

Paul's Later Letters

Fully Establishing the Churches According to Christ's Design

Paul's Later Letters

This is a very important letter in completing the process of fully establishing churches.

Many issues are misunderstood in most of our churches today because of the dominance of the Western, institutional church, its global missions institutions, and its plethora of parachurch organizations:

- key apostolic leaders and their teams
- the household social structure of the church as more than a metaphor
- authority structures of apostolic leaders, and elders, deacons, and leading women
- sound doctrine as an identifiable deposit
- one design for Christ's churches in every culture in every generation

Paul's Later Letters

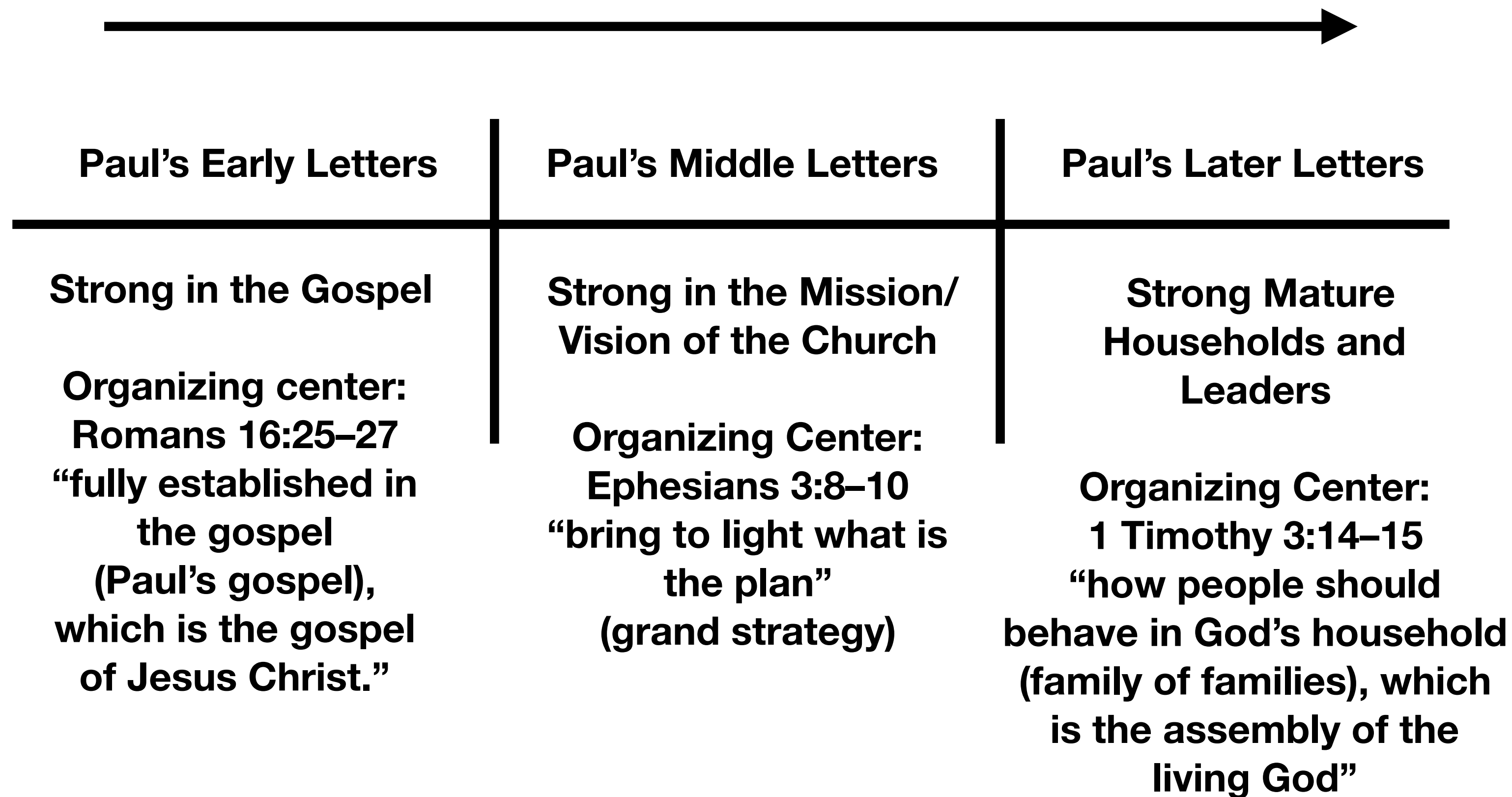
Issue: Significance of 1 Timothy in Paul's Later Letters

