



1 AND 2 TIMOTHY; PHILEMON

PASTORAL LETTERS

1 TIMOTHY

Pastoral Letters

The “Pastoral Letters” is the title given to four letters written to Timothy and Titus, as *pastors* or shepherds of local or regional flocks of Christians. All three letters claim Pauline authorship. The more experienced apostle wrote to guide his beloved younger leaders. He gives Titus and Timothy instructions on how to supervise their regional responsibilities: Timothy in Ephesus, and Titus on the isle of Crete. The traditional dates for these letters are after Paul’s first Roman imprisonment, between AD 62 and 66 (1 Timothy 1:3). 2 Timothy appears to fall later in a harsher imprisonment.

Paul’s Tie to Titus, and Timothy’s Family

Paul may have been involved in the conversion of the Greek Titus and half-Greek Timothy as he refers to them as his spiritual “sons.”

- **Titus** was present at the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15:2–22) and is mentioned by name in 2 Corinthians 2–3, and Galatians 2:3. Paul became the spiritual father to him (Titus 1:4).
- **Timothy** is mentioned in nine Epistles and as a co–author of five. He joined Paul as a missionary halfway through Paul’s second apostolic mission when in Lystra. Timothy joined Paul’s missionary force shortly thereafter and became his closest companion (Acts 16:2; 1 Timothy 1:2; 2 Timothy 1:2).
- **Eunice and Lois**, Timothy’s mother and grandmother are highlighted as women of great faith who knew their scriptures. These Jewish-Christian converts shared their faith and love of scripture with Timothy in “his infancy” (Acts 16:1; 2 Timothy 1:5; 3:15). Paul met them as family in Lystra, during his second apostolic mission.

Outline: 1 Timothy

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Themes

- Beware of False Teachers Usurping Authority
- Church Organization—Priesthood Offices,
- Christian Belief Shapes Christian Life

Greetings

1 Timothy 1:1-2

1 Timothy 1:1-2 “Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God . . . unto Timothy, *my own son in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord*” Just as is in eight other Pauline epistles, the author introduces himself as Paul, the apostle. Then he acknowledges his Master, the head of the church, Jesus Christ. Paul introduces himself most often as a steward, “sent” by Jesus, who continued to run the church from heaven. This is the third assignment mentioned for Timothy (1 Corinthians 4:17; 1 Thessalonians 3:1-2).

Confront False Teachers Against Unsound Doctrine

1 Timothy 1:3-7

1 Timothy 1:3 “**stay there in Ephesus so that you may command certain people not to teach false doctrines any longer**” (NIV) Timothy held some ecclesiastical responsibility in the region of Ephesus. Paul knew that area well as he served there for three years during his third apostolic mission (Acts 19:1, 20:31). Tradition holds that the apostle John also lived and presided there at one time.¹ Even after prolonged periods of service by those two apostles and then Timothy, we still read of an apostasy, like a “misty fog,” seeping into the new church.²

Paul writes with an urgent tone throughout the whole letter to correct doctrine. He asks Timothy to “command” or “charge” (KJV) the false teachers to stop their corruption of the church. In nearly every chapter of 1 Timothy, the author warns against the problem of false and inappropriate teachers (e.g., 1 Timothy 1:3; 2:12; 3:2; 4:11; 6:2, 3).³

1 Timothy 1:4 “**nor give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which cause disputes rather than godly edification which is in faith**” (NKJV) Paul specifically attacks fables, “myths” (NIV), or “senseless stories” (CEV), and “endless genealogies.” They are both contaminated with worthless speculation and a waste of time. He is not denouncing what we define as genealogy work. The New and Old Testaments are filled with genealogies as an important link (i.e. Matthew 1, Luke 2:36; 3; Romans 1:3; 11:1; etc.).

Paul condemns false or foolish genealogies twice (here and Titus 3:9). Both times we assume people were seeking their genealogies for the wrong purposes. This Jewish practice may have given the Jewish converts a sense of superiority as they traced their lineage to the prophets or kings. However, in a church predominately of Gentile Christians, it may have made them feel inferior. Or, perhaps Paul just wanted them to stop searching for important distant relatives for vanity’s sake. We do know there was vicarious baptism work going on (1 Corinthians 15:29), but this was not for that purpose. Paul mentions that the “endless genealogies” were not edifying but fostered speculation. Paul wanted to foster things that would edify or provide “divine training” (RSV). Paul’s warning instructs all Christians to carefully test one’s teachers to make sure they are trustworthy servants of God.

1 Timothy 1:5 “Now the goal of our instruction is love that comes from a pure heart, a good conscience, and a sincere faith” (CSB) Again Paul touches on one of his favorite themes, “charity” (KJV) or pure love. He mentions it in every letter we have attributed to Paul. Even when condemning falsehoods, Paul asks that it be done with a pure heart filled with love.

1 Timothy 1:6–7 “Some have strayed from these ways and turned aside to empty talk. They want to be teachers of the law, but they do not understand what they are saying” (BSB) Paul points out evidence of the apostasy here as new Christian teachers leave their foundation of Christ to teach “janglings” (KJV), “fruitless discussion” (JB), or “meaningless talk” (NIV). Paul may also be speaking against intellectuals, Gnostics, or Judaizers.

1 Timothy 1:8–10 “We know that the law is good if one uses it properly. We also know that the law is made not for the righteous but for . . . whatever else is contrary to the sound doctrine” (NIV) Paul may be referring again to the Law of Moses. *If it is used lawfully, it can produce good.* However, as a lesser law for a people not ready or willing to live a higher law, it was used inappropriately as well. Many laws are for the weak (i.e. Alma 25:15–16; D&C 89, “for the weakest of all saints.”) But some, like consecration and sealings, are for the noble saints. (For more information on the list of specific laws see commentary on Romans 1:26–27; 1 Corinthians 6:9, etc.)

Paul is Proof of God’s Forgiveness

1 Timothy 1:12–16

1 Timothy 1:12–13 “I thank Christ . . . appointing me to his service. Even though I was once a . . . violent man, I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief” (NIV) Jesus “hath enabled me” (KJV), or “given me strength (RSV), and “made me equal to the task (NEB).” Paul was completely changed from a deceived blasphemer to a forgiven saint (Acts 9:4–7).

1 Timothy 1:15 “The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love . . . Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst” (NIV) We are all included in the category of the sinners that Jesus came to save. Paul calls himself the chief sinner. In the Book of Mormon, King Benjamin reminded everyone to humbly realize, “Do we not all depend upon the same Being, even God, for all” (Mosiah 4:19).

1 Timothy 1:16 “. . . in me first Jesus Christ might show all longsuffering, as a pattern to those who are going to believe on Him for everlasting life” (NKJV) Paul became an example of the power of the atonement. After living as a vile sinner, he still found forgiveness through repentance and through the Redeemer. Jesus showed Paul long-suffering, and now Paul is learning the same lesson.

First Prayer: King Eternal

1 Timothy 1:17

1 Timothy 1:17 “Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen” This is the only verse in the New Testament where God is described as invisible without adding that He made Himself known in Christ or the work of His creation. In Greek the word for “invisible/*aoratos*” can also be translated “unseen” (see Colossians 1:15). But even that does not accurately describe the word. It means *invisible* to the physical or “naked” eye, but figuratively, it is seen as a *spiritual reality* through *faith*. In the New Testament, unseen and faith are often connected (Romans 1:17–20; 1 Timothy 1:17–19; Hebrews 11:27). “The antonym of faith is not fear—but sight!”⁴ Paul also probably heard Stephen’s witness that he “saw God” on “the right hand” (Acts 7:55).

1 Timothy 1:18–19 “Timothy, my child, I entrust you with this command in keeping with the previous prophecies about you . . . that by them you may fight the good fight . . .” Timothy has either received a blessing or had prophecies made about him (perhaps like our patriarchal blessings) that have given Paul the confidence that he will faithfully be able to carry out his command.

1 Timothy 1:19–20 “Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck . . . Hymenaeus and Alexander” Paul had dealt with other teachers or leaders who had caused trouble. Those two men he names have “shipwrecked” or been “delivered unto Satan” meaning they were probably excommunicated.

1 TIMOTHY 2

Directions for Prayer

1 Timothy 2:1–8

1 Timothy 2:1–3 “I urge . . . that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people—kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and . . . holiness” (NIV) Paul exhorts (KJV) the saints to pray with hearts full of gratitude for everyone—even for the political rulers. “All people” includes those that are hard to get along with, or those for whom we are not grateful. If we pray for our enemies, our hearts may also change so that “we may live” in tranquility; “*éremos*/quiet/without needless commotion or disturbances.” The word for “peaceable/*hésuchios*” (KJV) means “steady (settled) due to a *divinely-inspired inner calmness*.”⁵ As we pray for peace, the Lord may not answer the prayer with an absence of warfare, but we can feel the Spirit’s peace which allows the saints to maintain hope and faith to trust in God in order to weather the storms of life.

1 Timothy 2:4–6 “Who is willing to have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth which is in Christ Jesus, who is that Only Begotten, Son of God, and ordained to be a Mediator between God and man; who is one God, and hath power over all men” (JST in *italics*). The addition of “is willing” reminds us that our Savior will never force anyone, but respects choice or agency (unlike Satan). The JST also adds four titles and roles of the Savior to verse four. They seem to focus the call for prayers on the source of power connected with prayer. Paul notes our relationship to Jesus as Mediator (also see Galatians 3:19–20; Hebrews 9:15; 12:24; etc.). The concept of the Mediator as a “go-between” to overcome alienation and bring God the Father and repentant mortals back together is motivating and humbling. (Outside of the bible, Jesus is also identified as the mediator in D&C 76:69; 107:19; and 2 Nephi 2:9).

1 Timothy 2:8 “I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting” Paul singles out “men/male/aner” on how to pray appropriately and respectfully. Praying with “lifting up holy hands” offers a physical demonstration of drawing on the powers of heaven (and has temple symbolism, too). The men also needed direction on praying “without anger or dissension.” (NIV). The Lord taught his disciples in the Sermon on the Mount to prepare for prayer by making peace with our fellowmen, and to cleanse our hearts before prayer (Matthew 5:23–24).

Corrupt teachers

1 Timothy 2:9–15

This is a puzzling passage because the Epistles attributed to Paul speak positively in at least twelve examples of women teaching or preaching in the church.⁶ Unlike the positive counsel, this passage seems inconsistent. As it reads in the KJV, it reduces the women’s opportunity for participation in church services. Either this section is incongruous with the other dozen examples, or we have misunderstood the author’s intent. We must again ask ourselves, what problem was the author trying to address? In this letter, Paul’s main concern was to stop false teachers as well as those who usurped priesthood authority (1 Timothy 1:6–8; 4:12; 5:17).⁷ That may shed light on to whom and why he gave this direction on women’s worship.

