

New Testament Foundation 9

Letters from Rome Part 2

(Pastoral Epistles)

Paul had written a letter of instructions to the churches in Ephesus after hearing that many Gentiles were coming to faith. Upon his release from imprisonment, Paul was eager to visit the churches to see how these new believers were doing. Paul and his associate Timothy went to Ephesus and discovered there were many new believers in the churches, but also among them were false teachers. Paul immediately began to teach sound doctrine and correct errors to help the churches remain healthy and survive.

The text does not tell us how long Paul was in Ephesus, but when he left he asked Timothy to continue teaching until his return. When Paul was delayed in Macedonia, Philippi, he wrote this first letter to Timothy giving encouragement and further instructions.

1 Timothy - written AD 64 - Encouragement for Timothy and Instructions

1. Paul began by reminding Timothy of his assignment. What had Paul urged Timothy to do? (1 Tim. 1:3)

2. What were the false teachers in Ephesus devoted to? (1 Tim. 1:4a)
 - Why was that a danger to the church? (1 Tim. 1:4b)

3. In addition to these false teachers, there were others who Paul described as having "wandered away from God's truth" and had become involved in "meaningless talk." How did Paul, who was a trained Pharisee and teacher of the Law, describe these individuals? (1 Tim. 1:7)

4. In this letter Paul gave three "trustworthy sayings" which were sayings being taught in all the churches as sound doctrine. The first was related to the message of the gospel. Why did Christ Jesus come into the world? (1 Tim. 1:15)

5. Paul encouraged Timothy to keep up the good fight, hold on to the faith and keep a good conscience. (1 Tim. 1:18, 19) Then Paul mentioned two men in the church, Hymaneaus and Alexander. What did Paul say about these men? (1 Tim. 1:19, 20)

6. Concerned about proper worship, Paul began his teaching with the importance of prayer. Who did he urge the church to pray for? (1 Tim. 2:1,2)
7. Why did Paul say that this pleases God - - our Savior? (1 Tim. 2:3, 4)
8. There was a problem with some men in the churches who were false teachers but there was also a problem among some women. What did Paul say about some of the young widows? (1 Tim. 5:11-13)
9. What further details did he give about these women in his second letter to Timothy? (2 Tim.3:6, 7)

Paul's instructions on proper worship must be understood in the context of the Ephesian church and the culture of the city of Ephesus, which was an occult center. Many new believers, both men and women, lacked understanding in the ways of the Lord. In the next several chapters Paul explained proper worship in the church. He began by instructing the men who were involved in arguments.

10. What were Paul's instructions to these men regarding proper attitude in prayer? (1 Tim. 2:8)
11. What did he emphasize to the young widows about worship? (1 Tim. 2:9, 10)
12. In 2 Timothy 3:7 Paul described these women as "always learning but never able to understand." What were his instructions regarding these women in the worship service? (1 Tim. 2:11, 12)

With the lack of understanding in the ways of the Lord, it was crucial to have church leaders who knew the Scriptures, including the Gospel message, and who lived in a way that reflected God's values. In chapter 3 Paul gave instructions on selecting overseers (those who watch over the church) and deacons (those who serve alongside the overseers).

Paul's second trustworthy saying relates to the role of overseer in the church. 1 Tim. 3:1, "*Here is a trustworthy saying: If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer, he desires a noble task.*" Therefore, Paul emphasized that when selecting an overseer one of the first qualifications is a life above reproach. That includes his relationships within his family as well as his character; he must be one who does the right thing at the right time even if no one is watching. He also must be a man of integrity within his community and he must be recognized in the church as one who has been given the spiritual gift of teaching (1 Tim. 3:2-5)

13. When selecting church elders (all leadership), Paul included a warning about putting someone who is still a fairly new believer into the role of leader. What was his reason? (1 Tim. 3:6)
14. Besides being worthy of respect, what additional qualifications are included for deacon?
 - 1 Tim. 3:9
 - 1 Tim. 3:10

In chapter 4, Paul gave personal instructions to Timothy and a third trustworthy saying. "*We have put our hope in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, and especially of those who believe.*" (1 Tim. 4:9, 10) Because of this truth, Paul had given his life to sharing God's message of the gospel with everyone.