Questions:

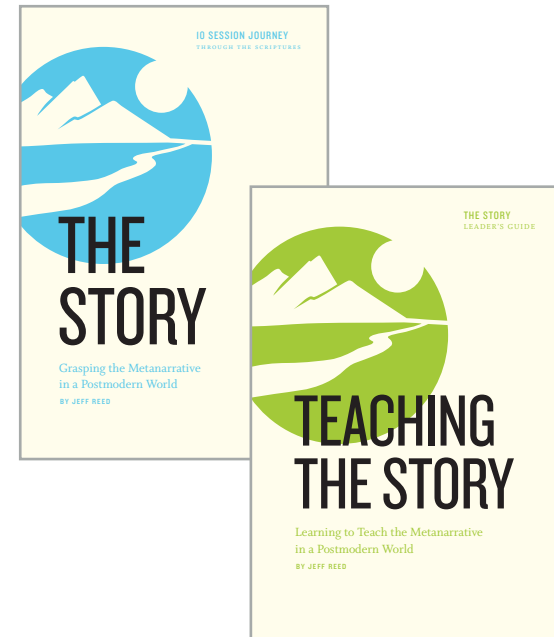
1. In what way does 1 Timothy anchor Paul's later letters?
2. Is Paul's concept of a church as God's household a metaphor or the actual social structure of Christ's design for all churches?
3. In what sense are churches an extended family? How does this actually create the concept of a family of families?
4. Why is this a genius strategy for churches in all cultures and at all times in history?

Paul's Early, Middle, and Later Letters

The Process of Building Strong Churches



New Perspective on Paul



Kerygma
Early Acts
Apostles' Teaching
6 months
Paul: 3 years "night and day"