1 Timothy 2:9–10 “In like manner also . . . adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works” His next words act as a linking phrase to address women. He does not continue his advice on prayer, probably because praying in anger or with doubts was not a problem for the women. Instead, he warns against prioritizing appearance and fashion.⁸ The mention of gold and pearls also suggests Paul is talking about a problem with wealthy women (1 Timothy 5: 6, 13; 6:9, 17). Paul contrasts striving for eternal holiness with superficial materialistic priorities in women.

Some of the words in the KJV are archaic and can lead to misunderstandings throughout this difficult passage, but it is evident that the author wants Christian women to replace worldliness and self-promotion with selfless service. Starting with the KJV phrase “shamefacedness and sobriety,” a few twentieth century translations can help clarify 1 Timothy 2:9.

1 TIMOTHY 2:9

KJV	JB	NAS	RSV	WELCH-HALL
Shamefacedness	Quietly	Modestly	Modestly	In good taste,
And	And	And	And	In a manner
Sobriety	Modestly	Idscreeetly	Sensibly	That brings honorable respect

This must have been a concern to Paul because four times in the same letter, he cautions those who tried to impress others by their appearance (1 Timothy 5:6, 13; 6:9, 17). He contrasts eternal and superficial priorities.

1 Timothy 2:10 “but with good deeds, appropriate for women who profess to worship God” It appears that the problem of women’s materialistic desires and prideful attitudes was only tangential to the larger problem of misplaced values and false teaching that infiltrated the church community (1 Timothy 6:3–5). His specific concern with women’s hair may stem from the multigenerational Jewish custom that required women to hide or cover their hair.⁹ Christian women had the freedom of going outside their homes without their hair covered. Some converts may have overreacted with their new freedom and concentrated more time and money on their hair adornments than on more worthwhile charitable activities. Or, perhaps part of the problem was that male Jewish-Christian leaders (possibly even the converted Pharisee Paul) found the women’s new freedom in dress and uncovered hair too startling. In either case, Paul hopes that women might be adorned in good works rather than spending their time and money on self-aggrandizement.

1 Timothy 2:11 “Let the woman learn . . .” Narrowing in on the first phrase of the verse, the text acknowledges that women *may learn religious topics*. This was a radical departure from the Pharisaic instruction.¹⁰ This was a positive cultural breakthrough.

“woman learn in silence with all subjection” The second phrase sounds like the pharisaical records that encourage women not to speak outside of their homes.¹¹ Christian women actively joining religious worship and offering opinions or asking questions was a drastic change. Many Jewish converts may not have been accustomed to this new practice.

Nonetheless, the verse contradicts Paul’s earlier encouragement: “every woman that prayeth and prophesieth...” (1 Corinthians 11:5), “Aged women . . . teach the young women” (Titus 2:3–4); and “There are many parts, but one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, ‘I don’t need you!’” (1 Corinthians 12:20–21). In many letters Paul repeats that all are needed to serve and build the kingdom in different ways.

There are two words that need a closer look, silence and subjection. “Silence/*hésuchia*” means stillness or quietness, “implying calm; for the believer.”¹² “Subjection/*hupotagé*,” is from “submit/*hupotassó*” which was discussed in Ephesians 5:21–22 as a voluntary attitude of cooperation (or in a military setting, lining up behind the leader). Everyone will learn better when he or she has a humble or submissive attitude as a learner. The Spirit can teach or witness of truth when a seeker submits reverently to God.

1 TIMOTHY 2:11

KJV	NIV	NEB	JB	WELCH–HALL
Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection	A woman should learn in quietness and full of submission	A woman must be a learner listening quietly and with due submission	During instruction a woman should be quiet and respectful	Let women learn in serenity, with deference in peace of soul

The recurrence of words such as “quiet,” or “peace,” and “respectful” implies that irreverence may have been a problem in some church services. Allowing women to bring their children to worship services would have added to the problem of irreverence (or at least made sounds that the men were unaccustomed to hearing in that setting and may have found distracting). However, Paul does not single out women for this problem. An earlier letter reads: “We beseech you, brethren . . . study to be quiet, and to do your own business” (1 Thessalonians 4:10, 11). Similarly, in modern scripture, “Learn of me, and listen to my words; walk in the meekness of my Spirit, and you shall have peace in me” (D&C 19:23).¹³

Looking in latter-day revelation specifically to women we find even more encouragement: “[She] shall be ordained . . . to expound scriptures and to exhort the church” (D&C 25:7). President Spencer W. Kimball’s prophecy encouragement continues to be quoted regularly: “It will be . . . female exemplars of the Church [who] will be a *significant force* in both the numerical and the spiritual growth of the Church in the last days.”¹⁴ I am grateful for a living prophet to direct us when biblical passages no longer apply.

1 Timothy 2:12 “But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence”

This verse echoes rabbinic statements from the late Second Temple era and beyond when women were not allowed to teach or speak in public, and sat separated from men in the synagogue, with no authority to testify.¹⁵ Recall how the Lord and His apostles called Christian women to witness and testify of Jesus as the Son of God.

Just a few chapters later, and in the other pastoral Epistles, Paul calls for both men and women to become committed teachers and he attacks all false teachers, not just the gender of the instructor:

- 1 Timothy 6:3, 5; “If any man [*ei tis*/whoever, anyone,” male or female] teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness . . . from such withdraw thyself” (KJV)
- 2 Timothy 2:2 “The things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men [*anthropos*/human, female or male], who shall be able to teach others also.”
- Titus 2:3–4 “The aged women likewise, that *they be* in behaviour as becometh holiness . . . teachers of good things; That they may teach the young women . . .”

This was a vote of confidence in mature women that they had wisdom and were capable of teaching with the Spirit of God. By juxtaposing these examples of women teaching with his complaint of inappropriate teaching, it appears that Paul worried about falsehoods, not gender. By looking at all of Paul’s canonized Epistles, we find him inviting all to participate and teach, because “there is neither Jew nor Greek . . . male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:28). In this light, I assume that Paul referred to a specific problem. It sounds as though the real issue here is usurping authority. Women need to support their leaders who are called of God as leaders even now.

1 Timothy 2:13–14 “For it was Adam who was first created, and then Eve. And it was not Adam who was deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression” (NASB) The author concludes his argument by referencing the creation story from Genesis, with a punch at Eve’s transgression (Genesis 3:1–13). Many interpretations of Adam and Eve’s story over the centuries have become the rationale behind male and female relationships in Judaism. The tone of this verse fits into the thinking from the late Second Temple era where we find several derogatory statements about Eve.¹⁶ Instead of honoring Eve as the one who brought life, they emphasized: “through her we all die.”¹⁷ Josephus wrote that God cursed Adam in the Garden of Eden “because he weakly submitted to the counsel of his wife.”¹⁸ These facts make me wonder if the verse, as it stands, was written or even intended by Paul.

In contrast, most of the New Testament honors Adam and Eve as important pieces in the puzzle of earth life. Paul writes: “For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive” (1 Corinthians 15:22). Luke traced Jesus’ genealogy through his adopted father Joseph’s lineage back to Adam.¹⁹ Nonetheless, these verses, 1 Timothy 2:13–14, do not seem to honor our first parents either. The text seems to force a cause and effect relationship between Eve partaking of the fruit and women not teaching or acting with authority.

The Catholic scholar Raymond Brown observed, “If the false teachers were making such women their targets, that would explain them seeking monetary gain (6:5). Possibly women who became spokespersons of the false teachings would be the object of Paul’s prohibitions against speaking in church. Women who did this were compared to Eve . . . to clarify the false teachings on marriage (4:3).”²⁰

This verse seems out of harmony with Paul’s other statements and those from our living prophets. Unlike most Christians, we honor Adam and Eve as a prophet and prophetess, among the noblest of all mortals. Modern apostles have called the fall of Adam and Eve one of the “pillars of eternity.”²¹ Unlike the rest of the world, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints honors Eve for making her choice, as the initiator of mortality.²²

1 Timothy 2:15 “Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety” Bearing a child does not bring salvation; as Paul drills, only Christ Jesus “hath saved us” (2 Timothy 1:9). God designed Adam and Eve in a way to create offspring, and to raise them in a family unit, “in faith and charity.”²³ Joseph Smith made a notable change from “she” to “they.” This gives both parents the responsibility and blessing of childbearing. Parents have the responsibility to obey all of God’s commandments, which include bringing children into the world, but this does not mean that one without children cannot be saved.²⁴

1 TIMOTHY 2:15 (EMPHASIS ADDED)

KJV

Notwithstanding *she* shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety.

JST

Nowwithstanding *they* shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety.

Akin to Joseph Smith’s emphasis on having both parents join in God’s work of redemption through childbearing, Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of The Twelve restates the mutual relationship of husbands’ and wives’ roles in both childbearing and priesthood power:

Men and women have different but equally valued roles. Just as a woman cannot conceive a child without a man, so a man cannot fully exercise the power of the priesthood to establish an eternal family without a woman. In other words, in the eternal perspective, *both the procreative power and the priesthood power are shared by husband and wife*. And as husband and wife, a man and a woman should strive to follow our Heavenly Father. The Christian virtues of love, humility, and patience should be their focus as they seek the blessings of the priesthood in their lives and for their family²⁵ (emphasis added).

Paul's message also speaks of women's special role in God's plan as co-creators. In this role, English translators emphasize two quite different interpretations for the offspring. There are many ways to interpret scripture correctly. A powerful understanding of our Savior and Redeemer as the infant child born as the Son of God, comes from the ISV description of "the Child."²⁶

1 TIMOTHY 2:15

WYC

But she shall be saved by generation of children, if she dwell perfectly in faith, and love and holiness, with sanctity with self-restraint.

NASB

But women will be preserved through the bearing of children if they continue in faith and love and along with good judgment.

ISV

Even though she will be saved through the birth of the Child, if they continue in faith, love, and holiness soberness

The tenor of 1 Timothy 2:11–15 (KJV) is less respectful to women and is thus inconsistent with the Lord's example, apostolic writings, and words of modern apostles. Most of the New Testament speaks of women who valiantly served the Lord and dynamically helped build His church with the Apostles. Those sister saints were emancipated and empowered by the truth that set them free (John 8:32). When we come across these puzzling passages it helps to keep them in context and balanced with the majority of positive statements.²⁷

1 TIMOTHY 3

Bishops

1 Timothy 3:1–7

1 Timothy 3:1 "If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work" This verse has been adapted by those who have served as bishops to include, "he desireth a good work OUT."²⁸ Paul advocates strong central leadership, and gives Timothy a practical profile on how to select bishops for the growing church in Ephesus. The standards for a bishop become a moral measurement for church leaders and even members. Leaders and members were both expected to live up to the same standard as all volunteered to serve as needed. The Greek word is also translated, "bishop/*episkopé*/overseer/supervisor/a visiting judge."

