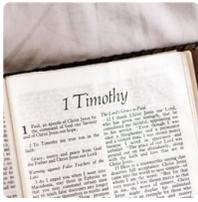


# OpenTheo

## 1 Timothy and Titus: Introduction (Part 1)



### 1 Timothy - Steve Gregg

This segment provides an introduction to the pastoral epistles of 1 Timothy and Titus. The speaker discusses the role of pastors and leaders within the church, and looks to Acts chapter 20 for guidance on cross-referencing. He discusses the potential authorship of Paul, and refutes arguments made by those who claim Paul did not write the epistles based on linguistic evidence, among other things. The speaker also details the character of Timothy and his importance within the early church, shedding light on the historical context of these letters.

### Transcript

...what are called the pastoral epistles. If you're not familiar with that term, it refers to the epistles, the two epistles to Timothy and the epistle to Titus. They're called pastoral epistles because there was a famous theologian a couple centuries ago who called them that.

He called them that because he considered that they gave good advice to pastors of churches, and they had to do with how to run the church and organize the church, although they really don't spend most of their time talking about these things. That is, in Timothy and Titus, you don't really find a treatise on how to run a church. So, Paul does say to Timothy that he wrote to him in the first epistle that Timothy might know how to conduct himself in the house of God, which is the church.

He says, the pillar in the ground is the truth. So, the epistles, at least 1 Timothy and Titus, and to a lesser degree 2 Timothy, give us instructions about how the church ought to be set up and operate, and upon what principles and what the structure of the early church was. Though it has been pointed out that the material in these epistles that talk about that subject makes up about one-tenth of the whole of the material.

Therefore, while these epistles do give us more than most epistles do about church structure and organization, they really do not focus on it as their principal theme. We have about a tenth of the material, really, talking about this subject. So, to call them pastoral epistles may be to focus on only a minor aspect of them.

And, really, I don't think calling them pastoral epistles is a great idea, though we call them that because that's what they've come to be known. And we might as well use the terminology that has used among Christians over the past couple of centuries about them. The reason I don't necessarily approve of the term pastoral epistles is because they suggest something about the pastor.

That is, the term pastoral suggests a pastor of a church. And there's no mention anywhere in any of these epistles about the pastor. Or, in fact, as a matter of fact, there's no place in the whole Bible that suggests that a church ever had a pastor.

The word pastor is used only once in the New Testament in the plural of the leaders of the church, where it says he gave some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers. In Ephesians, of course, chapter 4 and verse 11. And there it talks about pastors in the plural, just like it talks about apostles in the plural, and prophets in the plural.

We don't have any reason to believe that there is one apostle per church, or one prophet per church, or one pastor per church. Certainly, in the church of Jesus Christ, globally, there are a plurality of leaders, some of whom are pastors. But how many were in each church is nowhere discussed, and we certainly do not have the impression, reading through the epistles of Paul, that he acknowledged the presence of a pastor in any church.

The word pastors means shepherds. It's simply another word for shepherd in the English language. And those who were committed with the task of shepherding the church were the elders.

And that is quite clear, not only from these so-called pastoral epistles, but from a number of other places. In Acts chapter 20, which we will have occasion to look at when we come to the right places in these epistles to cross-reference. And in some other places, 1 Peter chapter 5, we have exhortations to the elders of the churches.

And the elders are told to shepherd, or feed the flock. And therefore, it's quite clear that in the early church, the shepherding of pastoral ministry was conducted not by an individual professional who was a paid clergyman, but by the elders of the church. It does not appear from the New Testament that any church had an individual single pastor.

We'll talk about that a little later, when we come to the passages. That's why I don't necessarily get excited about the use of the term pastoral epistles. I will use it as a concession to Christendom, which has come to call it by that name.

But we should be aware that that's not really what they are so much as their personal epistles. Like the book of Philemon, these letters are personal epistles from Paul to

certain associates of his, or friends of his. Philemon was, as far as we know, not necessarily an associate in ministry with Paul.

He seems to have been a settled member of the Church of Colossae. But Timothy and Titus were both traveling ministers. We suggest that their position was that of an apostolic assistant, or apostolic legate.

They were not pastors. At least, if they were, there's no biblical reason for us to come to that conclusion. There's no place in the Bible that Timothy or Titus were called pastors, nor is their function described in such terms as would identify them with what we nowadays usually call a pastor.

They were more like apostles. Whereas the apostles, Paul and Barnabas, originally had the task of appointing elders in Acts chapter 14, Timothy and Titus are now given the authority to do the same in the churches. In other words, they are acting with the kind of authority in the churches that apostles have, and I believe that Timothy and Titus served as sort of extensions of Paul's own apostolic ministry.

In fact, Timothy is elsewhere considered to be an apostle of sorts, perhaps only by virtue of his association with Paul. But when Paul writes to the Thessalonians, his letter is addressed from Paul, Silas, and Timothy. And in 1 Thessalonians chapter 2, Paul says, We could have, meaning him and his two associates, we could have been burdensome to you as apostles of Jesus Christ, suggesting that the word apostles could extend beyond not only Paul and Silas, but even Timothy as well.

It's not a very strong proof that Timothy would have been widely regarded as an apostle, but insofar as he was associated with Paul, working as part of an apostolic team, serving as an official agent of Paul, he carried an authority like that of an apostle. And so, we should not think of Timothy and Titus so much as pastors, in the sense that that term is modern, it's used in modern churches, they were more like apostles. Apostolic legate is probably a good term, a legate is an official representative or agent who acts in the authority of another.

Okay, that raises the question of who Timothy was. Now, we're going to be talking about, first of all, we're going to be in Titus as a group of epistles. We're also going to take them as individual letters.

And in this lecture, and possibly in the next, we're going to essentially have an introduction to the whole group of letters, the three letters. They have so much in common, and it's probably become very evident to you in your study of them, in preparation for these classes, that they have many expressions that are fairly unique to them. They have common concerns in a seemingly common historical setting, and therefore they stand out among all epistles as a group, just as, for example, the prison epistles, Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians, and Philemon stand out as a group.

They were all written in the same setting, they share many of the same ideas and concerns, and so also these three epistles are related to each other a little bit like the prison epistles are related to each other. They have common language, common concerns, and a common historical setting. So, in our introduction, we're going to have to talk about pastoral epistles as a whole, and of course, when we talk about them, we will be giving something of an introduction to each of the individual epistles as well.

And then we will take each one individually. Now, we might as well identify who Timothy and Titus were. We can start with Titus.

We don't know much about him, so we can start with him and say as little as we know about him. Titus is not mentioned in the Book of Acts at all, for some reason. That does not mean that Titus did not accompany Paul in the Book of Acts.

We should understand that the Book of Acts is selective in its history, like any history is, and there are other persons in Paul's company mentioned in his epistles who are not mentioned in Acts. That is, in books like 1 Corinthians and such, we'll find Paul making reference to some of his companions whose names we won't find in the same parallel sections of Acts. So, Luke in writing Acts did not specifically name everybody that traveled with Paul, and it seems clear that Titus traveled with Paul at a fairly early time in his history, because Paul mentions him in Galatians, probably the earliest of Paul's epistles.

The setting of the writing of Galatians, of course, is in dispute. Some hold the earlier and some the later date for Galatians, but in any case, most evangelicals seem to favor the earlier date for Galatians, and I think the evidence favors it. I myself feel that way.

And if the early date for Galatians be chosen, then it's probable that Galatians was written prior to the Jerusalem Council. We've discussed the evidence for that on another occasion. We won't go into that in detail now.

But we find in Galatians chapter 2 a mention of Titus, because back when Paul and Barnabas were still a team, this would be back before Paul teamed up with Silas, and even before Timothy joined Paul, because Paul and Timothy linked up on Paul's second missionary journey, and Barnabas and Paul were not traveling together at that time. So, even before Timothy ever met, or I should say linked up with Paul, Titus was, because we read in Galatians chapter 2 that when Paul and Barnabas went to Jerusalem to discuss the question of circumcision, they took Titus with them, who apparently was a Greek. Paul says he was a Greek.