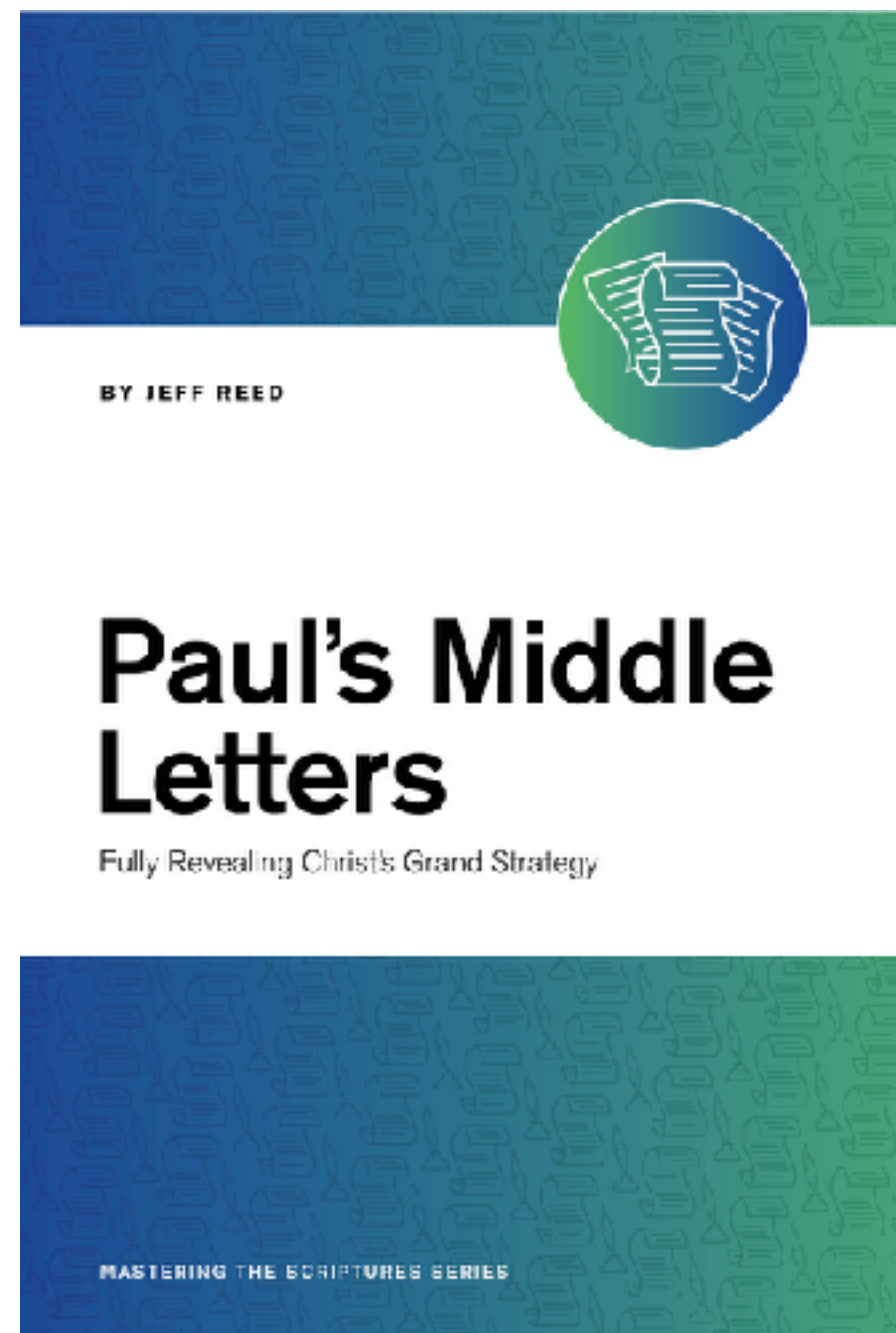
Didache
Body of Acts
Theology of Paul
1½ years



Full Kerygma
After Acts
Apostles' Gospels
1 year



Paul's Middle Letters



Feb. 60 to March 62



Autumn 60



Autumn 61



Spring 62

Paul's Later Letters

Now we turn to Paul's later letters, which brings us to the third and final phase of Paul's process of establishing strong, mature, multiplying churches, with solid leadership and high community impact with the gospel.

1 Timothy—written to Timothy when at Ephesus, Autumn, AD 62

Titus—written to Titus who was in Crete, Summer of 66

2 Timothy—written to Timothy, Spring of 67 (shortly before his death)

Middle and Later Letters

1 Timothy and Titus are similar in relationship to Ephesians and Colossians.

Ephesians — framework

Colossians — put into action in a cluster of churches

1 Timothy — framework

Titus — put into action in a small network

Ephesians is sort of the framework for Christ's grand strategy. And Colossians, written in a very similar manner and content, is an example of establishing a cluster of churches in the grand strategy revealed in Ephesians.

1 Timothy is sort of the framework for fully setting in order the churches according to Christ's design as a household of God: a "family of families." (Timothy was at Ephesus fully establishing them.) And Titus is an example of establishing a small network of churches.

Paul's Later Letters



Book 1: Paul's Later Letters: Fully Establishing the Churches
According to Christ's Design

Book 2: 1 Timothy: Ordering the Churches as Households of God

Book 3: Titus: Setting in Order What Remains in the Churches

Book 4: 2 Timothy: Investing in Intergenerational Apostolic
Leadership

Paul's Later Letters



Book 1: Paul's Later Letters: Fully Establishing the Churches According to Christ's Design

Session 1: The Household: Organizing Center of the Later Letters

Session 2: 1 Timothy: The Church as an Extended Household

Session 3: Titus: Setting in Order What Remains in the Churches

Session 4: 2 Timothy: Investing in Intergenerational Leaders

Session 5: Completing Paul's Process of Establishing Church Networks

New Perspective on Paul

Old Perspective on Paul

Paul's letters contain miscellaneous, often unrelated topics that would be useful for future believers, especially in dealing with sin, salvation, and living the Christian life. These topics are a significant part of today's ever growing systematic theologies.