1 Timothy 3:2–5 "A bishop then must be blameless . . ." The church organization grew under the apostles' direction. The apostles called local leaders, including Bishops. The qualifications to serve as bishop are beautiful (BSB translation, unless noted):

- Above reproach
- Husband of but one wife
- Temperate
- Self-controlled
- Respectable
- Hospitable
- Able to teach
- Not dependent on wine
- Not violent but gentle
- Peaceable
- Does not love money
- Manages his household
- Obedient and respectful children (CEV) or children in subjection with reverence (NHEB)
- Not a recent convert or prideful
- A good reputation with outsiders
- Will not fall into disgrace

Directing others starts with directing self. Controlling temper, liquor, greed—all areas of self-control are summed up in “sober” (KJV). Paul hoped that Bishops could be successful family leaders first.²⁹ Gently reaching out to his own children was a prerequisite of being trusted with a group of the Lord’s children.³⁰ In a society filled with wife and child abuse, the Christian ideal sets a new standard. Any abuse would disqualify a man from leadership in the Lord’s church. In restored scripture, we learn that Bishops are given the ability “to discern all those gifts” of the Spirit in order to organize the saints (1 Corinthians 12:7; D&C 46:27).

1 Timothy 3:5 “for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?” The Pastoral letters show the family as the first unit of ministering in the church. Even in early Christianity we see that leadership and teaching in the church back up leadership and teaching at home, but do not replace it.

Deacons

1 Timothy 3:8-15

1 Timothy 3:8-12 “In the same way, deacons are to be . . .” Paul is using two different words here that are both translated, “deacon” in these four verses. The Greek noun for male and female, “deacon/*diakonos*/servant/minister” is a word meaning a helper (also see Romans 13:4; 15:8; 16:1; etc.). Verse 10 uses it as a verb, “*diakoneó*/to actively serve,” or literally, “kicking up dust’ because one is ‘on the move.” This list of attributes is for male deacons:

- Worthy of respect
- Sincere
- Not indulging in much wine
- Not pursuing dishonest gain
- Keep hold of deep truths of faith
- A clear conscience
- Be tested
- Faithful to his wife
- Manage his children and household well

The list is similar, but shorter for a deacon than a bishop. Both were offices for older men. Likewise, Jewish priests did not begin their service until 30, and Levites at 25 years old (Numbers 4:3). Deacons were also older at the beginning of the Restoration. The age was lowered when the church became stable with regular supervision from priesthood leadership. These two offices are part of the same organization that both the primitive and restored church share (Article of Faith 6).

1 Timothy 3:11 “**In the same way, the women are to be worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything**” (NIV) The female equivalent of servants or ministers in the church have a shorter list; they are more general and cover broader topics. Different translations include “sober” for temperate. There is one unique qualification for female servants. Timothy needs to make sure there are no “malicious gossips” (NASB). In the Greek context, the word for “women,” may refer to either the deacons’ wives or women who were also women in leadership roles to “minister as servants” or “deaconesses,” such as was Phebe (Romans 16:1, KJV, ISV). This sounds similar to our female leadership roles in the restored church.

Reasons for Paul’s Instructions

1 Timothy 3:14-16

1 Timothy 3:14 “**Although I hope to come to you soon, I am writing you these instructions so that, if I am delayed, you will know . . .**” Paul planned to come to Ephesus, so we assume this is an earlier imprisonment than in 2 Timothy. We also do not know if he ever made it back to Ephesus.

1 Timothy 3:16 “**The pillar and ground of the truth is . . . God was manifest in the flesh . . .**” (JST) The Prophet Joseph moved this phrase from the end of verse 15 to the beginning of 16 to act as the introduction to the poem or hymn that followed:

He appeared in the flesh,
was vindicated by the Spirit,
was seen by angels,

was preached among the nations,
was believed on in the world,
was taken up in glory (NIV).

1 TIMOTHY 4

Instructions Part 1: Dealing with False Doctrines

1 Timothy 4:1-6

1 Timothy 4:1-2 “The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits . . . through hypocritical liars” (NIV) The Spirit has warned Paul of the coming apostasy when Christians will follow “seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils” (KJV). The inspiration seems applicable to many periods of history. False teachers have deliberately lied so often that their consciences no longer bother them with their hypocrisy.

1 Timothy 4:3-5 “*men who forbid marriage and advocate abstaining from foods which God has created to be gratefully shared*” (NASB) The false teachers may have been Gnostics who taught that God’s people should not contaminate themselves with physical things (i.e. marriage, foods, creation, crucifixion, resurrection, etc.). Paul’s problem was not with the Jewish attitudes, but the Christian heresies that originated from the Jews.³¹ This is a good verse to add to the others on Paul’s positive support of marriage (i.e. 1 Corinthians 9:5; Philip 4:3; etc.)

The food restrictions were also of Jewish origin. Since the Jerusalem Council though, Christians had not kept the kosher food restrictions (except for food sacrificed to idols, and blood—including an animal that was strangled so that the blood remained within, Acts 15:29). The KJV, “meat,” is the general term for “foods” (RSV, JB, NAS). Paul wants Timothy to teach that “no food is to be rejected” (JB). As long as different food is received with thanksgiving, it is sanctified. This was a radical departure from the Jewish food laws.

Instructions for Godly Living

1 Timothy 4:6-10

1 Timothy 4:6 “If you point these things out to the brothers and sisters, you will be a good minister of Christ Jesus . . . and of the good teaching” (NIV) Timothy probably served in a role equivalent to a Stake President or regional authority. He edifies the local leaders with spiritually nourishing good words of faith and true doctrines. Paul opposes wasting time, arguing over foolish ideas—silly myths,” godless legends, and old wives’ tales (BSB). Instead, Paul hopes that disciples will discipline (NAS) or train (RSV) themselves in godliness. Likewise, living prophets have recently encouraged, “My prayer for today is that I may help you understand that greater happi-

ness comes from greater personal holiness so that you will act upon that belief;” and “Holiness of the Lord must pervade our being.”³²

1 Timothy 4:8–9 “For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come” Paul exposes the superficiality of the Greco-Roman priority of muscles and money (which resurfaces in our own world). He does not oppose taking care of our bodies but puts it in perspective. It is also helpful to remember how physically demanding daily life was in the ancient world—just fetching water, cooking, and heating one’s home required a daily workout. The problem was the Greco-Romans’ over attention to physical prowess that overshadowed more worthwhile pursuits.

1 Timothy 4:10 “That is why we labor and strive, because we have put our hope in the living God” (NIV) Part of being a disciple requires laboring for delayed gratification. Some of God’s promises are immediate, but most are to come. “Suffer reproach” (KJV), means: “especially strive, above all struggle, particularly battling.” Paul’s message is to trust in the Lord.

“the Savior of all people, and especially of those who believe” (NIV) Is the atonement more efficacious to those who repent? (D&C 19:16–17). Immortality is a free gift to all mortals through Jesus’ Atonement, but those who deeply believe and “strive” will receive Eternal Life. In that sense, those who remain repentant and are valiant in their testimonies can receive more of the Savior’s atoning gifts (D&C 76). Those who humbly seek redemption can find it—and its accompanying joy and forgiveness—in this life or the next.

The Leader as An Example

1 Timothy 4:11–16

1 Timothy 4:11–12 “Command and teach these things. Don’t let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers . . .” (NIV) Timothy was old enough to join Paul as a companion on his second mission ten to fifteen years before this (around AD 49). He has been Paul’s companion for the better part of thirteen years. He was probably close to thirty at this time. That was still considered young. In the Jewish culture, thirty is the age of authority when a priest may begin working in the temple. Paul encourages him to put his energies into becoming an example of the believers regardless of his age. This includes a concise list of general commandments that Timothy needs to teach as part of the higher laws of Christ’s Gospel.

- in speech
- in conduct
- in love
- in faith
- in purity

1 Timothy 4:13 “Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching” (NIV) English translations all mention something about publicly reading the scriptures. Scriptures usually referred to the Torah or Law (Genesis to Deuteronomy), the Prophets (Isaiah to Malachi), and the Writings (Judges, Psalms, etc.) at this time, but they may have added some form of Jesus’ sayings, and apostolic correspondence by then. They may have distributed apostolic letters and the sayings of Jesus, but the New Testament collection was not organized until decades later, and the canon of twenty-seven was not closed until AD 367.³³ As scriptures were an expensive and scarce gift, each community usually shared a few scrolls of Old Testament books depending on their size and wealth. Whole communities gathered to hear the scriptures, not only because they were scarce, but also because many of the poor were illiterate. This way all could learn.

1 Timothy 4:14 “Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands” Timothy’s gift is often understood as his calling and ordination to serve in the priesthood leadership. If that is the case, then this verse shows that priesthood authority was delegated by the laying on of hands by the “presbytery” (which means “the council of elders,” RSV, or “body of elders, NIV). If that is the case, then this verse includes the two processes involved in callings—first inspiration or “prophecy,” then ordination (as we saw in Acts 13:1-3 when Barnabas and Paul were called as missionaries). In Acts 20:28 the Ephesian Elders were told “the Holy Ghost made you overseers.” We also see Paul’s two-step ordination of inspiration and the laying on of hands in Hebrews 7. Timothy’s gift may also have been a gift of the Spirit or ability that God gave Timothy through a blessing or setting apart—such as the gift of healing or administrations (see 1 Corinthians 12:5, 9). The gifts of the Spirit are only given to bless others, not for selfish desires (D&C 46:9).

1 Timothy 4:15 “Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all” As we meditate on our callings, blessings, and gifts of the Spirit we can receive inspiration on how to progress and use them to bless. Other translations have less to do with pondering and more to do with action. For example, “Practice these things” (HCSB), “Be diligent in these matters” (BSB), or “Take pains with these things” (NASB).

1 Timothy 4:16 “Pay close attention to your life and to your teaching. Persevere in these things, for by so doing you will save both yourself and those who hear you” (BSB) When Paul asks Timothy to “take heed” or “Watch your life” (NIV), he asks for the daily refining or purifying of repentance. When we live the doctrines of Christ, we also bless those within our sphere of influence.

1 TIMOTHY 5

Leaders Duties Concerning the Elderly and Widows

1 Timothy 5:1-16

1 Timothy 5:1-2 “Do not rebuke an older man harshly, but exhort him as if he were your father. Treat younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters, with absolute purity” (NIV) Paul instructed Timothy to lead with love, respect, and closeness. This counsel shares themes with what the Lord taught the Prophet Joseph Smith in Liberty Jail, “. . . only by persuasion, by long-suffering, by gentleness and meekness, and by love unfeigned . . . showing forth afterwards an increase of love toward him whom thou hast reprov'd, lest he esteem thee to be his enemy” (D&C 122:41–43).

