

APOLOGIA

... always be ready to give a defense [Greek, *apologia*]
to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you ... 1 PETER 3:15

Pastoral Priorities of Paul

Acts 20 – Paul mentors the elders of Ephesus

1. personal mentoring of plural elders (Acts 20:17,18)

2. service in humility & suffering (20:19, 22,23 – note Spirit's emphasis)

Just as the sermon in the synagogue at Pisidian Antioch (Ch.13:16ff.) is a sample of Paul's approach to synagogue audiences, and his speeches at Lystra (Ch.14:15ff.) and Athens (Ch.17:22ff.) are samples of his approach to pagan audiences, so we may say that this Milesian speech is a sample of his ministry to Christian audiences. But it is more than the sort of thing that Paul was accustomed to say to Christian audiences; it is plain that Luke was present when this speech was delivered (cf. Ch.21:1), and there is every reason to believe that Luke is here giving the gist of what he remembered hearing Paul say on this particular occasion. This speech is mainly hortatory, but also in some degree apologetic. It seems to be implied here and there that Paul's adversaries in the province of Asia had been prejudicing his converts against him in his absence; he therefore defends his teaching and general behaviour by appealing to his hearers' personal knowledge of him. **F.F. Bruce** *The Book of the Acts* p.413



JAMES STALKER
(1848-1927)
Ephesians – a tribute to
Paul's proficiency

3. thorough discipling – 'the whole counsel of God' (20:20,27-28)

4. whole, uncompromised gospel – centred on repentance toward God & faith in Christ (20:21) [but how can faith be built on a low view of God?]

... his success in the churches lying all around Ephesus which St. John addressed a few years afterwards in the Apocalypse; for they were probably the indirect fruit of Paul's labors. But we have a far more astonishing monument of it in the Epistles to the Ephesians. This is perhaps the profoundest book in existence; yet its author evidently expected the Ephesians to understand it. If the orations of Demosthenes, with their closely packed arguments, between whose articulations even a knife cannot thrust, be a monument of the intellectual greatness of the Greece which listened to them with pleasure; if the plays of Shakespeare, with their deep views of life and their obscure and complex language, be a testimony to the strength of mind of the Elizabethan Age, which could enjoy such solid fare in a place of entertainment; then the Epistle to the Ephesians, which sounds the lowest depths of Christian experience, is a testimony to the proficiency which Paul's converts had attained under his preaching in Ephesus. **James Stalker** *Life of St. Paul* p.102

5. selfless stewardship, grace by word & example (20:24)

6. summarized work as proclaiming 'kingdom' (in ALL its aspects as rule of God in our lives – thus gospel of grace (v 24) is not merely about forgiveness – Christ is Saviour and Lord)

7. elders accountable for the blood of the Lord's flock, thus constant attention urgent (20:25-28) [note Who appoints & equips elders]

8. need for vigilance against wolves in disguise (20:29-30) [what will be the wolf's opportunity?]

9. contrast the work of the true shepherd (20:31)

10. after Paul's departure, on what depends the security and

continued health of the elders and thus the flock? (20:32)**11. again, the example of Paul; lives out the teaching of Christ (20:33-35)****1 Timothy – Paul mentors a young elder****1. the pastor's vital relationship to pastor/elders he mentors (1:1,2)****2. Timothy's first charge at Ephesus – guard against false teachers (1:3-11) [how does Paul summarize the pastoral charge in v.5? What seems to be the 'burden' of the false teachers?]**

[1:3] Liddon points out that the Greek term *parekáleō* ("beseech", "entreat") has a personal, friendly ring. For it is a cognate of the word the Lord used for the Holy Spirit, "Paraclete", and has the root meaning *to call alongside*.

[1:3] The word translated *teaching false doctrines*, apparently coined here and found subsequently only in Christian writings, literally means "to teach other things" or "novelties." [Gordon Fee, *1 & 2 Timothy, Titus* 6]

[1:3] Paul used military language to help Timothy and his people see the seriousness of the problem ... "Charge" means "to give strict orders from a superior officer. Paul used this word ... 8 times in his two letters to Timothy (1 Tim. 1:3, 5, 18; 4:11; 5:7; 6:13, 17; 2 Tim. 4:1). [Wiersbe 16]

In 1:9-10 Paul alludes to 5 of the 10 commandments (see Wiersbe 18)

Paul uses the Greek word *pistos* ("faithful") at least 17 times in these 3 letters [the Pastoral Epistles]. The theme runs through each chapter ... [Wiersbe 7]

3. the personal testimony of an 'insolent man' saved by grace! (1:12-17) [recall how Paul summarized his pastoral charge in Acts 20:24]**4. how should Timothy regard his charge? (1:18-20)**

[1:18] The church is a well-disciplined battalion of shock troops who have as

their objective the overthrow of evil in this world and the establishment of righteousness. This calls for dedication, intensive training, carefully planned sorties, and considerable courage. How does this metaphor of warfare fit what we are doing each week in our local congregations? ... Do we have intensive training sessions? ... What about those who are AWOL (absent without leave)? Would the army be stronger if every soldier were exactly like me? [Robert Mounce, *1 & 2 Timothy: Pass It On* 24]

5. How should Christians relate to the state(s)? (2:1-4) [especially in the wake of Remembrance day, what should we remember?]