And yet he was not compelled to be circumcised, and Paul mentions that as an issue, because the question they were discussing was whether Greek converts should be circumcised, and Paul says even Titus, being a Greek, was not required to be circumcised. Now, we don't know when or where Titus was converted. It seems likely he

was a native of Antioch, and we can't prove that, but it just seems likely since prior to Galatians chapter 2, Paul had spent most of his time in Antioch in ministry, he had, of course, made his first missionary journey.

But we don't read of him bringing home with him from that journey anyone. That is to say, if we would deduce that Titus perhaps was converted through Paul's efforts on his first missionary journey as he traveled up through southern Galatia and Phrygia, then we might suggest that Titus accompanied him and Barnabas back to Antioch and then down to Jerusalem, as Galatians records, but Acts does not give any impression that Paul and Barnabas brought back anyone to Antioch from their journey. That doesn't prove that they did not, but I'm just saying we don't have any evidence that they did.

Therefore, the likelihood is that Titus was simply a Greek Christian from Antioch, Paul's home church, and when in Galatians chapter 2 Paul describes his going to Jerusalem with Barnabas and Titus, we are told that he went from Antioch to there. And so Titus was very possibly, I would say, probably a convert, a Gentile convert from Antioch. He traveled with Paul and Barnabas at least that once, early on, before the second missionary journey and before Paul ever drafted Timothy into his entourage, and he also apparently was associated with Paul quite late, because the book of Titus is generally assumed to be of a very late writing.

It is clearly in the same historical setting as the books to Timothy, and there is strong evidence, and especially 2 Timothy, for a late date. We'll talk about the date of writing a little later on, but it would suggest that Titus, though we know very little about him, he's not mentioned in Acts at all, yet he apparently was one of the earliest associates of Paul, along with Barnabas, and also one of the last associates with Paul at the time of Paul's latest writings, and the pastoral epistles are certainly Paul's latest writings that have survived. And that's all we really know about Titus.

He apparently was a convert and a minister of longstanding, and of Gentile blood entirely. Now, Timothy's pedigree is a little different. Timothy had a Greek father, but a Jewish mother.

We're told that when Timothy joined Paul, that Paul actually circumcised him. He did not circumcise Titus, but he circumcised Timothy because it was widely known that Timothy's mother was Jewish and his father was a Greek. And there's always been some question as to what constitutes a person as a Jew, but for a long time, having a Jewish mother has been considered that which makes a person a Jew, and Paul, though he taught that Gentile converts did not need to be circumcised, he was not willing to come out and boldly say that Jewish people should not be circumcised, even Christian Jews, apparently.

That does not mean that he felt they must be circumcised, but he did not strongly ever come out with the position that they shouldn't. And since Timothy was enough Jewish to

raise the issue, and, you know, Paul was accused in Jerusalem. We know from the later part, I think his last visit to Jerusalem, in Acts, James says to Paul that certain brethren in Jerusalem were accusing Paul of teaching Jews not to circumcise their children.

Now, Paul apparently did not teach that. Paul did not teach Jews not to circumcise their children. He taught very strongly that Gentiles did not need to be circumcised, but we don't have any record of him teaching Jews not to circumcise their children.

This was an accusation being made. And no doubt he was mindful of these accusations, and therefore, since Timothy was a Jew with a Greek father, he knew that Timothy was Jewish enough for the Jews to think of him as a Jew, but knowing his father was a Greek, people might suspect him to be uncircumcised, but just to remove all need to debate the issue, Paul went ahead and had him circumcised. That's what we're told in Acts chapter 16.

Now, Timothy was a native, it would seem, of the list, John, did you have time for one more? Yeah, there's some of that accusation again. Oh, when Paul first, the last time when he came to Jerusalem, very late in Acts, the chapter would have to be around chapter, what would it be, chapter 22, maybe, or 21? It's chapter 21. And let me see here.

Down in verse 21, Acts 21-21, James is talking to Paul and says, But they have been informed about you that you teach all the Jews who are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, nor to walk according to the customs. So Acts 21-21. Okay? Now, Timothy was apparently a native of Lystra.

Lystra was one of the cities that Paul and Barnabas visited on their first missionary journey. It was apparent, that's in Acts 14, apparently, on Paul's first missionary journey, his first visit to Lystra, where you might recall he was stoned. That's the place where they stoned him.

Timothy's mother and grandmother apparently were converted to Christianity from Paul's first efforts there. We deduce this because Paul says in 2 Timothy chapter 1 that Timothy's mother and grandmother, who were Jewish, were converted to Christianity before Timothy was. Okay? It says, The faith dwelt first in his grandmother Lois and also his mother Ewan before Timothy himself was a convert.

Probably Timothy was converted through the efforts of his grandmother and mother. But Timothy was a convert on Paul's... I mean, he was already a Christian when Paul began his second missionary journey because Paul visited Lystra again in Acts 16 on his second missionary journey and picked up Timothy, a young convert, and took him as a companion. Now, we can deduce from this that if Timothy was already a young Christian when Paul visited Lystra the second time, and Timothy's mother and grandmother were converted before he was, they must have been converted when Paul visited Lystra the

first time.

So we can deduce that Lois and Eunice were converts of Paul's on his first missionary journey. Timothy might have been also. Or Timothy might have been converted later through the efforts of his mother and grandmother.

At any rate, by the time Paul made his second missionary journey, in Acts 16, he visited Lystra again, Timothy had such a reputation as a young, zealous brother that Paul decided to take him along. Now, you'll recall that on the first missionary journey, Paul went with Barnabas and had John Mark as his minister, their servant, probably the guy who carried their luggage for them or something. But John Mark defected early on in that trip, and then after that visit, Barnabas and Paul parted ways.

And on the second missionary journey, it was not Paul and Barnabas, but Paul and Silas. And of course, they didn't have John Mark with them. John Mark had gone off with Barnabas on a separate mission to Cyprus.

So when Paul and Silas made their trip, they went to the same areas where Paul and Barnabas had been, and there Timothy was picked up possibly to fill the role that John Mark had played in the first missionary journey. We don't know that for sure, but he was a young man. He probably was not called to be a preacher at this early age.

Paul himself tells Timothy not to ordain young novices into eldership. It's probable that Timothy began as something more like a deacon or a servant to the apostles. And then later on, what happened was... Something from my nose there? Thank you very much.

What is it? What was it? What was it? How embarrassing. Anyway. That's okay.

It's preserved for... Timothy... What was I saying before all the hand motions were being given to me? Timothy probably started out as merely a servant of Paul and Silas. And then, you know, through his association, he showed himself faithful in that area so that he was entrusted with more responsibility so that by the time the letters of Timothy were written, he was actually entrusted with something like apostolic authority. Now, according to 1 Timothy, chapter 1, verse 3, Timothy was in Ephesus at this time.

We know that Paul visited Ephesus a number of times, well, at least twice in the Book of Acts, and apparently again after the Book of Acts closed. Because we read of Paul coming to Ephesus and spending a little time there, not very much, in Acts chapter 18, and then he goes to Antioch home again, and then he returns to Ephesus in Acts chapter 19. It would not appear that the mention of Ephesus in 1 Timothy 1.3 belongs to either of those visits.

Notice in 1 Timothy 1.3, Paul says, as I urged you when I went into Macedonia, remain in Ephesus. What we get from this is that Paul and Timothy had come to Ephesus, and Paul went on to Macedonia, but left Timothy in Ephesus. Now, we cannot find a place in the

Book of Acts to fit this in.

Therefore, it is fair to conclude that this happened after the close of the Book of Acts. Remember, the Book of Acts does not tell us of Paul's death, nor of the end of his career. When the Book of Acts closes, Paul is in prison in Rome for two years awaiting trial.