15. Through this letter we discover that Timothy was young in age but mature in faith. He was in Ephesus as Paul's representative and with Paul's authority. How did Paul instruct Timothy to treat the various age groups within the church? (1 Tim. 5:1, 2)
 - Older men as if they were his _____
 - Younger men as if they were his _____
 - Older women as if they were his _____
 - Younger women as if they were his _____
16. In chapter 6, Paul returned to his primary reason for writing which was to give instructions on dealing with false teachers. How would Timothy identify them? (1 Tim. 6:3-6)
 - He teaches:
 - He does not agree to:
 - He is:
 - He understands:

- He had an unhealthy interest in:
- The result of such teaching will be evident by:
- These people have been robbed of:
- They try to use "godliness" for:

17. Timothy was to flee from those things and to pursue characteristics that identified him as a man of God. What was Timothy to actively pursue? (1 Tim. 6:11)

18. What was Paul's final instruction to Timothy? (1 Tim. 6:20a)

Titus - Written in AD 65 - Encouragement and Instructions to Titus

Sometime after Paul left Ephesus, he traveled with Titus, another young assistant, to the island of Crete to visit the churches there. The island of Crete had a large, well established Jewish population and according to Dr. Luke, there were Cretans in Jerusalem on Pentecost when the church was born. (Acts 2:11) This would make the church on Crete one of the oldest.

Paul quickly realized the Cretan believers lacked basic understanding of the faith so began to teach sound doctrine. When he traveled on to Nicopolis in Greece, Paul left Titus to continue the teaching. It was from Nicopolis that Paul wrote this letter to encourage Titus.

19. What were Paul's original instructions to Titus? (Titus 1:5)

20. Some of the problems Titus encountered in Crete were:

- Titus 1:10 Many rebellious people (especially Jews) who were _____
- Titus 1:11 They were teaching _____
And doing so for _____

21. How were the Cretans characterized? (Titus 1:12)

22. This letter to Titus is a wonderful example of contextualization, which is to put in a context that will help the audience understand the truths. How did Paul contextualize the character and nature of God to a society where lying was acceptable and even revered? (Titus 1:2a)
23. What was Titus instructed to do? (Titus 2:1)
24. How was he to do this? (Titus 2:7, 8a)
25. Titus was to teach that the grace of God brings salvation for everyone, even Cretans. (Titus 2:11a) When one comes to faith in Christ that is only the beginning of the relationship; one must also live out the faith. What is the believer to say "no" to? (Titus 2:12a)
26. How is the believer to live in the present age? (Titus 2:12b)
27. The sound doctrine Titus was to teach included that our great God and Savior Jesus Christ gave Himself for us, redeemed us from all wickedness and purified for Himself a people that God calls His very own. What, then, should the believer be eager to do? (Titus 2:14)

Paul gave Titus a trustworthy saying regarding what we have in Christ. By His kindness and love He has saved us, not because of what we had done but because of His mercy. He has washed us, given us rebirth and renewal. He has given us the Holy Spirit. We have been justified by grace, become heirs and have hope of eternal life. (Titus 3:4-7)

28. As Titus stressed these truths, what should be the result? (Titus 3:8)
29. Paul closed by saying he would send either Artemis or Tychicus to take over so Titus could meet him in Nicopolis. (Titus 3:12) What was Paul's final remark to Titus? (Titus 3:14)

Background - AD 64 - 67

Paul sent Artemis to Crete and Titus met Paul in Nicopolis during the winter of AD 66. The political climate in the Roman Empire changed dramatically, beginning AD 64, with a fire in the capital city of Rome that burned 10 of the 14 districts. The people blamed Nero, saying that he wanted to rebuild Rome more to his liking. Nero looked for someone to take the blame and settled on the Christians. Persecution was intense as Nero poured out his wrath on any man, woman or child who would claim to be a follower of Christ. When he used Christians as torches for his garden parties, even the most hardened Roman felt pity for them.

Another major turning point took place in AD 66. Gessius Florus, the Roman governor in Judah, went into the Temple treasury in Jerusalem and took 17 talents to pay taxes. This united all the Jews against the Romans from the Sadducees to the lowest of slaves. As one man, they came together and drove the Roman soldiers out of Jerusalem and took control of the fortress Antonia. With renewed hope, Jews throughout the province of Judah began fighting to reclaim their freedom from Rome.

When news of the Jewish war and their defeat of a Roman army reached Nero, he was furious. In the spring of AD 67, Nero responded by sending General Vaspasian and 60,000 elite troops to Judah with instructions to "*make sure that nobody ever again dreams of challenging the might of Rome.*" In that same year, Paul's travels had taken him to the seaport of Troas where he had been arrested and taken back to Rome. This time he was in a dungeon, chained like a common criminal.

