

THE PASTORAL EPISTLES: GOD'S DIRECTIVES FOR HIS UNDERSHEPHERDS

I. 1 Timothy: Basic Local Church Ministry

A. Countering A Drift In The Church From Bible Exposition (1 Timothy 1:1-7)

I. Introduction

- A. We increasingly get reports of great needs and problems in various churches in our area of the country and in other parts of the world, much of which has been produced by errant actions by Church leaders themselves.
- B. Thus, we view the Pastoral Epistles, Biblical handbooks on local pastoral ministry, for insight and application for not only our Church leaders, but also for the welfare of the people in congregations themselves.
- C. We view the epistles in the order of their writing -- 1 Timothy first, then Titus and last 2 Timothy (Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, p. 1723, "Introduction to the Letter of Paul to Titus") -- and 1 Timothy 1:1-7 directs us to realize the need for pastors to counter a drift in the local church away from Bible exposition (as follows):

II. Countering A Drift In The Church From Bible Exposition, 1 Timothy 1:1-7.

- A. When Paul wrote to Timothy, he asserted that he had been appointed as an apostle of the Church universal by the **command of God the Father**, the Church's **Savior**, and the **Lord Jesus Christ**, Who is the **hope** of the Church, 1 Timothy 1:1. These instructions were thus not mere suggestions on pastoral ministry or church leadership, but **God's orders** via apostolic authority that *every church leader in Church History was to heed!*
- B. After Paul's "fairly standard" greeting in 1 Timothy 1:2 (Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 731), he repeated a command given earlier to Timothy to continue ministering in the Church at Ephesus in addressing two key issues, addressing the tendency in a local church to drift away from Bible exposition (as follows):
 1. First, Timothy was to charge certain men not to teach any "heretical" doctrine, 1 Timothy 1:3:
 - a. The Greek verb behind Paul's reference to teaching a different doctrine is *heterodidaskaleo* (Arndt & Gingrich, A Grk.-Eng. Lex. of the N. T., 1967, p. 314), combining the adjective *hetero*, "other, another" (Ibid., p. 315) and the verb *didaskaleo*, "to be or function as a teacher" (Ibid., p. 190-191).
 - b. In this case, "other" refers to "heretical" (Ibid., p. 314), a false doctrine that counters what written Scripture teaches, so Timothy and every pastor and teacher in the church must counter unbiblical heresies!
 2. Second, Timothy was to charge certain men not **even** to "pay attention to" (*prosecho*, Ibid., p. 721) "tales, stories" (*muthos*, Ibid., p. 530-531) and endless genealogies, 1 Timothy 1:4a. We explain (as follows):
 - a. The expression "fables and endless genealogies" (KJV) refers to a single entity, for Jewish rabbis would take a name from a genealogical list in Scripture and develop a story around it, embroidering the Biblical text with all sorts of imaginable ideas about the character involved and teach these things in the synagogue along with Scripture. These stories became part of the Hebrew Haggadah in the Jewish Talmud. (William Hendriksen, New Testament Commentary: Exposition of The Pastoral Epistles, 1974, p. 58-59)
 - b. Though such stories may have been constructed with good intent, and they may have even taught a moral, they were not part of the divinely inspired Biblical text itself, but human reasoning that spawned "speculations" (*ekzetesis*, Ibid., Arndt & Gingrich, p. 239), questions and debates rather than the certainties of truth of the stewardship of the Word of God that is by faith, 1 Timothy 1:4b.
- C. Paul clarified that the aim of the charge God had given him and Timothy was to produce love that issues from a pure heart, a good conscience and a sincere faith that rises from teaching **certain truths of God-inspired Scripture itself VERSUS** "heresies" or "stories and endless genealogies," 1 Timothy 1:5.
- D. The basis of Paul's repeating this command was the fact that certain men had wandered away from Bible exposition into vain discussions, desiring to be teachers of the Law without understanding either what they were saying or the things about which they made their confident assertions, 1 Timothy 1:6-7.

Lesson: Paul repeated a command he had previously given to Timothy to remain at the Church at Ephesus so as to charge certain men to avoid drifting away from Bible exposition into teaching heretical doctrines or merely teaching extrabiblical stories about Bible characters in genealogies that had no spiritual meat and that created speculations instead of objective, divinely-inspired Bible truth that truly disciplined hearers!

Application: (1) We must avoid the threat of theological "drift" from Scripture in the local church, a drift that can begin with a mere series of speculations that eventually lead into outright heresy that counters Scripture, both of which fail to edify. (2) May all of our teaching in our Church be "expositional," what exposes the truths of the written Biblical text itself instead of what teaches mere human reasoning or outright error in unbiblical heresy.