The Book of Acts does not tell us what became of that trial. We can deduce from much of what's in the pastoral epistles that Paul was released, we'll talk more about that in a few moments, and made some other journeys, including a trip to Ephesus. Now, let me tell you why this visit to Ephesus mentioned in 1 Timothy 1.3 cannot be linked with that in, for example, in Acts chapter 20.

In Acts chapter 20, Paul leaves Ephesus in verse 1 and goes to Macedonia. Now, that sounds like this passage, but the problem is Paul took Timothy with him. In Acts 20 in verse 4, it mentions that Timothy was traveling with Paul at that time, so that Paul did not leave Timothy in Ephesus on that occasion.

It must have been another trip where Paul went to Ephesus with Timothy and left Timothy in Ephesus, and, of course, the setting of Titus and 2 Timothy also suggests a later date than that mentioned in Acts. So, apparently, later in life, after Paul was released from the imprisonment with which the Book of Acts closes, he and Timothy went to Ephesus again, and he left Timothy there, and according to church tradition, Timothy spent the remainder of his life there. In fact, there is tradition preserved in Oxford Book of Martyrs that Timothy died a martyr there, that he lived to be somewhat of an advanced age, and then there was a festival, I believe it was to the deity Bacchus of the Greeks, the god of sex and alcoholism, and, you know, it was the partying god, and I think there was a parade down the streets of Ephesus where they were celebrating Bacchus, and Timothy, according to tradition, went out into the street and rebuked the crowd, and they beat him to within an inch of his life, I guess, and he lingered alive for a few days and then died of his wounds.

Now, that's a tradition, and it may be true or not, but there's no reason to doubt it. We know that the last we read of him in the Bible, he is in Ephesus, and the tradition that he died there is not unrealistic at all. Now, it is interesting, however, that if that is how Timothy came to his end, he did become bold.

In the Bible, we do not read of Timothy being a very bold person. In fact, the suggestion is that he may be a little bit intimidated. Paul tells Timothy not to let anyone despise his youth.

Now, since these letters were written easily 15 years or more after Paul picked Timothy up, and yet, even some 15 years after Timothy began to travel with Paul, he's still sort of as young enough for people to look down on him. He must have been extremely young when Paul met him. By tradition, it is thought that Timothy was probably in his late or

middle teens when he began to travel with Paul.

Whether that's true or not, we can't be sure, but it would suggest, of course, or it would be suggested by the fact that even later in the pastoral epistles, some 15 or more years later, he still was a young man, or still relatively young, so that he had to be bold not to let anyone despise his youth. There is some indication in Paul's epistles that Timothy was a timid, a retiring sort, maybe a little bit afraid. We have that, for example, suggested in 1 Corinthians, chapter 16.

We couldn't, perhaps, conclude it simply from the evidence in 1 Corinthians 16, but that taken together with that in Timothy may well prove the point. In 1 Corinthians 16, in verses 10 and 11, Paul says to Corinthians, Now if Timothy comes, see that he may be with you without fear. For he does the work of the Lord as I do, and therefore let no one despise him.

But send him on his journey in peace, that he may come to me, for I am awaiting him with the brethren. Now it's interesting that he says in verse 11, let no one despise him, the same expression that he speaks to Timothy. In 1 Timothy 4.12, let no man despise your youth.

Apparently, because Timothy was young, people may have kind of looked down on him. Paul was an elderly man at some point in these writings, and Timothy may have just seemed to be too young to be credible. But Paul contorts people to take him seriously.

And interestingly, 1 Corinthians 16 says, let him be with you without fear. That is, don't scare him. Don't intimidate the poor kid.

Now, we see in 2 Timothy, chapter 1, some evidence that Timothy may have been a little bit timid. And possibly because of his age, he may have felt like he lacked credibility and therefore couldn't be too bold. However, Paul urges him to be authoritative.

2 Timothy, chapter 1, verses 6 and 7, Paul says, Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the light of my hands, for God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and love and of a sound mind. Verse 8, therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord or of being his prisoner. Notice, Paul says, stir up the anointing that's in you, the gift that's in you, because that anointing will cancel out fear.

God has not given us a spirit of fear. Well, why do we have to say that to Timothy in association with him needing to stir up this gift? Apparently, Timothy was a bit fearful. He needed to be powerful, loving, and sound in mind, and not be ashamed of the gospel.

So there may be some hints there that Timothy, apart from the anointing of the Holy Spirit, was a rather timid individual, but with the anointing, he could expect to be not fearful, but powerful and loving and of sound mind and bold and not ashamed. And we can see, certainly, if the tradition of his martyrdom is true, then he did overcome that

natural personality weakness, if we could call it that. We do know also from the book of Hebrews that Timothy at some point suffered imprisonment.

We don't have any record of this in the book of Acts or in any other epistles, but we do know in Hebrews chapter 13 that the writer of Hebrews tells us that Timothy has been released from prison. Verse 23. Hebrews 13, 23.

Know that our brother Timothy has been set free, with whom I shall see you if he comes shortly. So it suggests that Timothy had been in prison and was now released at the time that the writer of Hebrews wrote. So we have this anecdotal information about Timothy.

He traveled with Paul on his second and third missionary journeys. He is mentioned as one of the co-drafters of several of the epistles, along with Silas. First and second Thessalonians mention Timothy as one of the ones with Paul when those letters are sent.

Those are, of course, some of Paul's earliest epistles. Second Corinthians, Timothy is mentioned as being with Paul when Paul sent that letter. And so also Colossians, Timothy was with him when he wrote Colossians.

And maybe some of the others as well. So Timothy was a very close associate of Paul. Actually, Paul told the Philippians about Timothy.

He said, I have none other like him who is so like-minded with me, and so naturally it takes on the same concern for you that I have. So Timothy was like a true son in the faith. In fact, I quote Paul often.

My true son, in 1 Timothy 1-2. My true son in the faith. Realize that son, of course, does not refer to his being a biological son.

In ways, the son in the faith, he means that Timothy was converted. Well, it may mean that he was converted by Paul. It seems likely that it does.

In which case, he was converted while Paul was enlisted on the first missionary journey. It is also possible that Timothy was converted through his mother's efforts, but that because he became like a son to Paul, that Paul came to call him his son. Just like Peter.

In Peter chapter 5, it refers to John Mark as his son. Marcus, my son, delivered you, he said. First Peter chapter 5. I forget which verse.

But the point is that some of these apostles had young associates who were not physically related to them, but who were like protégées, and who were trained, and were loyal, and were like-minded, and could be trusted basically to carry on their work after they were gone. And Timothy was like that to Paul. So we have two letters to Timothy from Paul.

So we've had some consideration of who Timothy and who Titus were. Now we need to

consider the authorship of these books. There never seemed to be any question, if we take the statements of the books at face value, of who the author is.

Like the other epistles of Paul, he names himself right at the beginning, Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ. First Timothy 1.1. Second Timothy 1.1. Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ. Titus 1.1. Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ.

It's quite clear that the author claims to be Paul the Apostle. There's only one known character in the first century named Paul the Apostle, and therefore this would be the same Paul who wrote the other Pauline epistles. Now, what's the problem? There really isn't a problem to those who are willing to let the Scripture speak for itself.

As a matter of fact, the early Christians, in fact all Christians up until about the 19th century, held that Paul was the author. He is specifically stated to have been the author by some very early church fathers. Irenaeus in 178 AD.

Tertullian in 200 AD. And Clement of Alexandria in 194 AD. All three of these men left writings where they named Paul as the author of these epistles, and it demonstrates that, you know, within less than two centuries after the time they were written, they were recognized generally by the leaders of the church as from Paul.

Their authenticity has not been seriously questioned except by heretics. In the early church, there were some heretics who did question it. One of them was a guy named Marcion.

Marcion was remembered as a heretic in the early church. He was in about 140 AD. Of course, he was not in the apostolic age, but he was shortly after.