New Perspective on Paul

Paul's letters form a coherent, interlocking shape, foundational for churches in any generation to fully understand Christ's grand strategy of the Church being central to His unfolding kingdom and to living in full alignment of that grand strategy.

Paul's Later Letters

Topoi (common topics in one place) is a very important form of Greek rhetoric that enables you to structure an argument including several topics around one memorable schematic, or rubric, or literally in one place.

The organizing center (a topoi) of Paul's later letters is 1 Timothy 3:14–15

¹⁴ I hope to come to you soon, but I am writing these instructions to you so that, ¹⁵ if I am delayed, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and bulwark of the truth.

Paul's Later Letters

As we master these final three letters of Paul and understand the household topoi, we will gain great insight into completing the process of establishing churches and church networks and to building intergenerational leadership. Here are some of the key topics swirling around his topoi of the church as a household of households (family of families).

Examples of “topoi-based topic paragraphs”:

1. Establishing phase 3

Here we will see Paul complete the process of establishing his churches and church network: Paul leaves Titus on the island of Crete to “set in order what remains” in the process of establishing the churches.

2. Key intergenerational Timothy's—4Gen

We will gain more insight into the importance of building a process that will produce intergenerational apostolic leaders, which is key to creating intergenerational complex apostolic networks.

Paul's Later Letters

3. Senior elders

We will see the critical nature of senior elders in both churches and church networks, especially as they assume aspects of the apostolic leaders' role in both teaching and keeping the churches strong.

4. Family of families social structure

We will see that the concept of “family of families” is not just a model that works, but it is the actual social structure of churches and church networks that is part of Christ's design.

5. Outcome—good occupations, meeting pressing needs

We will be able to see the importance of Christ's design of the church, as a family of families, to adorning the gospel through their collective “engaging in good occupations and meeting pressing needs” in the community.

Paul's Later Letters

6. Honoring widows to senior elders

We will see the importance of honoring exemplary women and men within the church family: from widows who have led an exemplary life to elders who themselves are exemplary in their service and are worthy of double honor.

7. Ongoing apostolic teaching

We will see that ongoing apostolic teaching is central to apostolic networks, particularly as seen by Paul's encouragement to Timothy to make sure his progress is evident to all, as he devotes himself to this kind of teaching.

Paul's Later Letters

8. Long-haul apostolic leaders

We will see the importance of key apostolic leaders being in it for the long haul: committed to teaching in season and out and seeing their calling as a fight that they need to finish throughout their whole lives.

9. Network building acumen

At the end of Paul's final letter, which was his second letter to Timothy, we will see his network skills fully refined in his last "network conversation." From that, we will then be able to see clearly the full set of network skills, having attained true network acumen.

Paul's Later Letters

All of these topics are part of one topoi: “the church as a family of families.” As these final letters unfold, we will see each of these concepts, and many others, come alive as topics of one topoi, the churches as families of families.

This is key to the final phase of fully establishing networks of churches as strong, multiplying churches, with intergenerational families, solid intergenerational leadership, and high impact community involvement.

1 Timothy Key Topoi-Based Topic Paragraphs



Book 2: 1 Timothy: Ordering the Churches as Households of God

Session 1: The Importance of Solid Apostolic Leadership Who Guard Sound Doctrine

Session 2: The Ordering Work of Apostolic Leaders: Developing Modal Leaders

Session 3: The Importance of Apostolic Teaching

Session 4: Honoring Modal Leaders: From Widows to Senior Elders

Session 5: Apostolic Leaders and the Long Haul of Their Work

1 Timothy Key Topoi-Based Topic Paragraphs

As we focus specifically begin our focus on 1 Timothy and seek to understand the “household topoi,” we will gain an even fuller insight into completing the process of establishing churches and church networks and to building intergenerational leadership. Let’s read through a few core passages of 1 Timothy

