

Paul's Later Letters

Fully Establishing the Churches According to Christ's Design

Paul's Later Letters

Importance of apostolic teaching today

We call Sunday morning's teaching "apostolic teaching" Why?

Why did Paul say, "that your progress may be evident to all"?

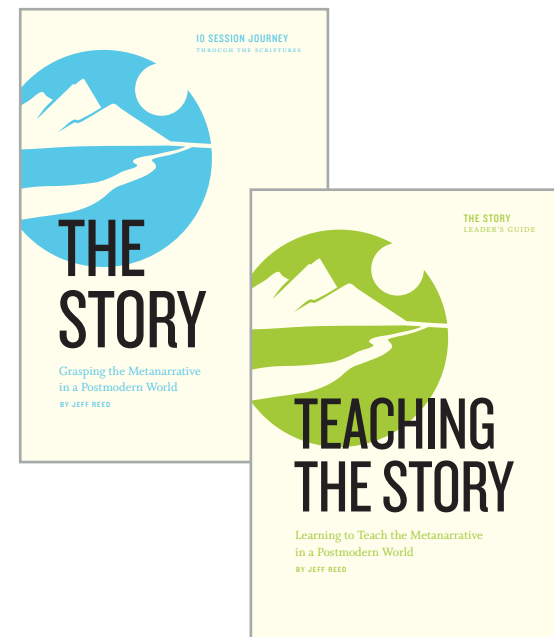
Paul's Later Letters

Issue: The The Importance of Apostolic Teaching

Questions:

1. What did Paul think about the importance of apostolic teaching, as seen in his challenge to Timothy?
2. Why was it so important for Timothy's progress to be evident to all the leaders and churches in the networks?
3. Why was it necessary for Timothy to have a lifelong commitment to progressing in his mastery of the Scriptures?
4. In what way is the apostolic teaching Paul expected from Timothy different from the teaching of gifted teachers and elders?