1 Timothy 5:3–4 “Give proper recognition to those widows who are really in need. But if a widow has children or grandchildren, these should learn first of all to put their religion into practice by caring for their own family and so repaying their parents . . .” These verses on widows are difficult to understand in the KJV, but with a little historical background they show the generosity and priorities of the church leaders. Paul dedicates thirteen sentences to their care. Caring for the widows was also a concern in the early Jerusalem church (Acts 6:1–7). The Old Testament was also full of direction to care for widows (“despise not thy mother when she is old” (Proverbs 23:22). Mosaic laws also called for the community to care for widows.³⁴

It sounds as if the local Christian churches provided for older widows who had no family connections but encouraged them to act responsibly by filling their days with service. The younger widows were to marry. As most women were not educated to earn a living (or even literate), so widowhood could lead to abject poverty. Culturally, women were allowed to work in some jobs, but the work earned only a meager income.³⁵ Also adding to the financial burden, Caesar Augustus implemented a law across the Roman Empire to encourage population growth. If a widow (or divorcee) could still bear children, and had not born three, she had two years to remarry or pay a higher tax.³⁶

1 Timothy 5:5–6 “The widow who is truly in need and left all alone puts her hope in God . . . But she who lives for pleasure is dead even while she is still alive” Paul refers to “widow indeed” (KJV) to mean one destitute without any family around to help. Those widows who are poor and alone should look to God and His church for help. However, if they are gossips and pleasure-seekers, they need to reform in order to find help from the church.

1 Timothy 5:7–8 “Give these instructions to the believers . . . If anyone does not provide for his own, and especially his own household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever” This Epistle is filled

with a call for productive labor, starting within the family (starting with Paul's own example). Greek philosophers idealized the contemplative life. But Christians, Paul taught, should spend their time serving God by serving their fellowmen.

1 Timothy 5:9–10 “No widow may be put on the list of widows unless she is over sixty, has been faithful to her husband, and is well known for her good deeds . . .” (NIV) Younger women were encouraged to remarry, but it sounds as though widows over sixty could “enroll” (BSB) to receive help from the church (if they were without family to provide for them). Earlier in Jerusalem the saints were living a form of the law of consecration (Acts 20). If that were also the case in Ephesus, this instruction reminds us that the law of consecration is as much about everyone working as it is sharing what we have.

1 Timothy 5:11–13 “As for younger widows . . . they want to marry . . . they get into the habit of being idle . . . busybodies who talk nonsense, saying things they ought not to” (NIV) Paul discourages the churches providing for more capable younger widows, who will use their free time inappropriately. It sounds like a typical case where attitudes and behaviors of those on the dole can be unhealthy and damaging, even to their faith (5:15.)

1 Timothy 5:14–15 “I counsel younger widows to marry, to have children, to manage their homes and to give the enemy no opportunity for slander” (NIV) Paul applauds the benefits of work and marriage for those who can. Christian women had many similar responsibilities to those of their Jewish peers: bearing children, serving one's family, loving one's husband, and serving those in need (also Titus 2:4). But the Lord made abrupt and fundamental changes to the priorities placed upon women. He never referred to women as possessions, nor did He dominate or try to control them (Matthew 9:22; 15:28; Mark 14:6; Luke 13:12; John 4:4–21; 8:10; etc.).

1 Timothy 5:16 “If any woman . . . has widows in her care, she should continue to help them and not let the church be burdened with them” (NIV) Paul knew of some devoted sister saints who took widowed women into their homes. Like Paul, Brigham Young taught a very practical religion that leads to salvation: “I am decidedly in favor of practical religion—of every day useful life . . . You know that it is one peculiarity of our faith and religion to never ask the Lord to do a thing without being willing to help him all that we are able, and then the Lord will do the rest.”³⁷

Leaders' Duties to Elders

1 Timothy 5:17–24

1 Timothy 5:17 “Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine” The title, “Elders” in a Greek community was the “senior council” or “board of advisors” under executive direction. According to the Epistle of James, in the early church, Elders were to bless the sick, care for the widows and the poor. The early Church Fathers placed Elders beside the Bishops as helpers

and teachers. In Greek, “doctrine/*didaskalia*” refers to teaching or instructions.

1 Timothy 5:18 “For Scripture says . . . the worker deserves his wages” Paul quotes two scriptures as evidence that those who are working full time for the church may receive payment (Deuteronomy 25:4; Luke 10:7). Paul’s commitment to labor does not mean that those who serve God full time should not receive remuneration. His example of working when he could give context to this counsel.

1 Timothy 5:19–20 Do not entertain an accusation against an elder unless it is brought by two or three witnesses. But . . . reprove before everyone, so that the others may take warning” (NIV) Timothy will have to act as a “Judge in Israel.” Paul taught Timothy that he needed witnesses of accusations against a member. Public condemnation sounds harsh, but Paul hoped that it might dissuade others. We no longer practice this in the modern church of Jesus Christ.

1 Timothy 5:21 “I charge you, in the sight of God and Christ Jesus and the elect angels, to keep these instructions without partiality . . . Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands” (NIV) Impartiality is especially important as Timothy is in a leadership position that must keep judgments just. Paul invokes the dual witness of God and angels that is also used for ordinances, with which leaders would have been familiar.³⁸

1 Timothy 5:22 “Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands” (NIV) In the context, “laying on of hands” in this scenario sounds as though Paul is talking about calling Bishops, ordaining the elders, or setting apart saints for specific callings or missions (1 Timothy 4:14; Acts 6:6; 8:18), rather than healings (i.e. Acts 28:8; Mark 6:5). The advice to take his time allows the leader to be careful and seek the gift of discernment. The Lord taught that we must “study it out in our mind and ask if it is right.” The answer may change if the question is different, so the wisdom to take the time to study before formulating questions and giving time to hear the Lord’s answers is especially important for church leaders. The verse continues, “Keep yourself pure,” which will enable to Spirit of revelation to inspire the leader (D&C 8:2–3).

1 Timothy 5:23 “Stop drinking only water and use a little wine instead, because of your stomach and your frequent ailments” (BSB) We do not know if Timothy had been living a Nazarene vow or why he chose to drink water without any purification, but in the ancient world, they purified their water with wine. Unclean water was the norm and lead to stomach cramping and diarrhea from diseases like giardia, dysentery, E. coli, and typhoid. As mentioned earlier, wine was most often diluted with ten parts water (and sometimes the dilution was twenty times water) to one-part wine.³⁹ All were healthier options than drinking from the water supply available then.

Most dispensations have their own health or dietary code for the conditions of that time, so this does not need to startle those who hold D&C 89 counsel against drinking alcoholic beverages. Paul has also just explained that

Bishops were not to not to be addicted to wine, and he also denounced drunkards (1 Corinthians 5:11; 1 Timothy 3:2–3; also, Titus 1:6–8).

1 Timothy 5:24–25 “The sins of some men are obvious . . . but the sins of others do not surface until later. In the same way, good deeds . . .” (BSB) All wickedness and goodness that has been hidden will be known by God. An omniscient God allows His judgement to be just. Jesus warned that even our thoughts will condemn us (Matthew 5:28; 15:19; etc.).

1 TIMOTHY 6

Duties of Slaves

1 Timothy 6:1–2a

1 Timothy 6:1 “All who are under the yoke as slaves should regard their own masters as worthy of all respect, so that God’s name and his teaching will not be blasphemed” (NIV) The text suggests that Paul asked Christian slaves to be respectful in their service to set a good example. Just as in the letters to the Ephesians and Colossians, Paul encouraged fairness and honesty on both the slave-servants’ and masters’ part. To understand much of the New Testament, we need to understand the social order that stemmed from the servant-master relationship. In AD 47, the Roman census documented that one-third of the Empire was enslaved or worked as servants.⁴⁰ Yet, historians describe a slave service more like a feudal system and for a limited period of time (for more see the early commentary in Ephesians 6:5–6 and Colossians 4:1).

As discussed earlier in the Gospels, Jesus Himself took on the role of a slave and often identified Himself with servants (Mark 10:44; Isaiah 49–53). Yet, He also attacked the practice of a man selling his family members into slavery in one of His parables: “But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made” (Matthew 18:25). Then the parable tells how the master softened and “was moved with compassion,” and forgave the man’s gargantuan debt so that the debtor’s wife and children did not have to be sold into slavery (Matthew 18:27). Rather than denouncing servitude though, Jesus wanted to teach masters how to serve.

1 Timothy 6:2a “They that have believing masters . . . do *them* service, because they are faithful and beloved” Even if both the master and servant/slave are Christians, Paul encourages diligence in their labor. To help put this in perspective, in the ancient world, even teachers, accountants, scribes, and doctors were servants. Male slaves served in the Jewish world before being set free (Exodus 21:3–4), and in the Roman world until the age of thirty.⁴¹ The Law of Moses allowed servants and slaves the option of choosing to serve their masters for life in exchange for bed and board if the relationship was mutually positive (Leviticus 25:39–42; Deuteronomy 15:12).

Warning Against False Teachers and the Love of Money

1 Timothy 6:2b–10

1 Timothy 6:2b–5 “These are the things you are to teach and insist on. If anyone teaches otherwise and does not agree to the sound instruction . . . they are conceited and understand nothing . . .” (NIV) Paul moves onto warning Timothy about false teachers who have wicked and prideful motives. He is especially upset about those who use religion to make a profit, “who think that godliness is a means to financial gain” (NIV). This falsehood creeps into our generation as well.

1 Timothy 6:6–8 “Religion does make your life rich, by making you content with what you have . . . So we should be satisfied just to have food and clothes” (CEV) Religion teaches one to be good. So, if you want to be truly rich, be good—as eternal gain comes from goodness. The underlying attitude of the “contentment” (KJV) lies in being satisfied with what one has. When one feels the Savior’s love, it changes our hearts to such a degree that we can be content with that great gift alone. The underlying spirit of the law of consecration fosters contentment, because those who live it see life as fulfilling our stewardship to God.⁴² When one internalizes the truth that all things belong to God and we are His servants to do and share God’s goods, then there is no room for greed.

1 Timothy 6:9–10 “Those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap . . . For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil” (NIV). There are at least three major problems with Satan’s temptation to get wealth. First, seeking riches changes one’s focus from serving God to seeking “filthy lucre” (Titus 1:11). Second, valuing monetary promotion, opens the door to seek wealth in wrong ways (i.e. getting rich quick schemes, getting something for nothing and the like, working on the Sabbath, or becoming angry over issues of money). Third, the desire for money and status can change one’s priorities and lead to pride. Pride comes in many forms—including selfishness and greed (this idea is repeated in 2 Corinthians 4:4–6, 14, 18; Revelation 22:3).

