early 60s
    - Colossians
    - Philemon
    - Ephesians
    - Philippians
- Release from Prison?—62 AD?
  - Wrote I Timothy and Titus
- Second Roman Imprisonment—64 or 67 AD?
  - Wrote II Timothy
  - Martyrdom in Rom—64-68?

**B. A FOURTH MISSIONARY JOURNEY?**

**1. EVIDENCE FOR A FOURTH MISSIONARY JOURNEY**

- a. Interval between Acts 28 and Paul's death
  - 1. Paul stayed 2 years in Rome—Acts 28:30
  - 2. Paul was martyred in Rome under Nero—[Early Church sources]
    - After the great Roman fire (64) and before Nero's death (68)
  - 3. So there is a gap of at least 2 years in Paul's life—62-64 AD

- b. Paul intended to go to Spain—Rom 15: 24, 28
- c. Eusebius implied Paul was released from Roman prison [*Ecclesiastical History* 2.22.2-3]
- d. Early Church documents say Paul went to Spain
  - Clement of Rome
  - Acts of Peter
  - Muratorian Canon

## 2. POSSIBLE ITINERARY

❖ Based on stated intentions in earlier epistles—and references in Pastoral Epistles

1. Release from Roman prison—62 AD
2. Spain—62-64 AD (Rom 15:24, 28)
3. Crete—64-65 AD (Titus 1:5)
  - Leaves Titus as pastor in Crete
4. Miletus—65 AD (II Tim 4:20)
5. Colossae—66 AD (Philem 22)
6. Ephesus—66 AD (I Tim 1:3)
  - Leaves Timothy as pastor in Ephesus
7. Philippi—66 AD (Phil 2:23-24; I Tim 1:3)
8. Nicopolis—66-67 AD (Titus 3:12)
9. Rome—67 AD—martyrdom 67-68 AD

## C. PASTORAL EPISTLES

### 1. PROBABLY PAUL'S FINAL LETTERS

- a. To Timothy in Ephesus
- b. To Titus in Crete

### 2. PAUL ADVISED HOW TO GIVE PASTORAL LEADERSHIP TO THEIR CHURCHES

## II. COMPOSITION

### A. PAULINE AUTHORSHIP

#### 1. ATTRIBUTED IN TEXT—**1:1**

#### 2. MANY SCHOLARS SCEPTICAL ABOUT PAULINE AUTHORSHIP

- a. Pastoral Epistles do not appear in some early lists of Paul's canonical writings
- b. Does not include typical Pauline themes—faith—the Holy Spirit—eschatology
- c. Simpler style of writing
- d. Vocabulary

- Pastoral Epistles contain 306 words not in other Pauline letters
- e. Organization of church is more developed than in Paul's generation

## **B. DATE AND PLACE OF ORIGIN**

### 1. DATE

- a. After leaving Ephesus for Macedonia—1:3
- b. About 66 AD?
- c. About 8 or 9 years after Paul's 3-year stay in Ephesus (3<sup>rd</sup> missionary journey)

### 2. PLACE OF ORIGIN

- Somewhere in Macedonia—possibly Philippi

## **C. CIRCUMSTANCES**

### 1. TIMOTHY WAS PASTOR IN EPHESUS—1:3

- He is a young man—in need of confidence—[let no one despise your youth]—4:12ff
- He needs encouragement and guidance how to lead and what to teach

### 2. PAUL PLANNED TO RETURN TO EPHESUS, BUT WAS DELAYED—3:14-15

### 3. HERESY IN EPHESUS—COMBINED 3 ELEMENTS

- Gnosticism—6:20
- False Jewish teachings—1:3-7
- False asceticism—4:1-5

### 4. CHURCH IS STILL IN FIRST GENERATION—IN NEED OF GUIDANCE FOR

- How to organize offices, do ministry, and worship
- How to deal with heresy and false teachers
- How groups should relate to one another

## **III. RECIPIENT—TIMOTHY**

### 1. Native of Lystra

- a. **Acts 14**—Where Paul healed a lame man—on 1<sup>st</sup> missionary journey
  - Possibly Timothy was converted during this time
- b. **Acts 16**—Paul returned there—on 2<sup>nd</sup> missionary journey

### 2. Father was Greek; mother was a Jewish Christian—Acts 16:1

### 3. Taught the OT from childhood—by mother Eunice and grandmother Lois

### 4. Paul circumcised Timothy—so his Greek heritage would not hamper ministry to Jews

### 5. Paul took him on 2<sup>nd</sup> missionary journey

- Timothy helped evangelize Macedonia and Achaia—Acts 17:14-15; 18:5

6. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> missionary journey
  - With Paul during much of his ministry in Ephesus—Acts 19:22
  - From Ephesus to Macedonia
  - To Corinth and back to Macedonia
  - To Asia Minor—Miletus
7. Probably to Jerusalem
8. Then in Rome—during first imprisonment
9. On 4<sup>th</sup> missionary journey
  - Remained in Ephesus—while Paul went to Macedonia
10. Paul sent for him at the very end—in Rome—II Tim 4: 9, 21
11. Was imprisoned and released—uncertain location—Heb 13:23
12. Co-sender of 6 letters with Paul
  - II Corinthians
  - Philippians
  - Colossians
  - I and II Thessalonians
  - Philemon