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

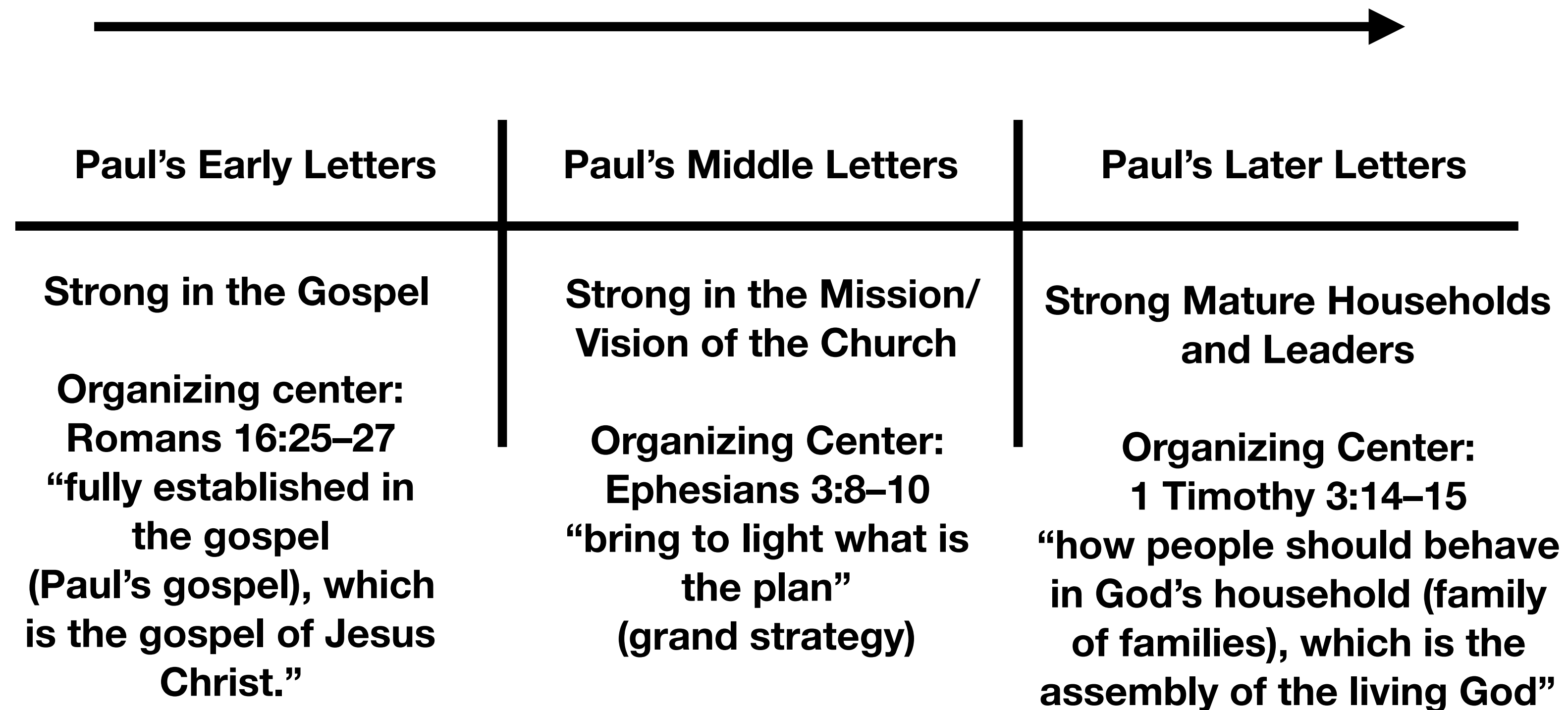


Full Kerygma
After Acts
Apostles' Gospels
1 year

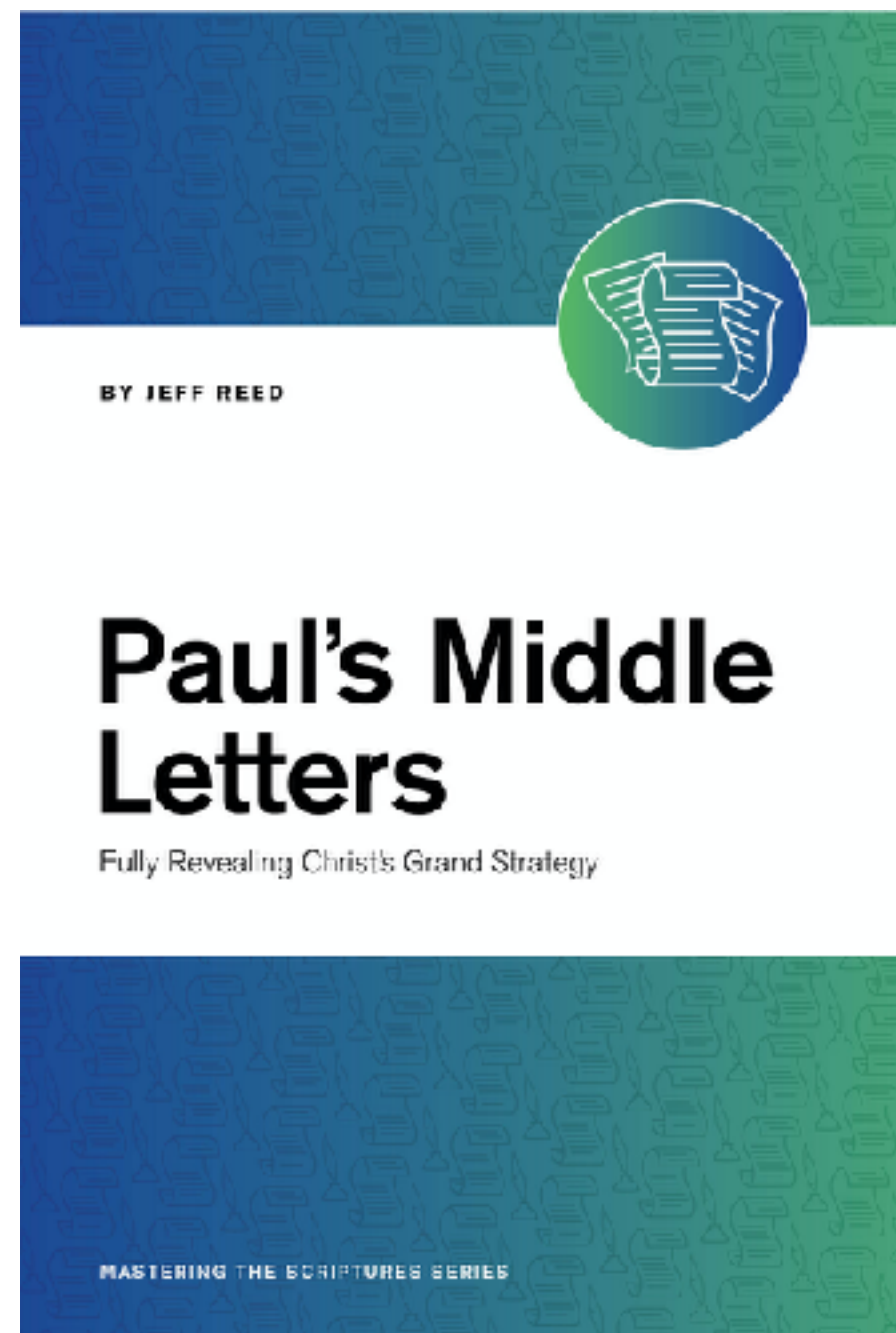


Paul's Early, Middle, and Later Letters

The Process of Building Strong Churches



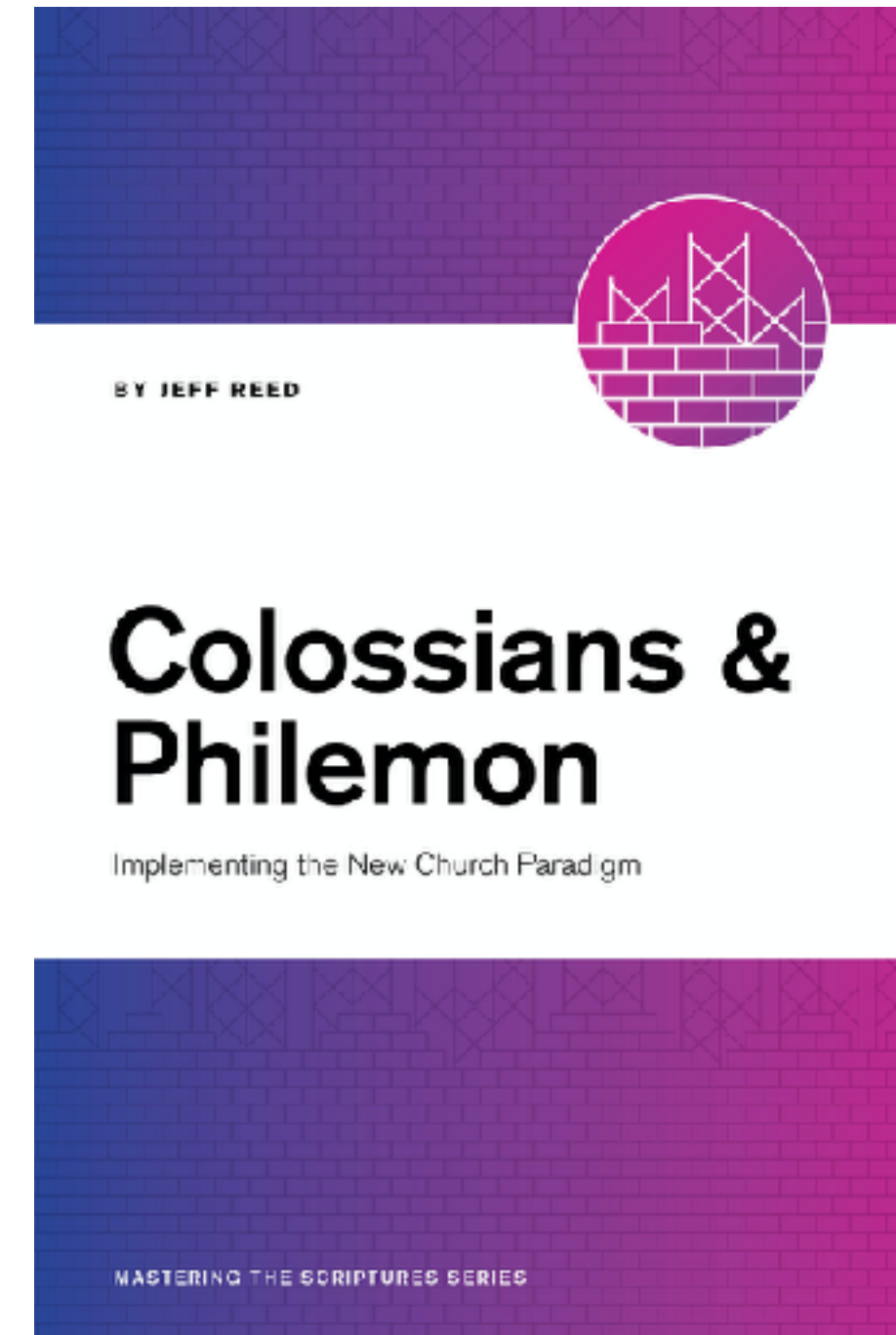
Paul's Middle Letters



Feb. 60 to March 62



Autumn 60



Autumn 61



Spring 62

Paul's Later Letters

Paul's later letters bring 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 at Ephesus, Autumn of AD 62

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

2 Timothy—written to Timothy, Spring of 67 (shortly before Paul's 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: The 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.

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

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

Solid Apostolic Leadership

Last session we looked at Paul's understanding of the importance of future solid apostolic leaders.

Obviously, Timothy and apostolic leaders after him didn't carry Paul's apostolic authority to add to the gospel and the teaching (kerygma, didache).

But on the basis of Paul's last 3 letters, it appears that Timothy and leaders after him would carry both a stewardship and authority to carry out these very important apostolic (with a little a) leadership functions. This is missing in most of our Western institutional churches today and, therefore, so are networks like Acts.

These were our conclusions last week from 1 Timothy 1:1–20.

Solid Apostolic Leadership

Solid Apostolic Leadership

1. Paul left Timothy in Ephesus to deal with teachers who brought a different teaching from the teaching Paul delivered to the Ephesian churches.
