

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PAUL TO TIMOTHY

The Main Themes of the Epistle

The epistle is not easy to outline. The message of the epistle seems to be built upon four main themes which recur throughout the epistle. Sometimes they stand alone; at other times they are mixed together. The four themes are:

- 1) The first has to do with what Paul said to Timothy for his own benefit, as a servant of the Lord. There are many examples of this, but one that is very clear is found in 1 Tim. 4:12-16.
- 2) The second concerned specific instructions to Timothy for the people of the church in Ephesus. An example of this is 1 Tim. 2:8-15.
- 3) Third, Paul seemed to be greatly concerned about false teachers and what they were teaching. See 1 Tim. 1:3-7.
- 4) Fourth, Paul's references to himself and to his own ministry. Cf. 1 Tim. 1:12-17.

The Outline of 1 Timothy

- I. Paul's address to Timothy (1 Tim. 1:1, 2).
- II. A charge for Timothy regarding false teachers (1 Tim. 1:3-11).
- III. Paul's testimony and praise to the Lord for putting him into the ministry (1 Tim. 1:12-17).
- IV. Paul's charges to Timothy concerning his ministry (1 Tim. 1:18-6:21).
 - A. Concerning the ministry as a warfare (1 Tim. 1:18-20).
 - B. Concerning prayer in the church (1 Tim. 2:1-8).
 - C. Concerning women in the church (1 Tim. 2:9-15).
 - D. Concerning church leaders (1 Tim. 3:1-13).
 - E. Personal words for Timothy (1 Tim. 3:14-6:21).
 1. The ~~subject~~ Timothy's behavior in the house of God (1 Tim. 3:14-16). ~~purpose of the epistle.~~
 2. His ministry to the people concerning false teachers (1 Tim. 4:1-11).
 3. For Timothy's personal life (1 Tim. 4:12-16).
 4. Timothy's ministry to groups within the church (1 Tim. 5:1-6:21).
 - a. Older men, older women, widows and elders (1 Tim. 5:1-20).
 - b. A parenthesis: A charge to Timothy to minister without partiality (1 Tim. 5:21-25).
 - c. Servants, masters--rich men (1 Tim. 6:1-10).
 - d. Another parenthesis: A charge to Timothy not to get involved in the very sins he would expose (1 Tim. 6:11-16).
 - e. More warnings to the rich (1 Tim. 6:17-19).
 - f. A final word for Timothy--an exhortation and a warning (1 Tim. 6:20, 21).

-- L. Dwight Custis, Pastor
Trinity Bible Church
Portland, Oregon
September, 1994