Unlike the KJV, which uses the singular, “the root,” the Greek text uses, “a root.” The love of money fosters pride, which “is the universal sin.”⁴³ President Benson taught that “Some prideful people are not so concerned as to whether their wages meet their needs as they are that their wages are more than someone else’s.”⁴⁴ Hugh Nibley taught that Satan’s first article of false faith is: “you can buy anything in this world with money.”⁴⁵

1 Timothy 6:11–12 “But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith” (NIV) Paul lists six qualities that disciples should seek more earnestly than riches. Paul admonishes disciples to take the same effort that they expend toward growing their careers, to work toward developing more faith, patience, and “charity/*agape*” so that they could “take hold of the eternal life.”

Paul inserts an athletic term that was well known from the competitive Greek games, “fight a good fight,” but then adds the key for a good fight, “*of faith.*”

1 Timothy 6:13–15a “I charge you to keep this command without spot or blame until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, which God will bring about in his own time” (NIV) Paul “charges” Timothy, as strongly as a leader can—“In the sight of God . . . and before Christ”—to remain pure. Jesus stood spotless and before Pilate, and through Him, we may do the same when we come before the Lord. The timing of the Lord’s coming is referred to in a way that shows Paul’s faith in the wisdom of God’s timing.

Third Hymn or Prayer

1 Timothy 6:15b–16

1 Timothy 6:15b–16 “Who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, to whom be honor and power everlasting Whom no man hath seen, nor can see, unto whom no man can approach, only he who hath the light and the hope of immortality dwelling in him” (JST) The JST changes the order of two phrases in this prayer or hymn, which in turn, changes its meaning. In the standard English translations, it communicates that man cannot see God, but that is contrary to Paul’s own experience of seeing the Lord (which is repeated in the book of Acts three times, and also referred to in his Epistles), as well as Mary Magdalene and all the other five hundred who saw the resurrected Lord (John 20:18; 1 Corinthians 15:6). The JST’s reordering explains that all those saints with the “hope of immortality dwelling in,” may see God.

JST

“Who is the blessed and only Potentate,
the King of kings,
and Lord of lords,
to whom be honor and power everlasting.
Whom no man hath seen, nor can see,
Unto whom no man can approach,
Only he who hath the light and the hope
of immortality dwelling in him.

KJV

Who is the blessed and only Potentate
the King of kings,
and Lord of lords,
Who only hath immortality,
dwelling in the light
which no man can approach unto;
whom no man hath seen, nor can see:
to whom be power and honor everlasting.
Amen.

Jesus Himself also taught the same thing in the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5:8, “blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God.” Similarly, He taught Joseph Smith “Every soul who foresaketh his sins and cometh unto me, and calleth on my name, and cc obeyeth my voice, and keepeth my commandments, shall see my face

and know that I am” (D&C 93:1).

Charge to the Rich and Timothy

1 Timothy 6:17–21

1 Timothy 6:17–1 “Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded . . . that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute . . . that they may lay hold on eternal life” Those who have plenty, who are “willing to share/*koinónikos*/ready to impart/communicate,” can avoid selfish greed, and follow the higher law of the gospel.⁴⁶

1 Timothy 6:20–21 “O Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you. Avoid irreverent, . . . opposing arguments of so-called ‘knowledge,’ . . . and thus swerved away from the faith” (BSB) Paul’s final plea to his beloved Timothy is applicable for all disciples of all generations. The adversary draws believers away through pride, distractions, and arguments of “knowledge.” (The KJV of “science” is translated, “knowledge” in all major English versions.)

2 TIMOTHY

Request for A Visit/Apostasy Of The Church/Endurance

Outline: 2 Timothy

1:1–5 Greeting and Thanksgiving

1:6–2:13 Mission Change to Visit Paul in Prison

- 1:6–12 Patience in Persecution
- 1:13–18 Disloyalty and Loyalty
- 2:1–13 Appeal for Endurance

2:14–4:5 Dealing with False Teachers

- 2:14–26 Teachings of Lord’s Servants
- 3:1–9 Evil in the Last Days
- 3:10–17 All Scripture Is God’s Word
- 4:1–8 Preach the Word

4:9–22 Conclusion

- 4:9–18 Personal Concerns
- 4:19–22 Final Greetings

Theme

Dark moments can be sustained by God’s Love.

This Epistle describes Paul’s grim imprisonment. Like Jesus on the eve of His passion, Paul gave counsel and lifted up the disciples closest to him. Timothy probably still served as a regional leader near Ephesus, but the letter gives Timothy’s transfer, “come to me quickly” (2 Timothy 4:9).

Background

Chronologically, this is the last letter we have from Paul. Although there is much debate on where and when the Epistle fits in, the NEW tESTAMENT at large suggests that Paul was released from his first Roman imprisonment and preached in Spain and the area around Greece, but then was imprisoned again sometime between AD 64 and 68 when he wrote this Epistle to his beloved younger companion. His earlier prison letters sound vastly different from this letter. He is lonely, cold, and his death is imminent.

We have historical evidence that the Caesar Nero ordered the killing of both Paul and Peter.⁴⁷ Even though the Christians were a relatively small sect at the time, Nero blamed the fire he instigated in Rome on them; it was not “for the public good, but to glut one man’s cruelty.”⁴⁸ Nero burned Rome to clear the area for a larger palace. He then arrested all Christians in Rome who would not reject Jesus.

We assume this is when Peter and Paul joined the martyrs. Some who were convicted were covered with skins of beasts, then torn by wild dogs until they died. Many, such as Peter, were crucified (But Peter refused to die as the Lord, so he was hung upside-down). As a Roman citizen, Paul was not tortured but beheaded.

2 TIMOTHY 1

Greetings and Thanksgiving

2 Timothy 1:1-5

2 Timothy 1:1-2 “Paul, an apostle . . . to Timothy, my dearly beloved son: Grace, mercy, *and* peace, from God the Father and Christ . . .” Paul’s standard greeting and introduction includes the source of grace, mercy, and peace as being Heavenly Father and His Son. We also hear of Paul’s authority and calling as a special witness. Even while imprisoned, he continues to help build the kingdom through correspondence.

2 Timothy 1:3-4 “I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day . . . Greatly desiring to see thee, being mindful of thy tears, that I may be filled with joy” Paul’s time in prison is spent praying, night and day. He repeats this desire to see Timothy three times in the letter (1:4, 4:9, 21).

2 Timothy 1:5 “I am reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice” (NIV) The last portion of the thanks goes out to the women in Timothy’s early life. As mentioned in the introduction of 1 Timothy, Lois and Eunice had a significant impact on his faith and scriptural understanding.

Encouragement to be Patient in Persecution

2 Timothy 1:6-12

2 Timothy 1:6 “Fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hand” (BSB) As in 1 Timothy, we are told that Timothy received a *gift* through the laying on of hands—priesthood possibly?

2 Timothy 1:7 “the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline” (NIV) God does not generate fear, but power and love. A “sound mind” is also translated, “self-control” (JB, RSV) or “self-discipline” (NIV, NEB).

2 Timothy 1:8-12 “So do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord or of me his prisoner . . . [or] of this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher . . . this is no cause for shame” (NIV) It sounds as though Paul’s imprisonment may have become a point of shame or embarrassment to some.

2 Timothy 1:13-14 “Hold on to the pattern of sound teaching you have heard from me, with the faith and love that are in Christ . . . with the help of the Holy Spirit” (BSB) By following the pattern that the apostles have set, the Spirit can testify of truth and keep disciples aligned on the path of the gospel. Teaching that is consistent with these two sources are consistent with this dispensation, “if ye receive not the Spirit ye shall not teach” (D&C 42:14).

2 Timothy 1:15 “all who are in Asia turned away from me” It has only been a little over thirty years since the Lord’s resurrection and apostasy is already rampant. Doctrines have been altered, and Christians have turned against the cause, including the two names mentioned here (Phygellus is only mentioned here, and Hymenaeus was an apostate living in Ephesus, 1 Timothy 1:3, 20). Paul had prophesied of this ten-years earlier as recorded in Acts 20:29, “after my departing shall grievous wolves enter.”

2 Timothy 1:16-18 “Lord show mercy to the household of Onesiphorus, because he often refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chains” Wealthy Onesiphorus from Ephesus, sought Paul out while he was imprisoned in Rome and comforted him. We are not told, but as Paul includes his name in this letter, perhaps Timothy sent him to help Paul.

2 TIMOTHY 2

Appeal for Endurance

2 Timothy 2:1-13

2 Timothy 2:1-2 “My son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ” Paul concentrates advice for Timothy in this

chapter. Paul asks Timothy to follow his good example as a disciple of Christ and teach others to do the same.

2 Timothy 2:3–7 “endure hardness as a good soldier . . . and also if anyone competes in athletics . . . [or] the hardworking farmer” (NKJV) Paul encourages Timothy to magnify his calling by giving him examples from three professions that have a reputation of working hard: the military, athletics, and farmers. The phrase, “*endure hardness*” is also translated, “share in suffering” (RSV) or “endure hardship with us” (NIV), or “put up with your share of difficulties” (JB). Paul wants Timothy to fight for the gospel, like a soldier. In verse 5, “Masteries” refers to sportive competitions for the victor’s crown. In verse six, a farmer (or “husbandman” in KJV) will eat his fruits—just as a servant of God will enjoy the fruit of his labors.

2 Timothy 2:8a “Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead” Paul specifically defends the issues that have been attacked—such as Jesus’ physical resurrection—by groups like the Gnostics (see 2 Timothy 2:18).

2 Timothy 2:8b–10 “This is my gospel, for which I am suffering even to the point of being chained like a criminal. But God’s word is not chained. Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect . . . in Christ” (NIV) Paul endured his persecutions for the hope that salvation would be spread, just as his Master Jesus Christ had.

2 Timothy 2:11–13 “If we died with him, we will also live with him; if we endure, we will also reign with him. If we disown him, he will also disown us; if we are faithless, he remains faithful, for he cannot disown himself” (NIV) Paul quotes a lovely poem or hymn (portions of which are also found in Romans 6:5). This message must have been very poignant for those who watched their fellow Christians deny their faith to avoid persecution.

Teachings of the Lord’s Servants

2 Timothy 2:14–26

2 Timothy 2:14–17 “Keep reminding God’s people . . . against quarreling . . . Avoid godless chatter . . . their teaching will spread like gangrene” (NIV) The Ephesians must have had a problem with quarreling and “vain babblings” which “eat as doth a canker” (KNV), which “only ruins those who listen” (NIV). Paul’s solution was for Timothy to do his best to teach “the word of truth” (BSB).