In fact, at 140 AD, Marcion, the heretic, denied that Paul wrote these epistles, and he did not include them in his canon of the New Testament in which he formulated. Likewise, the non-Christian Gnostic, whose name was, let me get his name here, Basilides, B-A-S-I-L-I-D-E-S, Basilides. He was one of the two leading Gnostic teachers of the second century.

He also denied that Paul wrote these epistles. And it is likely that these people denied that Paul wrote them, not because there was good reason to believe that he did write them, but because they didn't appreciate the contents, because these letters are very strong, apparently, against Gnosticism. Paul, throughout these epistles, is speaking polemically against certain false teachers.

And when you put together the facts of who these false teachers were and what they were teaching, it would appear that they were what we would call Gnostics. And it's interesting that it's Gnostics in the early Church that denied that Paul wrote it. Now, they tried to undermine the authority of the epistles, because they wouldn't have agreed with what was in it.

But they had no actual scientific or critical basis for denying it. The Christian Church always believed that Paul wrote them. It was not until the 19th century, 1807 and 1808, that certain German critics, Schmitt and Schleiermacher, good German names, began to question or simply deny that Paul was the author of these epistles.

It should not surprise us that someone would eventually do this, since liberalism thrives on finding new theories of authorship for biblical books. Now, to them, it may seem like a harmless pursuit. After all, to get a Ph.D., you have to find some new thesis that no one has ever thought of before.

And one of the favorite ways that people have thought of new ideas for Ph.D. dissertations is to come up with a new idea of authorship for one of the biblical books. And so there's academic motivations, I suppose, in some of these guys. There may be a certain degree of honesty in some of them, too.

However, when you read their arguments, and the answers that the evangelicals can give back to those arguments, one wonders whether these liberals can be honest men or not, and whether they're simply motivated by unbelief. You see, even if they considered it a harmless matter to postulate a different authorship to these books, it is not harmless, because if these books were not written by Paul, then they were written by a liar, because whoever wrote it claimed to be Paul. Now, the liberals say, that's not necessarily true.

It is true that the author called himself Paul, but you should understand that in the early centuries of the Church, it was not uncommon for people to affix the name of a more famous person to their writings in order to give them credibility. It was understood that this was done, this was not deception, this was something that was just in early Greek and Roman writings. This was done frequently, called pseudepigraphical literature, a literature that has the name of somebody who wasn't really the writer, as if he was the writer.

And this is all innocent, and it was not, in those days, considered torturing to do that. Well, the fact of the matter is, there are a lot of secular writings from the period that do that very thing. There are also Jewish writings from that period that do that sort of thing.

That is, the author pretends to be someone more famous than he really is. The author is really anonymous, and affixes the name of some famous person to his work. Yes, non-Christian writers, Jews and pagans did this, but there's no evidence at all that any Christian writers ever followed this policy.

And to say that people did it all the time does not change the fact that it's torturing. I mean, not only does this author claim that he is Paul, but he gives so many personal details about his relationship with Timothy. I remember when we met, and I remember how you wept when we left, and I remember your mother and your grandmother, and by

the way, I left you in Ephesus, and I left Titus, and I left him freed, and so forth.

I mean, all these personal things that have to do with false movements and so forth, it's more than just affixing the name of a famous person to give some kind of false credibility to the book. It is a definite attempt, if it is not Paul writing it, to impersonate him and give the impression that it is Paul. And if it is not, it's a liar.

And if it's a liar, we shouldn't be putting his works in our Bible. These books either belong in the Bible or don't, and the only way we can say they do is if Paul is the author. Therefore, those liberals who say Paul is not the author, simply are, whether they say they're doing this or not, they are seeking to undermine the authority of the epistles as Scripture, and whatever the epistles teach, therefore, is not authoritative to the Christians, if these theories are true.

So, the evangelicals have been very strongly intent on establishing Paul's authorship, and really, we shouldn't have to do that, since the epistles manifestly claim to be by Paul. The Church throughout history, until the 19th century, believed them to be about Paul. It wasn't until the liberals came along and started challenging the authorship of almost every book in the Bible that anyone challenged the authorship of these epistles as well.

It would seem, in light of the preponderance of the internal evidence and the authority of the traditions of the Church throughout history, that the burden of proof should rest upon those who wish to say that Paul is not the author. It should not be necessary for us, as evangelicals, to have to go to great lengths to prove that Paul wrote these things. It should be up to the others to prove that he didn't.

It would seem like inertia is on the side of belief that Paul wrote it, and those who wish to come up with some new idea have to put a lot of energy into trying to prove that he didn't. As a matter of fact, if you pick up any commentary on Timothy and Titus, I have several, and I consult with them, and I don't have all of them. Once it gets found, I guarantee you, any of them you get will spend an enormous amount of space discussing the authorship question.

And it's a shame that evangelicals, and most of the commentaries I have are by evangelicals, although I did read Barclay, who's not an evangelical. He's liberal. He doesn't believe Paul wrote these.

But evangelicals, although they do take his face value, of course, they'd have to spend 20 to 30 or 40 pages saying why they believe Paul wrote it, because they have to answer the arguments of the liberals. Now, the fact of the matter is, if the liberals had good arguments, then we should be forced to look at them and maybe answer them. I mean, if there were strong arguments to deny Paul's authorship, then it's fair enough that we who wish to sustain Paul's authorship should have to look carefully at those arguments

and, if possible, answer them.

The problem is, when you look at the arguments, they are not strong. And it's a shame that evangelical writers, and even I here, I'm going to have to spend a good portion of our time talking about these, to my mind, stupid arguments against Paul's authorship. But the reason I need to is because you may have a pastor some day who doesn't believe Paul wrote these, and you might say, well, he's on top of his belief.

Well, it's true he is. But if he doesn't believe Paul wrote these, then he's not going to hold to the teachings of these epistles as authoritative. And a church leader that does not hold to the authority of these epistles in terms of behavior in the church and so forth is going to have a church that's out of order.

We had better know whether the man who wrote these epistles and said, so that you might know how to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church, the pillar and ground of the church, whether that man had authority to speak about how people ought to conduct themselves in the house of God. And it's very important to establish that. So, we cannot just ignore the fact that the preponderance of liberal scholars, all liberal scholars deny that Paul wrote this, and according to Barclay's version, he says, the majority of New Testament scholars today doubt that Paul wrote these epistles.

Here's what he says in Barclay's commentary on Timothy, Titus, and Philemon. He says, concerning the pastoral epistles, most New Testament scholars do not think that Paul was released from his imprisonment. The general consensus of opinion is that the only release was death.

Now, the reason he says that is because the only way it needs to be written by Paul is if he was released from his imprisonment in Acts, because there are travels mentioned here that are not in the book of Acts. So, Barclay just says most New Testament scholars don't believe that Paul wrote these epistles, is what it gets down to. So, who cares what most scholars think? The question is, what is the evidence? What do the epistles claim? And what does the church believe throughout history? Most scholars these days are liberals, and therefore they can be said to have an agenda, and they do.

Now, I have read, over this weekend, three commentaries, three introductions to the pastoral epistles, and have been exposed to the arguments of the liberals against the authorship, Paul's authorship. I've also read the answers to these arguments by the Evangelicals. I can't go into as much detail as I would enjoy doing on this, simply because it takes a long time to do it.

I would recommend those interested in the subject to read one of these two commentaries. This one is called The Living Word Commentary. The author is, who is he? I didn't know him.

Carl Spain, isn't he? I've never heard of him before, but I was surprised. I got this at a yard sale or something, never heard of it. And I've been very pleased with the competence and the Evangelical commitment of the author, and he's very good at answering the liberal objections.

Then, of course, the Tyndale Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles, written by Donald Guthrie, also gives very good and comprehensive answers to the liberals. And what you come out with at the end is, we would have been better off not to have even listened to the liberals in the first place, because their arguments are just vacuous. Their arguments are fourfold.

They are agenda-driven. They are not based on critical studies of the data, although they appear to be. They appear to be in the way they are.