² To Timothy, my loyal child in the faith.... ³ I urge you, as I did when I was on my way to Macedonia, to remain in Ephesus so that you may instruct certain people not to teach any different doctrine, ⁴ and not to occupy themselves with myths and endless genealogies that promote speculations rather than the divine training that is known by faith. ⁵ But the aim of such instruction is love that comes from a pure heart, a good conscience, and sincere faith.... ¹⁸ I am giving you these instructions, Timothy, my child, in accordance with the prophecies made earlier about you, so that by following them you may fight the good fight, ¹⁹ having faith and a good conscience. By rejecting conscience, certain persons have suffered shipwreck in the faith; ²⁰ among them are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have turned over to Satan, so that they may learn not to blaspheme.

1 Timothy 1:2–5; 18–20

1 Timothy Key Topoi-Based Topic Paragraphs

¹⁰ ...and whatever else is contrary to the sound teaching ¹¹ that conforms to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which he entrusted to me.... ⁵ For there is one God;
there is also one mediator between God and humankind,
Christ Jesus, himself human,
⁶ who gave himself a ransom for all
—this was attested at the right time. ⁷ For this I was appointed a herald and an apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

1 Timothy 1:10–11; 2:5–7

1 Timothy Key Topoi-Based Topic Paragraphs

¹ First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for everyone, ² for kings and all who are in high positions, so that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and dignity.... ⁸ I desire, then, that in every place the men should pray, lifting up holy hands without anger or argument.... ¹² I permit no woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she is to keep silent.

1 Timothy 2:1-2, 8, 12

1 Timothy Key Topoi-Based Topic Paragraphs

As we master this first of Paul's later letters and understand the household topoi, we will gain great insight into completing the process of establishing churches and church networks and to building intergenerational leadership. We will look at some of the topics swirling around his topoi of the church as a household of households (family of families).

Key "Topoi-Based Topic Paragraphs" of 1 Timothy:

1. The Importance of solid apostolic leaders guarding sound doctrine

Paul begins his later letters by focusing on the importance of apostolic leaders who guard the sound doctrine entrusted to them, which comes from a pure heart, a good conscience, and sincere faith (and affirmed by a council of elders), and includes a mixture of apostolic, prophetic, and teaching gifts.

1 Timothy Key Topoi-Based Topic Paragraphs

2. Sound doctrine entrusted to apostolic leaders

Sound doctrine, which is rooted in the gospel, has been entrusted to these leaders. They must possess the ability to confront different doctrines, which will be a constant battle, which many younger emerging apostolic leaders will easily be entrapped by.

3. Sound doctrine and community-wide understanding of authority

One of the first things in setting in order the churches (1 Timothy 3:14–16) is for the churches to understand basic community-wide authority structures: in the context of governmental authority, men are not to become involved in angry causes toward the government, but to be at peace; women in the churches are to submit to men who are primarily responsible for guarding and teaching this sound doctrine—both which are key to maintaining sound doctrine. So the churches are to be well ordered and not be in turmoil externally or internally.

1 Timothy Key Topoi-Based Topic Paragraphs

¹ The saying is sure: whoever aspires to the office of bishop desires a noble task.

² Now a bishop must be above reproach, married only once, temperate, sensible, respectable, hospitable, an apt teacher, ³ not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, and not a lover of money. ⁴ He must manage his own household well, keeping his children submissive and respectful in every way—⁵ for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how can he take care of God's church? ... ⁸ Deacons likewise must be.... ¹¹ Women likewise must be

1 Timothy 3:1-5, 8, 11

1 Timothy Key Topoi-Based Topic Paragraphs

4. Setting order in the churches as an extended household

Paul expected Timothy to develop a household style leadership: recognizing elders, deacons, and leading women who assist, who will manage and teach the household of God, which requires that they manage their own households well. All of this clearly establishes the social structure of the churches as an extended household (a family of families).