2 Timothy 2:18 “They say that the resurrection has already occurred, and they undermine the faith of some” (BSB) The problem was with corrupt Gnostic teachers who said that the resurrection had already come, and the rest of the saints had missed it. There is also evidence that the Gnostics taught that Jesus had already come again, and that a physical resurrection was not going to happen at all; “They allegorized away the doctrine, and

turned all into figures and metaphors.”⁴⁹ The early Christian father, Irenæus, explained that these false teachers had developed false spirituality of invincible materialism that plausibly supported their disbelief in the physical resurrection of the body.⁵⁰ The Gnostics were more similar to the Jewish sects of Sadducees and Essenes who did not believe in a physical resurrection. To them, nothing material was truly eternal.⁵¹

2 Timothy 2:19–21 “The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity” If disciples stand on God’s foundation, and take His name, then we receive a sure seal and will “depart from iniquity.” Paul quotes an Old Testament phrase, “The Lord knows those who are his” (Numbers 16:5).

2 Timothy 2:22 “Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart” The mature Paul advises Timothy and all saints to seek the gifts of the Spirit. By mentioning the positive gifts in opposition to physical lusts, the text suggests that the same dynamic force that is associated with the negative lusts should be applied positively toward seeking spiritual gifts.

2 Timothy 2:23–24 “Lord’s servant must not be quarrelsome but must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful” (NIV). As a leader, Timothy must have known the difference between teaching and debating—one is selfless, the other selfish. Contention was a problem in the early church and the Lord denounced it shortly after He arrived to visit the Nephites (3 Nephi 11:29). At the very beginning of our dispensation, before the translation of the Book of Mormon and the organization of the church, the Lord taught: “that I may establish my gospel, that there may not be so much contention; yea, Satan doth stir up the hearts of the people to contention concerning the points of my doctrine; and in these things they do err” (D&C 10:63).

2 TIMOTHY 3

Evil in the Last Days

2 Timothy 3:1–9

2 Timothy 3:1–5 “in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous . . . Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away” Paul’s “latter-day prophecy” lists twenty signs of corruption. He abruptly stops his staccato litany of sins and turns to the present tense: “from such turn away.” Elsewhere the New Testament referred to his time as “last days” (Acts 2:17; 1 Corinthians 10:11; Hebrews 1:2; James 5:3; etc.). Every one of them exists in our culture, did exist in the Greco-Roman culture, and exists whenever Satan’s influence dominates the earth. Some of the words need translations:

- “without natural affection” can describe abortion.
- “Incontinent/*akratés*” also means: “lacking self-control, inclined to excess” or addictions.
- “Heady, highminded” means “reckless” or “rash and conceited” (NIV)

2 Timothy 3:6 “They are the kind who worm their way into households and captivate vulnerable women weighed down with sins and led astray by various passions” (BSB) In the Greco-Roman culture there were many examples of rampant promiscuity. The temples to the fertility goddesses were nothing more than brothels. In addition, Paul describes an aggressive perpetrator who attempts to “creep” into people’s homes (KJV). The apostle has just stated “from such turn away.” He refers to “vulnerable women” or “foolish women” (ISV), “silly women,” (KJV), or “weak-minded women” (GWT), but I would also add that in my world, many of these women have been taken advantage of, manipulated or abused without their consent.

2 Timothy 3:7 “Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth” A few translations include the subject from the previous verse, “these women always want to learn something new, but they never can discover the truth” (CSV, also ISV). The internet has brought the new problem of information bombardment. Now we must carefully choose our teachers, media, websites, etc. Truth can be found from heavenly sources, in nature, in prayer, and in all that is good. The prophet Moroni teaches that we must seek with sincerity and pray to know if things are true before the Spirit will witness (Moroni 10:4–5).

2 Timothy 3:8–9 Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses . . . and disqualified from the faith” This story from Moses’ time is lost. Yet Numbers 26:12 recorded the names (but spelled them differently).

All Scripture Is God’s Word

2 Timothy 3:10–17

2 Timothy 3:10–11 “You, however, have observed my teaching, my conduct, my purpose, my faith, my patience, my love, my endurance, my persecutions, and the sufferings . . . [in] Lystra . . . Yet the Lord rescued me from all of them” (BSB) Timothy knew the doctrines Paul taught. The word “patience” (KJV) is now more passive than it was at the time. Endure is a better translation. Paul lists a few of the afflictions he endured to refresh Timothy’s memory, including one from Timothy’s hometown of Lystra. Perhaps Paul included them to prepare Timothy for his future challenges.

2 Timothy 3:12–14 “all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. For evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived. But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned” (JST) Paul’s sobering thought becomes his core message to Timothy: Followers of Christ will suffer persecution. Even though the JST only changed one word, “but” was changed to “for,” the meaning became causal. Persecution came as a result of evil.

2 Timothy 3:15–17 “from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. And all scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness” (JST) Timothy’s mother and grandmother began teaching him the Book of Moses or Psalms (the most available texts found in synagogues and house churches at the time) when he was still an “infant” (NIV). Most children have much natural faith and an aptitude for spiritual learning. Their following of “inspired” scripture becomes a disciple’s measuring rod of a good teacher.

2 TIMOTHY 4

Charge to Timothy: Preach Sound Doctrine

2 Timothy 4:1–8

2 Timothy 4:1–2 “I charge you . . . Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and encourage with every form of patient instruction” (BSB) Paul’s charge to Timothy has an urgency to carry on the work. While Paul is unable to do all he wishes from prison, it is as if he feels more need for others to carry on in his place. His message shares ideas with D&C 121:43, “Reproving betimes [immediately] with sharpness, when moved upon by the Holy Ghost; and then showing forth afterward an increase of love.”

2 Timothy 4: 3–4 “the time will come when men will not tolerate sound doctrine, but with itching ears they will gather around themselves teachers to suit their own desires” (BSB) Paul’s charge also sounds a little like Jeremiah’s jeremiad as he saw the apostasy of 600 BC, “the prophets prophesy falsely... and my people love to have it so” (Jerimiah 5:31). This prophecy seems especially applicable for Christians who leave their faith or “lose” the truth. The apostasy creeps in among the believers too in the form of “fables” or myths.

2 Timothy 4:5 “Be sober . . . do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry” (BSB) Paul asks Timothy to “do the work of an evangelist.” Most read this as missionary work, but it may include Joseph Smith’s definition of an evangelist as a patriarch.

2 Timothy 4:6 “For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand” The image of a Jewish temple sacrifice is touching, as Paul feels he is approaching death. He has offered himself to the Lord and the end is close. He suffered in many prisons and faced death many times, but now the Spirit whispered that his mission was drawing to a close.

2 Timothy 4:7–8 “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith . . . the crown of righteousness is laid up for me . . . [and] to all who crave His appearing” (BSB) In this last preserved letter,

Paul expresses satisfaction that he won his long difficult race. Paul's life is a study in priority. Clement of Rome, one of the early Church Fathers who may have known Paul, wrote of him, "Through jealousy and strife Paul showed the way to the prize of endurance. Seven times he was in bonds; he was exiled; he was stoned. He was a heralded both in the east and in the west; he gained the noble fame of his faith; he taught righteousness to all the world. And when he had reached the limits of the west, he gave his testimony before the rulers and thus passed from the world and was taken up into the holy place—the greatest example of endurance."⁵²

Personal Greetings and Benediction

2 Timothy 4:9-22

2 Timothy 4:9-12 "Make every effort to come to me quickly, because . . . only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you" Paul again asks Timothy to come soon (and then again even more urgently in verse 4:21). This is Paul's most pessimistic letter—just as *Peter's* last letter was his most pessimistic. Both are filled with evidence of the apostasy. He names six people who have turned from him and the faith and three who have remained committed: Luke, Mark and Tychicus. Paul's "beloved physician and companion" is the only friend with him in the prison. Mark was Paul's junior companion on his first mission (Acts 12:12, 25). This reunion speaks to the forgiveness on both sides. The book of Acts recorded their history when Paul was not willing to work with him, but those days are over, the rift is healed, and Paul seeks for his companionship now (Acts 15:37-39). Tychicus was returning to Ephesus with Paul's letter and possibly Onesiphorus (2 Timothy 1:17-18). Paul asks some of the brightest minds of the Church to come to Rome, so it must have been legal to be a Christian then.

2 Timothy 4:13 "When you come, bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas, and my scrolls, especially the parchments" (BSB) Paul had left personal things in Troas. Either he was arrested there, or he traveled through Troas to Rome. The winter was approaching as he asks for his coat (4:21). Most of all he wants the "parchments" which probably refers to his scriptures. He may have had Epistles or a collection of words from Jesus, or possibly his own copy of an Old Testament scroll or two (this is evidence of Paul's wealthy past).

The Lord Remains Faithful

2 Timothy 4:16-18 "At my first defense . . . everyone deserted me . . . But the Lord stood by me and strengthened me so that through me the message would be fully proclaimed, and all the Gentiles" (BSB) At Paul's defense, the Spirit allowed him to powerfully testify of the Lord as he told his story. He felt rescued by the Lord and trusts that he will be taken "into His heavenly kingdom."

Final Greetings

2 Timothy 4:19 "Greet Prisca and Aquila, as well as . . ." Paul includes nine names as well as the brethren. Two are his dear friends who were also tent makers. Paul consistently refers to her in his letters as Prisca, while Luke writes out Priscilla (Acts 18:2-3, 18-19, 24-26; Romans 16:3-5; 1 Corinthians 16:19; 2 Timothy 4:19). They met

in Corinth on his second mission. They stand as ideal examples of a Christian couple unified in the Lord's work.

2 Timothy 4:21–22 “Do thy diligence to come before winter . . . Grace be with you. Amen” Paul's fourth request for Timothy now adds, “Do your utmost to come” before the weather changes and travel will be more difficult and Paul will be colder without his cloak (NKJV). He ends as he begins, referencing “grace” as a gift or blessing to man from Jesus Christ, or used sometimes as an expression of gratitude.

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO PHILEMON⁵³

This sweet, short epistle is a private letter from Paul to his friend Philemon who was a member of the church in Colossae, a city near Ephesus.⁵⁴ Paul, while a prisoner in Rome, instructed a man named Onesimus who converted to the Gospel. At some point, Paul learns that this new convert is actually the runaway slave of his dear friend Philemon, back in Colossae. Paul writes to Philemon, letting him know that he has found Onesimus and that he is sending him back, yet he pleads for Philemon to receive *not* as an escaped slave—with the punishment and consequences that would entail—but as a fellow brother in Christ.