[2:1] The one clear concern that runs through the whole paragraph has to do with the gospel as for *all people* (vss 1, 4-6 and 7). In this view, the *this is good* in v.3 refers to prayer *for all people* in verse 1 ... The best explanation for this emphasis lies with the false teachers, who either through the esoteric, highly speculative nature of their teaching (1:4-6) or through its "Jewishness" (1:7) or ascetic character (4:3) are promoting an elitist or exclusivist mentality among their followers. The whole paragraph attacks that narrowness. [Gordon Fee, *1 & 2 Timothy, Titus* 26]

[2:2] The concern ... is not that Christians should have a life free from trouble or distress (which hardly fits the point of view of 2 Tim. 1:8 and 3:12) but that they should live in such a way that "no one will speak evil of the name of God and of our teaching" (6:1). This understanding is supported by 2 other factors: First, in 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12 Paul uses identical language ("live a quiet life") for the selfsame reason (to "win the respect of those who are not believers"), where "busybodies" are disrupting things (cf 2 Thess. 3:11 with 1 Tim. 5:13); and second, the language *all reverence toward God* (*eusebeia*) and *proper conduct* (*semnotes*), which is peculiar to these letters in the Pauline corpus (except for Phil. 4:8, *semnes*), has to do with behavior that can be seen. At such points one would expect "righteousness" and "holiness" in Paul if the emphasis were on one's relationship to God internal righteousness. [Gordon Fee, *1 & 2 Timothy, Titus* 27]

6. Note the stress on the word ALL in these verses, more or less workbook verses among evangelicals (2:1-7)

[2:3,4] The gospel, by its very nature ... is universal in its scope, and any narrowing of that scope by a truncated theology or by "novelties" that appeal

to the intellectual curiosities of the few is not the gospel of Christ. [Gordon Fee, *1 & 2 Timothy, Titus* 28]

[2:5] It is implied that one of many gods might desire the salvation of only a portion of the human race. The Unity of God suggests that the One Supreme Being has an equal interest in all His creatures. [Liddon 13]

[2:5,6] *There is one God* ... often came to be used in an exclusivistic way: “He is *our* God and looks out for his own.” But basic to the original intent, and what Paul is stressing here, was that the fact of *one God* not only meant that there were no other gods but that he is therefore the *one God* over all peoples. [Gordon Fee, *1 & 2 Timothy, Titus* 29]

7. The most explosive passage in the pastoral epistles? (2:8-15)

[2:11-12] It would seem probable that, at first, women did speak, whether in prayer or prophecy, at the assemblies of the faithful, 1 Cor. 14:26 ... But this was inconsistent with woman’s natural position, and was withdrawn ... In AD 398 [at the Council of Carthage], women were forbidden to teach publicly ... but allowed to give private instruction to their own sex. [Liddon 18]

[2:11-12] In [John Stuart] Mill’s work *On the Subjection of Women*, p. 85, 3rd ed., this precept of St Paul is noticed as an instance of the Apostle’s ‘acceptance of social institutions as he found them.’ The writer compares the Apostolic precepts addressed to slaves, and to the subjects of a military despotism, and then urges that Christianity was ‘not intended to stereotype existing forms of government and society.’ But the analogy between the question before us and slavery or political absolutism fails in this, that the latter are only morbid outgrowths of human society, while the position of women, as enjoined by the Apostle, finds its reason in the original constitution of human nature, which Christianity may sanctify, but cannot abrogate. [Liddon 18]

8. The first qualification of an elder/overseer (3:1)

9. Which of these qualifications are most commonly winked at in North American churches? (3:1-7)

[3:2] A pastor must be a careful student of the Word of God, and of all that assists him in knowing and teaching that Word. The pastor who is lazy in his study is a disgrace in the pulpit. [Wiersbe 43]

10. Are the standards for deacons more relaxed? (3:8-13)

[3:9] I have noticed that some church officers know their church constitutions better than they know the Word of God. ... The Scriptures were the “constitution” of the early church! A deacon who does not know the Bible is an obstacle to progress in a local assembly. [Wiersbe 47]