So let me tell you the main reasons that the liberals have said, Paul couldn't have written these. Now, I give short answers to each argument, though if you want the more complete answers, there are books available that do that. But the Evangelical answers are so complete and so right that one has to wonder about the honesty of the liberals who are putting forth these objections, because they certainly must have read the Evangelical response to their writings.

And yet, if they continue to say their things, they are simply deceivers. I mean, I don't see any other way, I don't see any nicer way to put it. The first argument they use to say that Paul couldn't have written the pastoral epistles is that, they say, the ecclesiastical, or the church, situation that is presupposed in the epistles is such as did not exist in Paul's day, but was more like the church situation in the second century.

On what basis do they say this? Well, they say, in Timothy and Titus we read of elders and bishops and deacons and an order of widows who were supported by the church. And they say the idea of this kind of ecclesiastical authority did not really develop in the church until the second century. In Paul's day, they say, Paul was not concerned about organization and politics of the church.

It was in the second century, they say, that the idea of ecclesiastical monarchical bishops and so forth came into being. Now, this argument is absolutely without merit. Because, first of all, I would challenge that such a situation as they envisage is even presupposed in the epistles.

Where do we read in the epistles of a monarchical bishop? They're thinking of what the bishops came to be called in the Catholic Church and so forth, that they're almost a political figure in the church. There is no reason in the world to suggest that when the word bishop is used in the pastorals that it has this notion in mind. As a matter of fact, it is indisputable that the word bishop is used by Paul as interchangeable with elder.

The word bishop in the Greek is episkopos, which simply means an overseer. The word bishop is episkopos, which means an overseer. That does not necessarily refer to an office so much as a function.

Somebody who oversees, like a pastor, like a shepherd oversees. And it is a term that he uses interchangeably with the word elder. The word elder in the Greek is presbyteros.

And you might notice that both those Greek words sound like the names of denominations. Presbyteros has given rise to the word presbyterian. And episkopos, obviously, has given rise to the episkopal denomination.

Presbyterian and episkopal represent different forms of church government. But, unfortunately for them, when those denominations were formed, it was not generally understood that bishop and elder were the same thing. That has come to be realized by most biblical scholars today.

But notice, for example, in Titus 1. Titus 1, verses 5 through 7. We could read more, but that's far enough to make our point. Titus 1, 5 through 7. For this reason I left you in Crete that you should set in order the things that are lacking and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you. If a man is blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children, not accused of dissipation or insubordination, for a bishop must be blameless, the steward of God, etc., etc.

Notice he's talking about qualifications for this class of leaders in the church. He calls them elders in verse 5 and he calls them bishops in verse 7. Look over it. Let's see here.

I wonder if I remember Timothy in 1 Timothy. Yes, okay. Yeah, 1 Timothy 3, verses 1 and 2, we find the same interchangeability of terms.

1 Timothy 3, 1 and 2. This is a faithful saying. If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work. A bishop, then, must be blameless, the husband of one wife, hospitable, and so forth.

I guess the way that we understand that this has to do with elders is because he's giving the same information as we have about elders over in Titus. But the point is, he's describing the same office. Bishop and elder are the same.

That also can be shown by recourse to the book of Acts. Now, if someone were to say that bishops and elders represent offices in the church that did not exist in Paul's time, then they're going to have to be in conflict with the book of Acts, because we find Paul and Marcus appointing elders in every church on their first missionary journey. If we say Paul was not interested at all in church organization, it seems they're going to have to be in conflict with what the Bible actually says in Acts 14.23. In Acts 14.23, as Paul and Marcus were returning home on the second part of their missionary journey, their first missionary journey, it says, So when they had appointed elders in every church, and

prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

So it's quite clear elders existed in every church from Paul's first missionary journey on. Furthermore, when you get to Acts chapter 20, and Paul is completing his third missionary journey, he calls for the elders of the church in Ephesus. We can assume that he appointed them since he started the church in Ephesus.

Paul did. And if you'll notice in Acts 20, his instructions to them are very interesting, because it says in Acts 20, verse 28, well, let me point out in verse 17, it says, From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the church. Okay, so he then addresses these men who are called the elders of the church in verse 28.

He says, Therefore, take heed to yourselves and to all the flock among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, episkopos, bishops. Same word. Shepherd or pastor of the church of God.

Notice who the pastors of the church were, the elders. Was there one elder over each church? No. Look at verse 17.

The elders, plural, of the church, singular in Ephesus. We saw a moment ago in Acts 14, 23, they put in elders, plural, in each city, in each church. A plurality of elders in each church.

There was not one elder per church or one pastor per church. The shepherding ministry, the pastoral ministry was done by the elders, and there were several in each church. In James chapter 5, it says, If anyone is sick, let him call for the elders, plural, of the church, singular.

Not the elders of the churches, but the elders of the church. Look over at Philippians chapter 1. They're not long ago. We studied through Philippians, so you may already be able to anticipate the point I'm going to make.

But, in Philippians chapter 1 and verse 1, this is how Paul opens that letter. Paul and Timothy, servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with bishops and deacons. Now, no one denies, or at least no one in his right mind denies, that Paul is the author of Philippians.

And yet, he speaks of a church that has bishops and deacons. Interestingly, he doesn't say hello to the pastor. Just the bishops and the deacons.

Why? Because the bishops are the elders, and that's the highest ranking authorities of the church ahead. This is a church that Paul established, and in his lifetime, well into his lifetime, it had bishops and deacons. And if bishops are the same as elders, then there can be no argument made against the Pauline authorship of the pastoral epistles based on the fact that there are bishops, elders, and deacons mentioned in the pastorals.

They're also mentioned in Acts, and in Paul's other epistles. Not other epistles, but in Philippians, which is a Pauline epistle. And therefore, it is an absurdity to argue that Paul couldn't have written the pastoral epistles because in his day, the church was not so highly organized as had bishops and elders and deacons.

That's crazy. That is just absolutely ignoring the data, which they are aware of, who say this. Furthermore, they say there was an order of widows that developed in the church in the second century, and we see the reference to those widows in 1 Timothy chapter 5. Let not a widow be added to the number if she is under 60 years old, and so forth.

Let me just say, there is no reference in 1 Timothy 5 to an order of widows. Simply a list of women who needed to be supported by the church, because they were dependents of the church. And it may well be that this gave rise later to a more formal order of widows in the church, but there's not enough in 1 Timothy 5 to suggest that a formal order of widows is implied.

He's just talking about how to treat widows. We know from one of the earliest epistles, James, that true religion is based on how you treat widows and orphans. We know that also from the Old Testament.

And therefore, for Paul to show a concern for the support of destitute widows is quite in keeping with the whole spirit of the church in general, and Old Testament prophets as well. It needs not a second century setting to justify Paul's instructions about widows here. So, the first argument that is used against Paul's authorship is the so-called ecclesiastical setting of the epistles, and the arguments I gave you are the arguments involved in that.

The presence of bishops, elders, deacons, and widows in the church suggests a more formal, highly organized church structure than Paul knew. Wrong. That simply is not true.

A second argument against Paul's authorship is that these letters seem to belong to a period of time after Christian creeds had been formulated. It is argued that in Paul's lifetime, Christianity was a simple, creedless movement, that they didn't really care so much about formal creeds of belief. All they cared about was just believing in Jesus, and following him, and obeying the apostles' teachings, and so forth, and that in the second century, after the apostles were dead, the elders and bishops decided to formalize the theology of the church into stated creeds, like the Apostles' Creed, and later on, the Nicene Creed, and other creeds.

And, what the argument is, is that the epistles seem to belong to a period of time where the church was ... its theology was boiled down to certain creeds. There are certain statements that appear to be creedal statements. For example, in 2 Timothy ... well, we can see it in 1 and 2 Timothy.