2. By referring to “the divine training,” Paul is referring to Christ’s grand strategy and its unfolding in 1 Timothy 3:14–15 (all three later letters). Paul means that “different teaching” (heretical) is any teaching not completely aligned with what he delivered (the kerygma and didache—the teaching, the deposit, the sound doctrine).
3. The motivation for a different teaching seems to center around mixed motives, insincere faith, and a failure to actually understand Christ’s plan, His grand strategy; and it is seen in seeking self interests, evidenced in bad co-worker relationships.

Solid Apostolic Leadership

Solid Apostolic Leadership

4. Those bringing a different teaching really do not understand what they are teaching or their implications, leading many believers and churches to become trapped in endless disputes and corruption in the deteriorating culture around them.
5. Paul understood that solid apostolic leadership is needed to confront these teachers and to bring a full understanding of Christ's plan to the churches—setting the household of God in full alignment with Christ's grand strategy.
6. Paul understood that the same Spirit that was involved in the gift of his stewardship was involved in recognizing Timothy's stewardship, through prophetic words from himself and a council of elders. So he challenged Timothy to receive his instruction and enter the lifelong fight, which Paul had modeled for him.

Order in Paul's Churches

In this next section, 2:1–3:16, his thought is a coherent whole built around setting churches in order with clear lines of authority around the teaching, in this case Ephesians.

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”