Two beautiful aspects of this epistle are: 1) Paul wrote it as a chiasmus, a form of poetry popular in ancient Greek, Latin and Hebrew; and 2) Paul uses his relationship with Onesimus as a symbol for Christ's relationship with mankind. Paul serves a symbol for Christ in the way that he acts as a mediator between Philemon and Onesimus, pleading Onesimus' case before his former owner. Onesimus represents all of us: unprofitable servants and slaves to sin unless we are converted to Christ, and always dependent on Christ to advocate for us. This metaphor is evident in many of the verses of this chapter (especially verses 10–12, 15, 17–19), but not necessarily in all of them.

Outline: Chiasmic Structure

the following chiasmus is taken directly from John W. Welch⁵⁵

Epistolary (–3)

B. Paul's prayers for Philemon (4)

C. Philemon's love, faith, and hospitality (5–7)

D. Paul could use his authority (8)

E. But prefers to make supplication (9–10)

F. Onesimus is a convert of Pauls (10)

G. Paul has made Onesimus profitable (11)

him to the Gospel. This idea of becoming a son/daughter of Christ as a result of conversion exists throughout the scriptures. John 1:12–13 “But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”

Paul is accepting Onesimus as a “son” in the same way that Christ accepts all those who come unto Him as his “sons and daughters.” As King Benjamin states, “And now, because of the covenant which ye have made ye shall be called the children of Christ, his sons, and his daughters; for behold, this day he hath spiritually begotten you; for ye say that your hearts are changed through faith on his name; therefore, ye are born of him and have become his sons and his daughters.” (Mosiah 5:7) Paul “begat” Onesimus when he converted to Christ, in the same way that we are all “begotten” sons and daughters of Christ when we ally ourselves with Him through covenant making.

Philemon 1:11 “Which in time past was to thee unprofitable” According to King Benjamin, we, like Onesimus, are all unprofitable servants: “if ye should serve him with all your whole souls yet ye would be unprofitable servants.” (Mosiah 2:21). Matthew 17:10 describes how even the faithful are “unprofitable servants.” Like Onesimus when he intentionally left his master, we, through our sin, pride and negligence, often abandon Him whom we are supposed to serve. In an interesting play on words, Onesimus actually means “profitable,”⁵⁷ possibly implying that through his conversion to Christ, he is becoming “profitable” again.

Philemon 1:12 “Whom I have sent again: thou therefore receive him, that is, mine own bowels” In the NIV, this verse reads: “I am sending him—who is my very heart—back to you.” Paul asks Philemon to take Onesimus back because he (Paul) loves him. This is reminiscent of when Christ visits the Nephites and invites people forward to be healed, and he said, “Behold, my *bowels* are filled with compassion towards you.” (3 Nephi 17:6 italics added) Christ also declared, “Greater love hath no man than this, that a many lay down his life for his friends.” (John 15:13). This love is what moves Paul to advocate for Onesimus and what moves Christ to advocate and sacrifice for us!

Philemon 1:14 “But without thy mind would I do nothing; that thy benefit should not be as it were of necessity, but willingly” It is noteworthy that Paul honors and respects Philemon’s agency. The NIV translates it this way: “But I did not want to do anything without your consent, so that any favor you do would not seem forced but would be voluntary.” In the next six verses, Paul gives a convincing argument for why he hopes Philemon chooses to forgive Onesimus and receive him as a saint, but he does not seek to compel him, as a master would to a slave. It’s almost as if Paul could have quoted him this passage from the Doctrine and Covenants: “Verily I say, men should be anxiously engaged in a good cause, and do many thing of their own free will, and bring to pass much righteousness; for the power is in them, wherein they are agents unto themselves.” (D&C 58:27–28)

Philemon 1:15 “For perhaps therefore departed for a season, that thou shouldest receive him for ever.” This verse is significant because, together with verse 14, it forms the center of the chiasmus; the center is the home for the most important message of the text. This verse has a little poetic parallelism to it all of its own: You lost Onesimus *temporarily* as a slave so that you could have him back *eternally* as a fellow brother in Christ. For us, this has parallels to the plan of Salvation: Heavenly Father “loses” us to sin when we enter this fallen world, so that ultimately, we can be reunited with him eternally, as new creatures, born of Christ. If we apply this analogy to verse 14 as well, it would imply that Christ cannot compel Heavenly Father to “take us back,” but Christ gives Him every compelling reason why He can. This is the heart of the chiasmus and the heart of the Gospel: we can be changed from our temporary state as “servants to sin” to an eternally righteous state as followers of Christ.

Philemon 1:16 “Not now as a servant, but above a servant.” While in verse 13, Paul talks about wanting to keep Onesimus on as a missionary helper and assistant, here he advocates for him to be received back home as an equal.

Philemon 1:17 “If thou count me therefore a partner, received him as myself.” Paul is asking Philemon to receive Onesimus as if Philemon were receiving Paul himself. This hearkens to Christ’s teaching in Luke 9:48 “Whosoever shall receive this child in my name receiveth me” and Matthew 25:40 “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.” Christ pleads for us to treat others as we would him, in the same way that Paul asks Philemon to treat Onesimus as he would treat the Apostle himself.

Philemon 1:18 “If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account.” Here Paul is saying that he will pay back to Philemon whatever Onesimus owes him, and he will also pay for any wrongs he has occurred: Paul is willing to take on this man’s debt. This willingness to pay someone else’s debt is similar to what the good Samaritan—representing Christ—did for the robbed and injured man left on the side of the road.⁵⁸ He left him at an inn and paid the innkeeper two pence and then said to him, “Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.” (Luke 10:35)

Elder Uchtdorf explained, “As a result [of sin], every man, woman, and child was shut out of [God’s] presence—that is until Jesus Christ, the Lamb without spot, offered His life as a ransom for our sins. Because Jesus owed no debt to justice, He could pay our debt and meet the demands of justice for every soul. And that includes you and me. Jesus Christ paid the price for our sins.”⁵⁹ If Onesimus returned to his former owner, he could face death as a consequence for his escape,⁶⁰ but Paul is willing to pay Onesimus’ debts so in order to save his life. Similarly, in order to safely return to the presence of the Father, we need Christ to save us from both spiritual and physical death by paying for the debt of our sins.

Philemon 1:19 “...albeit I do not say to thee how thou owest unto me even thine own self besides.” Paul, somewhat playfully here, is gently reminding Philemon, “Don’t forget that you already owe me, bro, for saving *your* soul.” Like Philemon is to Paul, we are all spiritually in debt to the Savior, so when He asks us to forgive others, He can do so with authority because He has already forgiven us for more. (See the parable of the two debtors in Matthew 18:23–25.) As King Mosiah said, “...In the first place, he hath created you, and granted unto you your lives, for which ye are indebted unto him. ... and ye are still indebted unto him, and are, and will be, forever and ever; therefore, of what have ye to boast?” (Mosiah 2:24) Paul reminds Philemon of his debt of gratitude in the same thing that King Benjamin reminds us of it here.

Philemon 1:20 “**Yea, brother, let me have joy of thee in the Lord.**” The joy that comes from seeing someone you love live the Gospel and make righteous choices is also reflected in Alma 38:3 “I say unto you, my son, that I have had great joy in thee already, because of thy faithfulness and thy diligence, and thy patience and thy long-suffering among the people of the Zoramites.”

Philemon 1:21–25 “**For I trust that through your prayers I shall be given unto you.**” As shown in the outline of the chiasmus, Paul opens his letter talking about his prayers for Philemon in verse 4 (“I thank my God, making mention of thee always in my prayers”) and then concludes with a request for prayers from Philemon on his behalf (verse 22).

Header Image: St. Paul in Prison by Rembrandt, 1627. Image via Wikimedia Commons.

ENDNOTES

1. Bromiley, *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, 1.171, “. . . however, in harmony with the well-founded tradition that Ephesus was the scene of John’s later activity.”
2. Anderson, *Understanding Paul*, 317, 344, 371–373.
3. William Farmer, ed., *The International Bible Commentary* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1998), 1733. “First Timothy could be entitled, ‘The Gospel of Paul in Conflict with False Teaching.’”
4. Strongs, #517, “*aoratos*,” <https://biblehub.com/greek/517.htm> (accessed 10–7–19)
5. Strongs, #2272, *hésuchio*, <https://biblehub.com/greek/2272.htm> (accessed 19–9–19).
6. Looking at whole Pauline sphere, references that show support of women teaching include: Romans 12:7; 16:1–2; 1 Corinthians 12:28–29; Galatians 6:5–6, “*hekastos*/everyone;” Ephesians 4:8, “*anthropos*/male or female,” 4:11, 29; Philippians 4:3, 2 Timothy 2:2; Titus 2:3–4; also see Acts 18:26). Modern critical biblical scholars question the Pauline authorship of the pastoral letters and others. Only seven Epistles are generally accepted as pure Pauline (Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, 1 Thessalonians and Philemon). However, in this book, I refer to the author as Paul of the entire traditional corpus (Romans through Hebrews), even though that is debated at present by scholars.
7. Anderson, *Understanding Paul*, 317. Anderson sees this letter “from the opening warning about rebuking false teachers to the closing language . . . [as a] sober warning against those reforming the revealed gospel.” A lack of respect for authority was a regular problem in other New Testament churches too—see 1 Corinthians 9:1–5; 16:11; Titus 2:15.
8. The churches under Timothy’s care in Ephesus were not the only ones with this problem. In the book of Revelation, John describes the great harlot and mother of abomination with similar ornaments: “the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls” (Revelation 17:4). Peter, too, disapproved of women who prioritized their worldly adornments over inner goodness: “Your beauty should reside, not in outward adornment—the braiding of the hair or jewelry, or dress—but in the inmost centre of your being, with its imperishable ornament, a gentle quiet spirit which is of high value in the sight of God” (1 Peter 3:3–4, NEB).
9. Steinberg, *Encyclopedia of Jewish Medical Ethics*, 954. The Talmud also lists several rules for men’s hair. “A groom during his seven days of wedding feasts is allowed to cut his hair. . . . A *Priest (Kohen)* may not let his hair grow wild but is obligated to cut it every thirty days, . . . A *High Priest* cuts his hair every Friday. A *king* cuts his hair every day. The men of the watch in the temple cut their hair on Thursdays in honor of the Sabbath.” Pharisaic Jews insisted that a woman veil herself head to toe when she left her home.
10. Mishnah, *Kiddushin* 30a. For many previous generations, Jewish women were kept from studying at all, but in Christianity, that prohibition is clearly lifted.
11. Wilson, *Christ’s Emancipation*, Chapter 1, “Communication.”
12. Strongs, #2271, *hésuchia*, <https://biblehub.com/greek/2271.htm> (10–9–19)
13. Also see D&C 32:1; 90:15; 97:1; 107:99–100; 136:32
14. Spencer W Kimball, *Ensign*, October 1979, 103–4.