In 1 Timothy, chapter 3, and verse 16, it says, "... and without controversy great is the mystery of godliness. God was manifested in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen by angels, preached among the Gentiles, believed in the world, and received up the glory." In your Bible, probably, unless you have a King James, these verses will be set in sort of a poetic verse form. They are generally recognized as representing an early statement of faith of the early church, or something like a creed.

In 2 Timothy, chapter 2, we have a passage that is set similarly, for the same reason. 2 Timothy 2, verses 11-13, it says, "... this is a faithful saint. For if we die with him, we shall also live with him.

If we endure, we shall reign with him. If we deny him, he will deny us. If we are faithless, he remains faithful.

He cannot deny himself." Now, you'll notice in your Bible, again, that's probably set up like a poem, and it is because the scholars are generally of the opinion that Paul is here quoting something, perhaps a creed of the early church. Now, let's say these are creeds. So what? How do we know that basic doctrine had never been formalized into creedal statements like this in the first century? It's true it became more necessary to do so after the apostles were dead, and the church needed to preserve some kind of normative theology.

But there's no reason to believe that certain statements like these couldn't have existed as creeds or even as hymns. Some people believe he's just quoting Christian hymns. The Christians sang hymns right from the very beginning.

They wrote hymns. We know that Paul said in Colossians and Ephesians that Christians should speak to one another in hymns and psalms and spiritual songs. And James... No, not James.

James says to sing the psalms, but Paul says to sing hymns and psalms and spiritual songs. So, we know that the early church involvement had hymns to sing, and many scholars believe that these statements we just looked at are not so much creeds as they are hymns of the early church that he quotes. He's quoting familiar hymns.

Now, either could be true, but the point is, the presence of something like a formalized statement of faith does not have to belong to the second century. It is argued that the word faith in the pastoral epistles does not mean the same thing to Paul or to the writer as faith means in earlier epistles. I don't agree with this, but Barclay, for example, says that in the pastorals where we have repeatedly the expression, the faith, the faith, the faith, some shall depart from the faith.

See if you are in the faith, or whatever. Well, actually, that's in Corinthians, so that goes against Barclay's contention. But the idea of the faith suggests a body of doctrine which

is defined by creeds.

Now, actually, William Barclay didn't come up with this first. A scholar named Harrison, in the earlier part of this century, I think it was 1920 or so, came out with his anti-Pauline authorship thesis, and he made up most of the arguments that Barclay holds to. But the idea that the faith, as Paul uses it in here, must refer to a creedal statement rather than a living trust in Jesus as they say exists in Paul's day, is again reading too much into the evidence.

There's no reason to believe that the faith cannot refer to a vital faith in Jesus Christ as opposed to a faith in some formalized creed. And I just kind of gave something away a moment ago, even in 2 Corinthians, one of Paul's acknowledged earlier epistles, he says in chapter 13, examine yourself, see if you are in the faith, the same expression. The faith.

James, another early epistle, says, do not hold the faith of Jesus Christ with respect to persons. The faith is an expression that does refer to Christianity, it does refer to a system of belief, but it does not have to refer to a formalized religious kind of creedal belief such as exists in later centuries of the Church. But someone tried to read too much into that, and therefore they say, as a second argument, that the time of the writing was in the days of creeds rather than in the days of the apostles.

That's standard for doctrine. Yes, Joe? Another thing that seems to be silly about that is, what is it, you know, something like this in Timothy, or like 1 Corinthians 15, our body is building on something like that, so it's like this could be the beginning of creed. Yeah, I mean, obviously, even these seemingly poetry passages, Paul could have originated them.

He could have made them up, either right here or at a previous time, you know, and given them to the Church. This may be the first time that anyone ever read or heard them, but they may have become creedal as a result of Paul making them up. Yeah, I mean, the argument is so weak.

You can just see these people are grasping at straws, trying to find some desperate way of proving that Paul didn't write these. Why? Because they don't like the content of the letters, and the best way they can get around the content is to say they're not authentic. The third argument they give is that the heresy of the false teachers that Paul is concerned with in these epistles seems to be Gnosticism.

Now, in a few moments, when we look at the heresy more closely as a separate issue, I'll show you why it appears to be Gnosticism. He does appear to be concerned about Gnosticism. The argument is that Gnosticism as a formulated system really didn't arise as a problem in the Church until the second century, with men like Thessalonians, you know, who were Gnostic theologians, I guess you could say.

They basically tried to integrate Gnosticism in the Church, and it became a problem in the second and third centuries of the Church. And they argue that since Gnostics are the teachers that Paul is concerned with here, it must belong to the second century, not the first. But even Berkeley, who is liberal on this and does not believe Paul wrote it, admits - and this is an interesting admission - he says, it is quite true that the great formal systems of Gnosticism, connected with such names as Valentinus and Thessalonians, did not arise until the second century.

But these great figures only systematized what was already there. The basic ideas of Gnosticism were there in the atmosphere which surrounded the early Church even in the days of Paul. In other words, Berkeley, who is trying to say Paul didn't write these and that they had to admit that even though the great systematic teachings of Gnosticism did arise in the second century, still all the elements of Gnosticism were present in the apostolic age.

And therefore, Paul could have been concerned about teaching of Gnostic ideas even in his lifetime, and he was. The book of Colossians certainly suggests that Gnosticism was a problem. Much of what Paul warns against in Colossians is apparently emerging Gnosticism.

Certainly, in the epistles of John and the gospel of John, it appears to have been written to counter Gnosticism. And so Gnosticism was certainly present in the apostolic age, and even if we can identify the heresy that Paul is concerned with in the pastoralism as Gnosticism, it does not prove that his letter belongs to the second century. Of course, if we could prove from other grounds that the letter was part of the second century, it would make good sense that he would be concerned about Gnosticism because it was a major problem in the Church in the second century.

But we cannot deny that it was a problem in the first century. And in fact, it apparently was, even from other evidence in the New Testament, as well as these. So, again, the argument from Gnosticism is not a strong argument against Paul's authorship.

Then you have the argument about Paul's movements, where he went. There are a number of places that Paul is said to have gone which are simply not able to be fit into the book of Acts. There's a reference, as we already saw, in 1 Timothy 1.3, of Paul leading Timothy in Ephesus while he went on to Macedonia.

That does not fit into any of the journeys in the book of Acts. We also read of him being in Decapolis. Nobody is quite sure where Decapolis was, but it's not recorded in the book of Acts.

That's in Titus 3.12. It mentions that he left Titus in Crete, in Titus 1.5. Yet we have no record of Paul ever doing any missionary work in Crete. The only time he ever set foot in Crete, as far as the book of Acts indicates, is when his ship, where he was a prisoner on

the ship on his way to Rome, because of the storm, had to settle in to a port in Crete. There's not any evidence that Titus was with him on that occasion, or that he left Titus there, and therefore it doesn't seem to fit that Titus was left in Crete on that occasion.

There's also a reference to him visiting Corinth and Miletus in 2 Timothy 4.20. Again, although the book of Acts does record Paul visiting Corinth and Miletus, it does not record him doing it late in life, but only early on. As a matter of fact, there is a suggestion in 2 Timothy that these were written after Paul's imprisonment in Rome, because in 2 Timothy, Paul is a prisoner. Now, not in 1 Timothy and Titus.

In 1 Timothy and in Titus, Paul seems to be at liberty. But in 2 Timothy, he is a prisoner in Rome. We gather this from 2 Timothy, where? Chapter 1, I believe.

Yes. And verse 16 and following. The Lord grant mercy to the helpful of Onesiphorus, for he often refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chain.

But when he arrived in Rome, he sought me out very diligently and found me. Okay, so here this Onesiphorus came to Rome and sought Paul out, and was not ashamed of his chains. It's quite clear that Paul was chained in Rome.

Now, we know of Paul being chained in Rome at the end of the book of Acts, and we know that he was never chained in Rome before that. So, these letters were written at least after that point. They were written at least during or after a period where Paul had been chained in Rome.