2 Timothy - Written in AD 66 or 67 - Guard the Gospel

As a Jew and leader of the Christian movement, Paul knew this imprisonment would probably end in death. He wrote his final letter to Timothy whom Paul viewed as "*my dear son*" (2 Tim. 1:2) to encourage him one last time to guard the purity of the Gospel message. This became Paul's last will and testament as he passed the ministry on to young Timothy.

30. Of the thirteen Pauline letters in our New Testament, this was his most personal letter. He began by reminiscing about Timothy's life. What did Paul say about Timothy? (2 Tim. 1:4)

31. Paul recalled Timothy's sincere faith and his godly upbringing by his grandmother and mother. (2 Tim. 1:5) Paul recalled the time when it became evident to all that God had gifted and called Timothy into ministry. (2 Tim. 1:6) What were Paul's instructions to Timothy? (2 Tim. 1:13, 14)

32. Where did Paul say that Timothy's strength to endure would come from? (2 Tim. 2:1)

33. How was Timothy to keep the Gospel message moving forward? (2 Tim. 2:2)

Paul's fifth trustworthy saying was in the form of a poem. Read 2 Timothy 2:11-13 and reflect on how important this understanding would be to those about to face Nero - - and death because of their relationship with Christ.

34. What advice did Paul give in 2 Timothy 2:15?

35. In his personal life Timothy was instructed to: (2 Tim. 2:22)

- Flee _____
- Pursue _____
- Out of a _____

36. In his role of the Lord's servant, Timothy must not _____ instead he must be _____. He must be able to _____ and not be _____. (2 Tim. 2:24)

37. Paul warned Timothy that in the last days, before Christ returns, people will put their own interests ahead of God. What should Timothy expect to see in his own life? (2 Tim. 3:12)

38. Reminded again of Timothy's spiritual heritage, what did Paul say about the Scriptures?

- 2 Tim. 3:15:

- 2 Tim. 3:16:

39. To be godly men and women, one must be in the Word. Why is that so important? (2 Tim. 3:17)

40. Based upon that truth what was Paul's charge to Timothy? (2 Tim. 4:1,2 & 5)

41. What did Paul say about his own situation? (2 Tim. 4:6)

Paul urged Timothy to come to him quickly. Like a father, he longed for the joy of seeing him one more time. Paul's final letter ended with details Timothy would need to know regarding various ministry partners. Paul began with Demas, who had been with him during his first Roman imprisonment and included in the greetings in the letter to the Colossians. (Col. 4:14)

42. What did Paul tell Timothy about Demas? (2 Tim. 4:10a)

43. Where had Paul sent: (2 Tim. 4:10b)

- Crescens?
- Titus?

44. Only _____ had remained with Paul. (2 Tim. 4:11a)

45. Paul asked Timothy to bring _____ when he came. (2 Tim. 4:11b)

46. What had he left in Troas that he wanted Timothy to bring with him? (2 Tim. 4:13)

47. Paul warned Timothy to watch out for Alexander the metalworker who may have been the one who turned Paul over to the Roman authorities. What was Alexander against? (2 Tim. 4:15)

48. Paul sent greetings from the other Roman believers he was still in contact with. But in the midst of these greetings, what did Paul emphasize again? (2 Tim. 4:21)

Paul closed his last letter as he began and ended every letter - - remembering God's grace. God's grace had saved Paul, called Paul into ministry and empowered and strengthened him to fulfill that call. It was God's grace that would now bring him heavenward and into the very presence of his Lord and Master Jesus Christ. This is the hope of every believer and Paul wanted everyone to accept God's grace that is being offered through Christ. Some of the Pauline scholars believe that the word "grace" was written in Paul's own hand in large letters and served to authenticate his writings.

Paul's Final Days - AD 67 or 68

Although the details of Paul's death are scarce, there is little disagreement that the verdict at the second phase of his trial was guilty and the punishment, death. As a Roman citizen, he was not subject to crucifixion, but was beheaded with a sword. Paul was martyred under Nero, putting the time of his death between AD 67 and AD 68 when Nero was assassinated. Tradition says that Paul was beheaded at *Aquae Salviae* (now *Tre Fontane*) near the third milestone on the *Ostian Way*.

At the same time, the apostle Peter had been arrested and was also martyred in Rome under Nero. Peter was not a Roman citizen, therefore was subject to crucifixion. Tradition states that Peter was crucified upside down, because he didn't feel worthy to be crucified like his Lord. Both apostles were buried in Rome; Paul on the *Ostian Way* and Peter on what is now known as *Vatican Hill*.