[3:13] The Greek word translated “degree” [standing] means “rank (as in the army), a base, a step, or a rung on a ladder.” “What an encouragement to a faithful deacon! God will “promote” him spiritually and give him more and more respect among the saints, which means greater opportunity for ministry. ... It should be remembered that, in the New Testament churches, the elders were called from out of their own local congregations. They were not imported from other places. [Wiersbe 49]

11. Another reminder of Timothy’s high calling, appropriate to the sacred institution he serves (3:14-16)

[3:15] A church does not grow by addition, but by nutrition (Eph. 4:11-16). [Wiersbe 50]

12. Which dangers are between these lines of Paul’s counsel? (4:1-10) [the spirit of competition & the spirit of individualism are not the exclusive possession of false teachers!]

[4:1] This is the only place where demons are mentioned in the Pastoral Epistles. It is striking that it is in the context of false teaching, not personal demonic oppression.

[4:8,9] Here we have 2 Greek words with very obvious English relatives. *Gymnasia* (“training”) and *agonizometha* (“strive”). Would that this metaphor from Greek athletic methods were taken seriously!

[4:8] According to Pausanias, a 2nd century Greek historian, competitors in the Olympic games had to swear that they had been in strict training for 10 months before the contest. The purpose was to maintain high standards and to insure that the competitors were only those who had submitted themselves to severe self-discipline. Ministry requires self-discipline. It is no place for those unwilling to pay the price of personal commitment. In order to run the race we are to “throw off everything that hinders” (Heb. 12:1). Activities and pursuits not necessarily wrong in themselves become wrong for those who are in divine training. [Robert Mounce, *1 & 2 Timothy: Pass It On* 119-120]

13. How can even a young man – not normally elder material – become an example of leadership? (4:11-16) [we might take a detour to consider Joseph, Daniel, Paul & the Lord Himself]

[4:6] The vigour of our Spiritual Life will be in exact proportion to the place held by the Bible in our life and thoughts. I solemnly state this from the experience of 54 years. – George Müller

[4:12] *Youth* in that culture could even refer to the age of approximately 40.

[4:15] In discussing *give yourself wholly to these things*, A.T. Robertson refers to Roman author Plutarch's use of a parallel phrase to describe Julius Caesar in war mode. "Up to his ears" in sticking to the task at hand would give the idea, Robertson suggests. [Vol 4, 582]

14. Administration of the church – using financial resources in a responsible way (5:1-16)

[5:4-8] From the letter of Cornelius of Rome to Fabius of Antioch (AD 251), it appears that in the 3rd century there were more than 1500 widows and paupers supported by the Church in Rome. [Liddon 52]

15. The necessity of honouring elders (5:17-19)

[5:17, 18] In the early church, instead of one pastor, several elders ministered ... These men would devote themselves full time to the work of the Lord, and therefore they deserved some kind of remuneration. ... "honor" is used as in "honorarium". [Wiersbe 75, 76]

16. Vigilance to maintain discipline & purity (5:20-25)

17. Note Paul's continual stress upon how non-believers view our example! (6:1,2; cf 3:7, 5:14, 6:14)

[6:1] No Christian master would consider his slaves "under the yoke", but would treat them with love and respect (Col. 4:1; Phile. 16). For a slave to rebel against an unsaved master would bring disgrace on the Gospel. "The name of God" and His doctrine would be blasphemed (Rom. 2:24). This is one reason Paul and the early missionaries did not go around preaching against the sinful institution of slavery. Such a practice would have branded the church as

a militant group trying to undermine the social order, and the progress of the Gospel would have been greatly hindered. [Wiersbe 81]

18. With what is false teaching linked in Paul's mind? (6:2-10)

[6:5] Paul was always careful not to use his calling and ministry as a means of making money. In fact, he once refused support from the Corinthian church, so that no one could accuse him of greed (1 Cor. 9:15-19). He never used his preaching as "a cloak of covetousness" (1 Thess. 2:5). What a tragedy it is today to see the religious racketeers who prey upon gullible people ... [Wiersbe 84]

[6:8] The economic and energy crises that the world faces will probably be used by God to encourage people to simplify their lives. Too many of us know the "price of everything and the value of nothing." We are so glutted with luxuries that we have forgotten how to enjoy our necessities. [Wiersbe 85, writing in 1981]

19. How should Timothy 'take hold of eternal life'? (6:11-16)

20. One last warning – a word to the wealthy (6:17-19)

[6:17-19] We may not think that this charge applies to us, but it does. After all, our standard of living today would certainly make us "rich" in the eyes of Timothy's congregation! [Wiersbe 92]

21. One last exhortation – Timothy, guard your trust – the gospel of Grace! (6:20-21)