1 Timothy 1:3 NRSV

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.”

1 Timothy 3:14,15 NRSV

⁵ “I left you behind in Crete for this reason, so that you should put in order what remained to be done, and should appoint elders in every town, as I directed you.”

Titus 1:5 NRSV

Order in Paul's Churches

These few verses form a cluster and serve as a strong indicator of Paul's common intent for both letters: one to Timothy and the other to Titus.

They also seem to represent Paul's fuller understanding of what it means to fully establish his churches. Paul's teaching is now fuller as a result of spending two years in prison where he wrote his middle letters. In these letters he reveals his full understanding of Christ's grand strategy of the Church as the center of God's plan.

In these later letters, his instructions become completely clear; the full teaching in these three letters completes his own recorded understanding of the Teaching (the faith, the deposit, the sound doctrine).

Order in Paul's Churches

Paul's Concept of a Church Set in Order

A church is set in order when ...

1. At the heart of its culture, it has a respect for governmental authority, with a view of living quiet and peaceful lives, setting the context for adorning the gospel through the quality of its community life.
2. In the context of living life in the difficulty of cultural conflicts and societal stratifications, men avoid becoming politically enraged in the controversies of the world, and women respect men's responsibility to teach the churches in a way that keeps them out of these controversies and focused on the sound teaching Paul told Timothy and Titus to completely order the churches around.