And yet, we read a visit to Crete, a visit to Corinth, a visit to Miletus, Nicopolis, and these would apparently have been after he had been chained in Rome. So, the suggestion certainly is that if Paul ever made these journeys, he must have made them after the close of the book of Acts. He must have been released from his imprisonment in Rome, which the book of Acts leaves unanswered, whether he did or not, and he must have made these further travels.

But the liberal scholars say there's no good reason to believe he was ever released. Well, this is not true. As a matter of fact, Clement of Rome, a church father writing in 96 AD, indicated that Paul was released from his first imprisonment, and that he traveled to Spain, as we know from the book of Romans, Paul wanted to do.

The book of Romans tells us that Paul plans to go to Spain, but the book of Acts never tells us whether he managed to do it. Well, a very early church father in the first century, Clement of Rome, said that Paul was released from that imprisonment and did go to Spain, and may well have made all these other journeys that are mentioned. The argument against this, that the liberals put forward, is that in Spain there is no surviving tradition of Paul ever having been there.

There are no places named after Paul, as there are in Rome, for example, and therefore

it's unlikely that he ever went to Spain. Well, for scholars living in the 19th and 20th centuries to try to conclude the likelihood of what Paul did, as opposed to a man writing at the end of the first century, Clement of Rome, who was a bishop of the very church in the town where Paul had been imprisoned, I would not wish to put their opinions against his on the matter. Now, I don't want to go to the map over the issue of whether Paul went to Spain or not.

There is good surviving early tradition that he did go to Spain, that he was released from his first imprisonment, and he did go to Spain. But even if he did not go to Spain, the evidence from these pastoral epistles indicate that he was released from his first imprisonment and went to various places. He may not have gone to Spain, or he may have, but he did go some places that he did not go in the Book of Acts.

Notice over in 2 Timothy chapter 4, verses 16 and 17, he makes an explicit reference to him being released from prison the first time he stood before Nero. Now remember, the Book of Acts closes with Paul spending two years in his own private rented house awaiting trial before Nero. But the Book of Acts gives us nothing beyond this.

In 2 Timothy 4, verses 16 and 17, Paul says that my first defense, that is the first time he stood before Nero, no one stood with me, but all forsook me, may it not be charged against them. But the Lord stood with me and strengthened me, so that the message might be preached fully through me, and that all the Gentiles might hear, and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. Now, delivered out of the mouth of the lion might refer to, you know, he was in danger of being fed to the lions, as many Christians were fed to the lions by Nero.

Or it might mean that Nero is the lion. Some would suggest that Nero is referred to as a beast by the early Christians. He was a great persecutor of the church at a later date than this.

And the lion might mean I was delivered out of the hand of Nero. After all, the beast in Revelation is said to have the mouth of a lion. The same expression Paul uses here, I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.

And the beast in Revelation 13 has a mouth of the lion, and all the early Christians thought that was Nero. I mean, at least all the commentators that left us writings from the early church, they all believed the beast in Revelation was Nero. So, there is a strong hint here that Paul was released from his first imprisonment after his first trial before Nero.

By the way, there's other reasons to believe that he would have been. While the book of Acts doesn't tell us whether he was released or not, it certainly describes a lenient imprisonment there. He was not put in a dungeon.

He ran his own house. He was allowed to have visitors and teach Bible studies in his house. He was chained to a centurion or to a soldier or something, to a guard, but he was allowed to hold Bible studies and have free access, and no one forbade him to preach and so forth.

The closing words of Acts suggest that although Paul was a prisoner in Rome, he certainly was not a maximum security prisoner. Apparently, his situation was not considered to be dangerous, that he was not considered a dangerous man. Furthermore, King Agrippa, and was it Festus or Felix, I always get the two mixed up, had sent a letter to Rome basically saying, we found no problem with this guy, but there are some Jews making accusations against him, so we sent him to you, because he appealed to you, Caesar.

Now, in other words, the only documentation Caesar would get about Paul would be from his own Roman authorities who said, we couldn't find anything wrong with this guy. And the likelihood that Caesar would accept accusations from Jews against Paul with his own Roman officials is that we don't find anything wrong with him. It's not likely that Nero would go hard on Paul in a situation like that.

Furthermore, in the epistles that were written during the first imprisonment, that is in Philippians and Philemon and Ephesians and Colossians, in two of those epistles we see Paul expressing tremendous optimism that he will be released. Now, of course, his optimism does not prove that he eventually was released, but he certainly was more in touch with the situation than we are, and he seemed to believe he would be released over in Philemon, which he wrote during the first imprisonment. And verse 22.

Philemon, verse 22, Paul says, but meanwhile also prepare a guest room for me, for I trust that through your prayers I shall be granted to you. Notice he plans to get out of jail and go visit Philemon and Colossians as a result of Philemon's prayers. There were a lot of people praying for Paul to be released, and he was quite sure that he would be.

Also, we see that in Philippians, written also during the first imprisonment. In Philippians chapter 1, Paul is talking about his desire to depart and go be with the Lord, and he says, verse 23, for I am hard pressed between two options, having desire to depart from you with Christ, which is far better, nevertheless to remain in the flesh is more needful to you, and being confident of this, I know that I shall remain and continue with you all for your progress in joy and faith. So he says, I have confidence I'm not going to die.

I have confidence that when I stand before you, I'm not going to be executed. And it seems he wasn't. The pastoral epistles bear witness to later travels in the mystery of Paul after that imprisonment, if we accept them at face value, and there's no reason not to.

But simply because the liberals, they just want to say, no, Paul was executed by Nero.

They don't have any church tradition in favor of that. They don't have any Bible in favor of that.

They just assume it. They just say, well, you know, the assumption of Acts is that Paul died. Where is that assumption in Acts? The liberal scholars actually say that in their coverage.

Well, Acts seems to assume that Paul was killed. That's an argument from silence. Acts doesn't say whether he was or not.

It just says nothing. In fact, it would seem more likely that it would include reference to his martyrdom than omit it, if he was martyred. It mentions the death of Stephen.

Acts does. Acts mentions the death of James. It would seem if the death of Paul took place, then the book of Acts would mention that too.

So, it certainly seems like the liberals at this point are without solid ground. Their argument is, the movements of Paul mentioned in the pastorals do not fit in the book of Acts. And since Paul was not released from his imprisonment at the end of the book of Acts, he therefore did not write these epistles.

That is simply guesswork, assumption, and rebellion against the epistles of Paul. Yes? He seems pretty confident also in offering his head in 25.11. Oh, when he says, I appeal to Satan? What 25.11? If I'm an offender, if I'm committing any worthy of death, and I don't object to it. In Acts 25, what is the verse 11? What? Yeah, when Paul says, if I've done any worthy of death, I'm not afraid to die, but since I've done none of these things of which they accuse me, I appeal to Caesar.

No one's going to deliver me into their hands. And that's when he appealed to Caesar. He is quite confident that he'd get a fair trial before Caesar and get freed.

And so all the evidence from Acts and the prison epistles, the earlier prison epistles, suggest an optimism there, that he's going to get a fair trial and get released. And 2 Timothy 4, verses 16 and 17 suggest that he was released. Now, tradition has it that after Paul traveled a bit more, that he was arrested again.

This time by Nero's own initiative, because Nero began to first get to church. And as Paul was in prison again, and that's when he wrote 2 Timothy. It was his second Roman imprisonment.

But prior to writing 2 Timothy, he had traveled a good deal, again, after his first imprisonment. Anyway, again, the liberal arguments don't seem to have any weight. Now, Professor Harrison, who is the main advocate in this century of the anti-Pauline authorship of these epistles, says that his strongest argument is linguistic.

Based on the vocabulary and the style of the language of these epistles, he says he can prove that Paul didn't write them. Now, this is a rather complex argument, and so I'd rather read than try to regurgitate the basic arguments. I have here a very good treatment of it by an evangelical.