15. Josephus, *Antiquities*, IV.8:15; *Mishnah, Shebuoth*, 4:1, only certain men could act as legal witnesses, “but not . . . women.” *Mishnah, Kiddushin* 4.13. Rabbi Eliezer taught: “[Women] may not teach young children.”
16. *Mishnah, Shebuoth*, 4:1; We find this type of scriptural interpretation in the *Mishnah*, which condemns women in general as liars, because Sarah lied (Genesis 18:5).
17. Ben Sira, *Ecclesiasticus*, 26:1, 12–17.
18. Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, I.1.4.
19. Adam is the seventy–seventh name as Luke organized Joseph’s genealogy numerically. Luke honors the first parents not only as the lineage that brought the Savior, but also gave Adam the noble title “the son of God,” the only other person besides Jesus to share that name in the New Testament (Lk 3:38)
20. Brown, *Introduction to the New Testament*, 660–661.
21. Bruce R. McConkie, *Sermons and Writings of Bruce R. McConkie* (Salt Lake City, UT: Bookcraft, 1989), 190. Elder McConkie gave this talk at a BYU Devotional on February 17, 1981 and referred to the three pillars as the creation, the fall, and the atonement.
22. The Greek word translated here as *transgression* literally is “to overstep.”
23. For example, Ephesians 6:4 reads, “fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord,” and 1 Thessalonians 2:11: “As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children.” Also see Colossians 3:21; Ephesians 5:31; 1 Timothy 5:1; Hebrews 12:7, 9, etc.
24. I find it interesting that the Prophet Joseph Smith did not feel the need to change other verses in the chopater, only added the plural “they,” (and spelling of braided and to change “but” to “for” in verse 12). We do not know exactly when he made these changes—he may have done so during his initial editing in 1830–31 or when he returned to the text afterwards. However, by the time Joseph asked the Church to publish his translation of the Bible, he had already called women to preside in the Relief Society, had empowered women to offer healing blessings, had called women to teach in worship services, and had ordained women.
25. Elder M. Russell Ballard, *Ensign* (May 2012): 19. Elder Ballard confirms the unified work of spouses in Christ’s restored Church: the power of God is seen in both procreation and priesthood powers (1 Corinthians 4:20).
26. Focusing on another word in 1 Timothy 2:15 also helps our understanding of this verse. Adam and Eve must join in the process of salvation, in being “saved/*sozo/rescued*,” by populating the earth and developing “faith . . . charity and holiness” (1 Timothy 2:15, KJV). The New Testament uses “saved/*sozo*” to teach humanity what they must contribute to their salvation by building on their belief with faith, prayer, baptism, hope, example, works, and obedience as found in other verses that use “saved/*sozo*” as shown below.
 - 1) “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved” (Acts 16:31; Romans 10:9; 1 Corinthians 1:21)
 - 2) “Call on the Lord [to] be saved” (Acts 2:21; Romans 10:13)
 - 3) “Baptism doth also now save us” (1 Peter 3:21; also Acts 2:40–41)
 - 4) “We are saved by hope” (Romans 8:24)
 - 5) “For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?” (1 Corinthians 7:16)

- 6) “For by grace are ye saved through faith” (Ephesians 2:8)
- 7) “Received . . . the love of the truth, that they might be saved” (2 Thessalonians 2:10)
- 8) “Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee” (1 Timothy 4:16).
- 9) “To save him . . . shew thee my faith by my works” (James 2:14–18; also Matthew 9:22; 14:30; 19:25; 27:42, 49; Mark 5:23, 28; 6:56; Luke 8:36; 13:23; 23:39; John 11:12).
- 10) “He which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins” (James 5:20).
27. 1 Timothy 2:11–15 contain lingering baggage from the unhealthy culture of the time. This inconsistency may be the possible result of a different author, editorial changes, a misunderstanding, or even the author’s mood on a given day. Rather than accepting them blindly, students of the Scriptures are responsible to seek the spirit of revelation and to confirm truth through one’s own mind and heart (D&C 8:2–3). In contrast, Jesus set in motion a restoration of relationships. The cultural “that fettered the perception of women was not easily removed. After centuries of wallowing in unhealthy thought patterns, practices, and relationships, early Christians had the daunting task of changing their thinking and behavior.” Wilson, *Emancipation*.
28. Kelly Ogden.
29. Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Anchor Bible: The First and Second Letters to Timothy* (New Haven, CT: Yale Univ, 2001), 214. The message emphasizes that the man is free from the appearance of immorality.
30. Anderson, *Understanding Paul*, 329.
31. Anderson, *Understanding Paul*, 321.
32. President Henry B. Eyring, “Holiness and the Plan of Happiness,” General Conference October 2019. Elder Jeffery R. Holland, “The Message, the Meaning, and the Multitude,” General Conference October 2019.
33. Carter Lindberg, *A Brief History of Christianity* (Oxford, England: Blackwell, 2006).
34. Deuteronomy 5:16; “. . . the widow(s), which are within thy gates, shall come, and shall eat and be satisfied; that the LORD thy God may bless thee” (also see Deuteronomy 14:29; also 24:17–22; 26:12–13; Isaiah 1:17; Jeremiah 22:3; Exodus 20:12; etc.)
35. *Mishnah, Ketuboth*, 4.4. In the Jewish world, a woman was allowed to work as a cook, baker, spinner, weaver, laundress, inn-keeper, female hairdresser, midwife, or mourner.
36. Witherington, *Women and the Genesis of Christianity*, 23; Jackson J. Spielvogel, *Western Civilization 7th ed.* (Belmont, CA: Thomson & Wadsworth, 2009), volume 1, 152; “Augustus also revised the **tax** laws to penalize bachelors, **widowers**, and **married** persons who had fewer than three children.”
37. Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, 5:3–4. 293.
38. Ehat and Cook: *Words of Joseph Smith*, 10; also 9, 42, 110, 210, 327–331 “Paul . . . knew . . . all the ordinances, and blessings were in the Church.”
39. Richard N. Holzapfel, Thomas A. Wayment, Eric D. Huntsman, *Jesus Christ and the World of the New Testament* (SLC, UT: Deseret, 2006). John MacArthur, ed. *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago: IL: Moody Press,

- 1985), ch 18, Ephesians 5:18. A “stong drink” at that time meant two-parts wine, one-part water. Also, Ezekiel 44:21, explained the priests’ dietary restrictions from wine: “. . . Neither shall any priest drink wine, when they enter into the inner court.”
40. Bromiley, *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, Bartchy, “Servant” 4.420. Timothy G. Parkin, *Old Age in the Roman World: A Cultural and Social History* (Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins, 2003), 183. Some large cities had higher percentages, including Jerusalem, which recorded that fifty percent of the population were servants or slaves. To fully appreciate how many slaves there were, a normal middle-class Roman citizen owned eight slaves. Across the Roman Empire, at different times, estimates range between six and sixty million people were slaves. Junius P. Rodriguez, *The Historical Encyclopedia of World Slavery* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABD–CLI, 1997), 7.548.
 41. Campbell, *Marriage and Family in the Biblical World*, 135. Bromiley, *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, 4.545. Some sources record a release at age thirty, others thirty-five or forty. The process releasing a slave was known as manumission
 42. Steven C. Harper, “The Law: D&C 42,” in Matthew McBride and James Goldberg, eds., *Revelations in Context: The Stories behind the Sections of the Doctrine and Covenants* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter–day Saints), 93–98. Stewardship, accountability, and agency are the three points Harper emphasizes.
 43. Ezra T. Benson, “Beware of Pride,” General Conference April 1989. “Yes, pride is the universal sin, the great vice. The antidote for pride is humility—meekness, submissiveness. (See Alma 7:23.)”
 44. *Ibid.*, “When pride has a hold on our hearts, we lose our independence of the world and deliver our freedoms to the bondage of men’s judgment. The world shouts louder than the whisperings of the Holy Ghost. The reasoning of men overrides the revelations of God, and the proud let go of the iron rod. (See 1 Nephi 8:18–28; 11:25; 15: 23–24.) Pride is a sin that can readily be seen in others but is rarely admitted in ourselves.”
 45. Hugh Nibley.
 46. Strongs, #2843. *Koinónikos*, <https://biblehub.com/greek/2843.htm> (accessed 10–10–19)
 47. Anderson, *Understanding Paul*, 364. Around AD 200, the historian Tertulian wrote, “At Rome Nero was the first who stained with blood the rising faith” (*ibid.* 362). Tertulian named Peter and Paul as Nero’s victims. Clement the Bishop in Rome in AD 96 linked the apostles’ courage with Neronian persecution: “The greatest and most righteous pillars. . . [were] persecuted and contended unto death.”
 48. *Ibid.*, 363. “In July AD 64 a fire broke out in the huddled shops near the great circus. A fateful wind projected the flames down the length of the circus, through narrow streets, and over the hills, sparing nothing and no one. Fleeing refugees stared at escape routes cut off by sudden fiery walls. The only defense was to destroy lines of buildings that otherwise would have been bridges for the blaze. After five days of chaos, only four of the city’s fourteen districts were untouched.”
 49. Ellicott, *Ellicott’s Commentary for English Readers*, 2 Timothy 2:18.
 50. Irenæus, *Haer.* ii. 31, 2; cf. Tertullians. *de Resurr.* 19. https://biblehub.com/commentaries/2_Timothy/2-18.htm (accessed 10–10–19).
 51. Ellicott, *Ellicott’s Commentary for English Readers*, 2 Timothy 2:18.
 52. Anderson, *Understanding Paul*, 383. “Life is not long enough to reach many goals, and Paul reached his because he

devoted his life to it” (378).

53. Commentary by Jen Nuckols Bromley.
54. David J Ridges, *Your Study of the New Testament Made Easier, Part 2 Acts through Revelation*, (Springville, UT: Cedar Fort, 2007), 319.
55. John Welch and John Hall, *Charting the New Testament* (Provo, UT: 2002). <https://byustudies.byu.edu/system/files/pdfs/Charts/NT/15-20.pdf>
56. Paul Nolan Hyde, *A Comprehensive Commentary of the Epistle of Paul to Philemon*, (Orem, UT: Parrish Press, 2009;2015), 10.
57. Wilson, *Christ's Emancipation of Women*, 255.
58. John W. Welch, “The Good Samaritan: Forgotten Symbols,” *Ensign*, February 2007, <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/ensign/2007/02/the-good-samaritan-forgotten-symbols?lang=eng>
59. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “Behold, The Man!,” *Ensign*, May 2018, <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/2018/04/behold-the-man?lang=eng>
60. David J Ridges, *Your Study of the New Testament Made Easier, Part 2 Acts through Revelation*, (Springville, UT: Cedar Fort, 2007), 319.