1 Timothy Key Topoi-Based Topic Paragraphs

¹ Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will renounce the faith by paying attention to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons, ² through the hypocrisy of liars whose consciences are seared with a hot iron. ³ They forbid marriage and demand abstinence from foods, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth.... ¹¹ These are the things you must insist on and teach. ¹² Let no one despise your youth, but set the believers an example in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. ¹³ Until I arrive, give attention to the public reading of Scripture, to exhorting, to teaching. ¹⁴ Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you through prophecy with the laying on of hands by the council of elders. ¹⁵ Put these things into practice, devote yourself to them, so that all may see your progress. ¹⁶ Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; continue in these things, for in doing this you will save both yourself and your hearers.

1 Timothy 4:1–3, 11–16 NRSV

1 Timothy Key Topoi-Based Topic Paragraphs

5. Apostolic leaders engaging entire false doctrine systems

Paul warns Timothy of the coming constant barrage of entire doctrinal systems that will demand his own personal, lifelong discipline in the Scriptures. It's a kind of discipline that demands constant progress in his ability to handle the doctrines emerging in his context. His progress must be evident to all the churches as they are part of that teaching and dismantling of false doctrine systems.

1 Timothy Key Topoi-Based Topic Paragraphs

¹ Do not speak harshly to an older man,^a but speak to him as to a father, to younger men as brothers, ² to older women as mothers, to younger women as sisters—with absolute purity. ³ Honor widows who are really widows. ⁴ If a widow has children or grandchildren, they should first learn their religious duty to their own family and make some repayment to their parents; for this is pleasing in God's sight.... ¹⁶ If any believing woman has relatives who are really widows, let her assist them; let the church not be burdened, so that it can assist those who are real widows.... ¹⁷ Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor especially those who labor in preaching and teaching.... ²¹ In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of the elect angels, I warn you to keep these instructions without prejudice, doing nothing on the basis of partiality. ²² Do not ordain anyone hastily, and do not participate in the sins of others; keep yourself pure... 6:2 Those who have believing masters must not be disrespectful to them on the ground that they are members of the church;

1 Timothy 5:1–4, 16, 18, 21–22; 6:2 NRSV

1 Timothy Key Topoi-Based Topic Paragraphs

6. Functioning as an extended household in matters of both honoring and authority
Paul gives Timothy guidelines focused on the church as an extended household, instructing him as he continues to “set the churches in order” and keep them stable: establishing a basic extended household culture of the younger honoring the older; establishing a real extended household structure of honoring (caring for) widows who cannot be cared for by their own households; and honoring (paying for) elders who are carrying out extensive ministry. He must establish this social structure, recognizing that he must not show partiality, holding to these instructions as Christ’s design.

In addition, just as hands were laid on Timothy as an apostolic leader, he must lay hands on elders worthy of double honor very carefully. And they must see that those who have masters do not use the grounds that you are both members of the church, to disrespect them. (Remember Paul’s Colossians–Philemon argument and model.)

1 Timothy Key Topoi-Based Topic Paragraphs

² Teach and urge these duties. ³ Whoever teaches otherwise and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching that is in accordance with godliness, ⁴ is conceited, understanding nothing, and has a morbid craving for controversy and for disputes about words.... ¹² Fight the good fight of the faith; take hold of the eternal life, to which you were called and for which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.... ⁹ But those who want to be rich fall into temptation and are trapped by many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction.... ¹⁷ As for those who in the present age are rich, command them not to be haughty, or to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but rather on God who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.... ²⁰ Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you. Avoid the profane chatter and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge; ²¹ by professing it some have missed the mark as regards the faith.

1 Timothy 6:2–4, 12, 9, 17, 20–21 NRSV

1 Timothy Key Topoi-Based Topic Paragraphs

7. Household order as sound words to be taught with authority

Teach this “household order” with authority, not letting those who ignore these sound words get a foothold; and take care to instruct those who are rich not to lead people a different direction but to focus on these things and invest in them; taking care yourself to guard what has been entrusted to you.

1 Timothy Household Topoi Today

Now let's look at these key 1 Timothy "topi-based topic paragraphs" through the lens of our churches today:

1. The Importance of solid apostolic leaders guarding sound doctrine

Timothy-type apostolic leaders today (who are confirmed by a council of elders) need to understand the strategic importance of their role in setting churches in order according to Christ's household design for His churches. They must treat these teachings as sound doctrine to be guarded, using their apostolic gift cluster to the fullest.