I'm talking about P.N. Harrison, who is the scholar who popularized the idea that the linguistic considerations in the pastoralism exclude Paul as the author. Here's what he says. He contended, Harrison contended, that all of the 175 words unique to the pastorals are foreign to Luke and Paul.

To this group of words, he added another 131 words, which do occur elsewhere in the New Testament, outside of Paul's other epistles, making a total of 306 out of the 848 words which make up the vocabulary of the three letters. Now, let me explain what this means. The vocabulary of these three letters has 848 words in the Greek, excluding proper names.

Proper names are obviously not where they'd be taken into this consideration. But, apart from the proper names, the Greek vocabulary of these pastoral epistles amounts to 848 words. Of these 848 words, it is said that 306 of them are vocabulary words not found elsewhere in Paul's writings.

In other words, they are non-Pauline vocabulary, it is said. Of those 306 non-Pauline words, there's actually 175 of them that are not found in the New Testament at all, outside the pastoralism. Notice, not only did Paul not use the middle square, but no New Testament writer used the middle square.

So, it is argued that a huge percentage, at least a third, of the words in these epistles is foreign to Paul's other writings, and much of it is foreign even to the rest of the New Testament. And therefore, the liberal argues, the vocabulary of these epistles is that of the 2nd century church, not of the 1st century church. Now, we don't have time to go into all the details.

I've highlighted a lot of this passage, which I won't take time to. He gives many, many specific examples of how this argument is fallacious, and how it just doesn't work. But, the most thing, the thing of greatest importance, I think, is this last paragraph.

It's kind of a conclusion of it. There are some great words and themes which are not touched on, much less developed in these letters. Each of Paul's letters, however, was characterized by certain distinctive ideas, phrases, and words.

The absence of the word blood from the pastorals must not be held as significant in view of the fact that it is also missing from Philippians, Philemon, 1st and 2nd Thessalonians, and 2nd Corinthians. Spirit and spiritual are found 24 times in Paul's writings, but 16 of them are in 1st Corinthians, and none occurs in four of Paul's other letters, and so forth.

He goes on to point out that the so-called differences in the language of the pastorals from Paul's other letters is no greater than the differences of, for instance, the Thessalonian epistles vocabulary from the rest of Paul's letters.

Here's a section. He says, J. W. Roberts has used the Thessalonian letters since they are the first of the Pauline corpus, and the pastorals are the last. The Thessalonian epistles are also only slightly shorter in length, and were separated from Paul's other letters by about the same amount of time.

Roberts' study yielded precisely the same results. If one wishes to assume that Paul did not write in Thessalonian letters, he has 114 Pauline words which are absent to weigh against the Pauline authorship, or two more than Harrison has found for his theory against the pastorals. Now, this is not a fair treatment of this.

I mean, what I've just given you is not enough information to fairly treat this. If you're interested more in this argument, I would suggest you read the more technical version, like the appendix in this commentary that deals with the data. Very interesting to a person like me.

It may not be that interesting to you, but to summarize the results, basically, there are unique words and phrases, a lot of them, in the pastorals that are found in Paul's other writings, but there's at least as many in the letters to the Thessalonians that are unique to them, or that are typical Pauline expressions in other words that are not found in them. The linguistic differences between the pastorals and Paul's other letters are not really any greater than the linguistic differences between Thessalonians and Paul's other letters, which are about the same distance in time from Paul's main body of letters. And the point is, any author, at different times in his life, may have different words that he favors and uses and prefers to use, and, of course, the subject matter and the different recipient of the letter and the different time of Paul's life could easily account for the various differences in vocabulary.

I wish I had the details on this one point, but somebody told me not too long ago that a computer study was run on all the works of a modern English poet, a modern English writer. John, did you hear that? Dave, did you tell him? Yeah, some modern English writer whose works, we know he wrote them all. You know, we know he wrote all these works.

And a computer study was done on the vocabulary, and the differences between his various works were greater in vocabulary than the differences between the pastorals and the rest of Paul's writings. In other words, the evidence was greater that this English poet had not written all of his own works than the evidence was that Paul hadn't written the pastorals, based on the same kind of considerations. Again, this is just the most summary fashion treatment of this.

This is the main argument against Paul's authorship, and it deserves to be treated more

carefully if someone is interested. But if you are not a liberal and not interested in disallowing Paul's authorship, there is no compelling evidence against it, and certainly the evidence, the eternal evidence, and the church tradition is in favor of Paul's authorship of it. Now, that, of course, raises the issue of when the epistles were written, and, as I pointed out, 2 Timothy was written while Paul was a prisoner.

He described himself as being in chains, and the prisoner of the Lord, and so forth, in 2 Timothy. It also mentions Rome as the place where he apparently was imprisoned. It also suggests that it's the end of Paul's life, because he says in chapter 4 of 2 Timothy, I'm about to be offered up as a drinker.

I'm ready to go. I've finished my embrace. I've finished the course.

I've kept the faith. I'm about to go and receive my crown in heaven, and so forth. Paul clearly talks as if he does not expect to be released, in contrast to the way he spoke in Philippians and Philemon about his confidence that he would be released.

Now, it strongly argues for a different imprisonment. We find Paul in prison in Philippians and Philemon, but we also find him in prison in 2 Timothy. But his attitude about the outcome is very different, because in the earlier prison epistles, he is sure he's going to get out.

This time, he's sure he's not. He knows that death is near. So it argues strongly for a second imprisonment near the end of Paul's life.

Titus and 1 Timothy were apparently not written while Paul was in prison, but where he was, it's not entirely clear. 1 Timothy 1.3 may suggest that Paul wrote this 1 Timothy from Macedonia. He says, I left you in Ephesus when I went to Macedonia.

He does not mention in that epistle of any further travels, and therefore he may have still been in Macedonia when writing that. Paul mentions to Titus that he left him in Crete, but there's not much evidence of where Paul was at the time that he wrote the letter to Titus. But it does suggest that we're near the end of his life.

Now, even 2 Timothy, where we find Paul in his final imprisonment, has evidence that he has not been in prison for very long. For example, in chapter 4, he makes certain references. Let me see here.

Chapter 4, verse 13, Paul says, Bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas when you come, and the books, and especially the parchments. Now, the fact that he had left books, parchments, and a cloak in Troas, and he now wants them brought to him, suggests that he was probably at liberty not long ago, because if he had not been taken captive, sort of by surprise, he probably would have gone back and gotten these important things. I mean, those were things he wouldn't want to be without for very long.

And, in fact, he probably would have had them delivered to him in prison if he had been in prison long at this time. It sounds like he may have been just captured. And other travels seem to have been recent.

In chapter 4, verse 20, 2 Timothy 4, 20, it says, Erastus stayed in Corinth, but Trophimus, I have left sick in Miletus, suggests that Timothy did not already know this, and therefore it must be recent news. And yet, Paul speaks of having been in Corinth and Miletus on these occasions, apparently, and so he must have recently been there, recently enough that Paul had not yet, I mean, that Timothy had not yet heard about Trophimus being sick or Erastus being in Corinth. So, we don't know how recent the reason is, but it seems that Paul had not been in prison a very long time.

His second imprisonment, therefore, seems to have been fairly short and ended in his martyrdom. According to tradition, Paul was beheaded at the command of Nero, probably around 67 AD. And so, the time of the writing of 2 Timothy is probably 67 AD.

The writing of 1 Timothy and Titus would be probably shortly before. The reason we say that is that those letters have so many similarities, the thought that there's good reason to associate them with the same time period as 2 Timothy, just like there's good reason to associate Colossians and Ephesians with the same time period, because of the great similarity in their content and concern. So, these letters were probably written just prior to 67 AD, just prior to Paul's martyrdom.

Two of them were written before he was in prison, one after he was in prison. 2 Timothy was the last surviving epistle of Paul. Now, we're going to take a break, as we must at this point, and when we come back, by way of further introduction, we'll talk about the nature of the heresy that Paul was concerned with, and also some of the leading features of these letters.

And then we'll be—we'll have a break tomorrow to get into the actual text.