#### **IV. PURPOSES AND MAIN THEME**

##### **A. PURPOSES**

- TO HELP TIMOTHY DEVELOP HIS MINISTRY AS PASTOR
- TO REFUTE FALSE TEACHINGS
- TO SHOW TIMOTHY HOW TO SUPERVISE THE CHURCH

##### **B. MAIN THEME**

- REMAIN FAITHFUL TO YOUR CHARGE AS A MINISTER

#### **V. OUTLINE/ORGANIZATION**

**Greeting—1:1-2**

**Warning against False Teachers—1:3-11**

**Thanksgiving for God's Grace—1:12-17**

**Paul's Charge to Timothy—1:18-20**

**Administration of the Church—Chapters 2:1-3:13**

**Public Worship—Chapter 2**

**Qualifications for Church Officers—3:1-13**

**Paul's Delay—3:14-15**

**Confession of Faith—3:16**

**How to Deal with False Teaching—Chapter 4**

**How to Deal with Different Groups in the Church—5:1-6:2**

**Older and Younger**

**Widows**

**Elders**

Slaves  
Miscellaneous Issues—6:3-19  
False Teachers  
Love of Money  
Charge to Timothy  
The Rich  
Conclusion—6:20-21

## VI. BIBLICAL TEXT

**I Tim 1:18-19; 6:12—1** <sup>18</sup> *This command I entrust to you, Timothy, my son, in accordance with the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you fight the good fight, <sup>19</sup> keeping faith and a good conscience, which some have rejected and suffered shipwreck in regard to their faith. . . .* **6** <sup>12</sup> *Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called, and you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.*

## VII. EXPOSITION

### A. *THIS COMMAND I ENTRUST TO YOU*

#### 1. COMMAND

a. **παραγγελια** = a proclamation—announcement by a messenger—herald [angel]

**Ex: royal proclamation by herald—from a king**

b. **Order**—from an official with authority

**Acts 5:28**—the Sanhedrin **ordered** the apostles to be silent—and they refused

c. **Charge**—like a ‘charge sheet’

**Acts 16:24**—Philippian jailer received ‘charge’ from magistrates to imprison Paul/Silas

#### 2. ENTRUST

a. **παρατιθημι** = lay down—commit—deposit

b. Not just given—but handed over for safe-keeping

c. Recipient incurs great obligation to guard/protect it

d. Similar to ‘deposit’—**παρακαταθηκη**—in **II Timothy**

**II Tim 1:14**—*Guard, through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, the treasure which has been entrusted to you.*

#### 3. HOW THESE THINGS ARE ENTRUSTED

a. Giver must have—**authority** to entrust

1. Being chosen—and empowered—for a purpose

**Ex: commissioned officer—army**

**Ex: warrant card—British police**

2. Paul's commission—was 'apostolic'

a. *An apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God—1:1*

b. **Apostle** = messenger sent forth with orders

b. Giver must have—**something** to entrust—something entrusted to him to pass along

1. Something entrusted to the giver—to pass along

2. Paul had been 'entrusted' [passive of πιστευω] with the **gospel**

**I Tim 1:11**—*according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, with which I have been entrusted.*

3. Now Paul gives Timothy something—related to that gospel

a. A **command**—from a **commander** to a soldier—in service of that gospel

b. The command = "fight the good fight"

c. Giver must have—**experience** with what he entrusts the recipient to do

1. Not just positional authority as commander

2. But practical 'know-how'—that he teaches the soldier

3. This **experience** validates his **credibility**—and instills **confidence** in soldiers

4. Paul—himself had done what he commands Timothy to do

**II Tim 4:7**—*I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith.*

d. Giver must have—**vision** to perpetuate the 'trust'

1. The giver chooses recipients—whom knows will entrust others

2. Paul tells Timothy to pass it on

**II Tim 2:2**—*The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.*

❖ **Example:**

**90<sup>th</sup> Division WWI veterans' commissioned WWII Division**

**WWII Division re-activated—25 March 1942—Camp Barkeley, Abilene**

WWI vets challenged new division to preserve their honor

Placed 2 battle streamers on standard before deployment

St Mihiel and Meusse Argonne—five months fighting

7549 casualties

3 DSMs and 72 DSCs

## B. *FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT*

### 1. THE ENTRUSTED COMMAND = **FIGHT!**

#### a. **στρατευω**

1. To ‘soldier’
2. But more than that—to *lead* soldiers into war

#### b. Root word for strategy

- **στρατεγια** = office or command of a general

#### c. Paul calls Timothy alongside him—to be a ‘Christian soldier’

**II Tim 2:3**—*Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.*

### 2. THE KIND OF FIGHT

#### a. The ‘*good fight*’—here—**1:18**

#### b. The ‘*good fight of faith*’—parallel text—**6:12**

- We are engaged in **spiritual** warfare—[explained further in both texts]