1 Timothy Household Topoi Today

2. Sound doctrine entrusted to apostolic leaders

This sound doctrine must be entrusted to apostolic type leaders in each generation. They must develop the ability to confront different doctrines, recognizing it will be a constant battle, and many emerging young leaders, like Timothy, will easily become entrapped in other doctrines.

3. Sound doctrine and community-wide understanding of authority

One of the first things in setting in order our churches (1 Timothy 3:14–16) is for the churches to understand basic community-wide authority structures: in the context of governmental authority, men are not to become involved in angry causes toward government, but to be at peace; women in the churches are to submit to men who are primarily responsible for guarding and teaching this sound doctrine. Both of these are key to maintaining sound doctrine. The churches are to be well ordered and not in turmoil externally or internally.

1 Timothy Household Topoi Today

4. Setting order in the churches as an extended household

Apostolic leaders and our churches today need to develop a household style leadership: recognizing elders, deacons and leading women who assist, who will manage and teach the household of God, which requires that they manage their own households well. All of this clearly establishes the social structure of the churches as an extended household (a family of families).

5. Apostolic leaders engaging entire false doctrine systems

Key apostolic leaders today need to be aware of the coming constant barrage of entire false or distorted doctrinal systems that will demand their own personal, lifelong discipline in the Scriptures. It's a kind of discipline that demands constant progress in their ability to handle doctrines emerging in their context. Their progress must be evident to all the churches as they are part of that teaching and dismantling of false doctrine systems.

1 Timothy Household Topoi Today

6. Functioning as an extended household in matters of both honoring and authority
In establishing household order in our churches today, key apostolic leaders and their teams must establish the guidelines focused on the church as an extended household, instructing them as they continue to “set the churches in order” and keep them stable: establishing a basic extended household culture of the younger honoring the older; establishing a real extended household structure of honoring (caring for) widows who cannot be cared for by their own household; and honoring (paying for) elders who are carrying out extensive ministry. They must establish this social structure recognizing that they must not show partiality, holding to these instructions as Christ’s design.

In addition, just as hands were laid on them as key apostolic leaders, they need to lay hands on elders worthy of double honor very carefully. And they must see that those who have masters do not use the grounds that they are both members of the church, to disrespect them. (Remember Paul’s Colossians–Philemon argument and model.)

1 Timothy Household Topoi Today

7. Household order as sound words to be taught with authority

Key apostolic leaders and their team must teach this “household order” with authority, not letting those who ignore these sound words get a foothold; taking care to instruct those who are rich not to lead people a different direction but to focus on these things and invest in them; and taking care themselves to guard what has been entrusted to them.

This is a very important letter in completing the process of fully establishing churches

Many issues are misunderstood in most of our churches today because of the dominance of the Western, institutional church, its global missions institutions, and its plethora of parachurch organizations:

- key apostolic leaders and their teams
- the household social structure of the church as more than a metaphor
- authority structures of apostolic leaders, and elders, deacons and leading women
- sound doctrine as an identifiable deposit
- one design for Christ's churches in every culture in every generation

Huge Implications:

- no apostolic teams; all institution policies: denominations, mission establishment, seminaries
- trendy church models, pragmatic, 5-year life (emergent church, Acts 29, exponential gospel communities)
- business, parachurch, church growth corporate boards
- death of "Acts like" CPMs and spontaneous expansion
- growing decline of churches and church networks through institutional professionalization
- corruption of Global Pentecostalism

Paul's Later Letters

Issue: Significance of 1 Timothy for Us Today

Questions:

1. In what way does 1 Timothy anchor our final step in the process of fully establishing our churches today?
2. Can we look at this letter as a metaphor for our churches today, or does Christ expect us to treat this letter as the actual social structure of His design for all churches?
3. In what sense should all our churches function as an extended family? In what sense should we truly become a family of families?
4. Why is this a genius strategy for churches in all cultures and at all times in history, even for our churches today in a truly technological society?