### 3. WHAT IS THE GOOD FIGHT?

#### a. **Good** = **καλος**

##### 1. Meaning = approved—genuine—morally good—honorable

##### 2. Implication

- a. Though victory is the goal—the emphasis here is on values
- b. Though we should be effective—and win—the result is not **our** primary responsibility
- c. Our responsibility—is to battle the right way—the ‘good’ fight
- d. God will provide the result—God will bring the victory

#### b. Three **characteristics**—of the ‘good’ fight

##### 1. The **Ends**—are **just**

- We fight for a just cause—that of Jesus Christ
- We seek first His kingdom and His righteousness
- Not our own private—or corporate—worldly agendas

2. The **Ways**—are **godly**

- We employ Christ-like values
- We fight honorably
- The ends do not justify the means
- We do the right thing—because it is right

3. The **Means**—are **spiritual**

- a. It is the *good fight of faith*
- b. We wrestle not with flesh and blood—but spiritual forces—**Eph 6:12**
- c. Our resources—must be the Armor of God—**Eph 6:13ff**
- d. Our weapons—are not of the flesh—but ‘divinely powerful’—**II Cor 10:4**

**C. FOUR BATTLE PLANS—OF THE GOOD FIGHT**

❖ **TWO PLANS IN CHAPTER 1—TWO PLANS IN CHAPTER 6**

1. **BATTLE PLAN ONE—KEEP THE FAITH—1:8**

a. Faith as trust

- Trust Christ—die to self—and totally rely on Him

b. Faith as belief

1. Continue to be nourished in sound doctrine—**4:6**
2. Be careful to teach sound doctrine—**4:16**
3. Hold steadfastly to the basic ‘common confession’

- **I Tim 3:16**—sample confession—*The mystery of godliness—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.*

c. Faith as faithfulness

1. Loyalty—single-minded devotion to Christ

- **II Tim 2:4**—*Not soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life, so that he may please the one who enlisted him as a soldier.*

2. Obedient—follow Christ’s commands—and God’s will



- **I Tim 6:14**—*keep the commandment without stain or reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

**Example: Oath of Office—keeping the pledge**

... that I bear true faith and allegiance to the same [US Constitution]

... that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which I am about to enter

**2. BATTLE PLAN TWO—KEEP A GOOD CONSCIENCE—1:8**

a. Two dimensions of a ‘good conscience’

- Morally good—forgiven and at peace with God
- Doctrinally sound—consistent with the teachings of Christ and the Apostles

b. Pauline descriptions

1. **II Cor 4:2**—A clear conscience avoids

- Anything we must hide in shame
- Craftiness—cunning tricks—false wisdom
- Twisting God’s word
- Untruthfulness

2. **I Tim 4:2**—A clear conscience avoids

- Deceitful spirits
- Demonic doctrines
- Hypocrisy
- Liars
- False asceticism

3. **I Tim 1:4**

- a. The goal of our teaching should be love [**αγαπη**]
- b. This love is produced by three interconnected things

- ✓ Pure heart
- ✓ **Good conscience**
- ✓ Sincere Faith

**NOTE: BOTH BATTLE PLANS 1-2 ARE MAINLY DEFENSIVE PLANS**

**“HOLD THE FORT”**

**KEEP THE FAITH—KEEP A GOOD CONSCIENCE**

**NOW PAUL SHIFTS TO THE OFFENSIVE MODE**

3. **BATTLE PLAN THREE—TAKE HOLD OF ETERNAL LIFE—6:12**

- a. **επιλαμβανομαι** = take possession—seize
- b. Not aimed at defeating the enemy
- c. Instead—obtaining the promised prize—the fruit of victory—already won!
- d. Exhortation—not to give up—but to press on—to the finish line
- e. This was Paul’s own goal—to the very end

**Ph 3:12-14**—*Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.*

4. **BATTLE PLAN FOUR—MAKE A GOOD CONFESSION—6:12**

- a. **ομολογια** = **profession**
- b. Not just rote recitation of a doctrinal confession
- c. Not just *believing* with our mind
- d. But putting all on the line with public profession—and *actions*
- e. Paul challenges us with Christ’s example

**I Tim 6:13**—*I charge you in the presence of God who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who testified the good confession before Pontius Pilate*

- f. Christ before Pilate

**Jn 18:37**—*Therefore Pilate said to Him, “So You are a king?” Jesus answered, “You say correctly that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.”*

- g. Our ‘good confession’
  - 1. Follow Christ
  - 2. And testify to His truth—in all we say and do