Order in Paul's Churches

Paul's Concept of a Church Set in Order

A church is set in order when ...

3. It is solidly rooted in the sound teaching Paul delivered to the churches and has recognized and trained highly qualified leaders to keep the order in the churches once established. This is the backbone of maintaining order in the churches.
4. Men and women have complimentary roles in keeping the churches solidly established in that sound teaching. Elders are well qualified in life situations and character and fully competent to teach this sound teaching, with qualified men and women to assist them.

Order in Paul's Churches

Paul's Concept of a Church Set in Order

A church is set in order when ...

5. Qualified women are taking a key role in assisting the elders in this important role of maintaining solid order around this teaching: empowering the ministry of widows in their older age, assisting younger women in building strong intergenerational households within the family of families, and helping younger widows rebuild their lives.
6. It is carefully following all of these guidelines of fully setting in order the churches so it is stable in the sound teaching, is fending off different teachings (the church is the pillar of the church), and therefore, remaining focused on the progress of the gospel. That's what all of these guidelines of are primarily designed for.

Importance of Apostolic Teaching

Now we turn to a critical, but greatly misunderstood, concept in Paul's understanding of setting churches in order and building a strong apostolic network.

These 3 paragraphs are the heart of what we call apostolic teaching, which we currently do on Sunday morning.

Review questions at the beginning.

Western churches, mainline and evangelical, do not understand this.

Pentecostals do, but they do not understand apostolic teaching very well.

Let's look at this critical chapter in 3 short paragraphs, only 16 verses.

Importance of Apostolic Teaching

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. ⁴ For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected, provided it is received with thanksgiving; ⁵ for it is sanctified by God's word and by prayer.

1 Timothy 4:1–5

Importance of Apostolic Teaching

It is important to see what Paul is talking about here. He is not just talking about errors in teaching, when someone misunderstands part of the sound teaching.

He is talking about entire systems of teaching that will lead churches down a different path, which is why we must understand the importance of apostolic teaching. This calls for a special role in teaching, like Paul had, and he calls Timothy to pick it up after him.

Importance of Apostolic Teaching

Let's look at a few key words in this first section.

“deceitful spirits”: wandering, roaming, leading astray (LSJ), causing someone to be mistaken (LN), word family denotes vacillation or irregularity of speech, aberration in judgment, untrue or contradictory statement (TDNTA), cause to be mistaken (ANLEX)

“teachings of demons”: official instruction, training (LSJ), “demon” evil spirit (LN)

“Common from Homer, this word denotes teaching and learning in the wide sense of imparting theoretical and practical knowledge with the highest possible development of the pupil as the goal. There is little religious use, and the term has a strong intellectual and authoritative bearing.”

Kittel, G., Friedrich, G., & Bromiley, G. W. (1985). *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, Abridged in One Volume* (p. 161). Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans.

Importance of Apostolic Teaching

Let's look at a few key words in this first section.

“forbid marriage”

“demand abstinence of foods” *foods* is primarily meats, solid food

When you put these words and phrases together, we are talking about entire systems of teaching that churches are susceptible to wandering off into, mixing with Paul's teaching (the faith, the deposit, the sound teaching, sound doctrine).

Church networks exist in the midst of entire false teaching systems around them. This false teaching gets woven into the faith, so new combinations emerge that will be new systems, different from the teaching Paul delivered to the churches.

Importance of Apostolic Teaching

Think about the networks of churches globally today:

Roman Catholic church: many good things, but the entire global system is built around things like forbidding priests from marriage and abstaining from foods at certain times.

African churches: animism (systems of spirits from their culture and ancestors) becomes mixed with Paul's teaching, leading them away from the sound teaching.

Indian churches: practices from the Hindu class system and all of the spirit practices and that from Hindu priests are mixed in.

Church networks in Islamic countries: cultural practices from sharia law are mixed in, completely avoiding pork.

Importance of Apostolic Teaching

Think again about the networks of churches globally today:

SE Asian churches: Buddhism and practices of Buddhist temples, of the monks around endless cultural holidays.

Chinese churches: Catholic churches (13 million) 3-Self churches (18 million), who made agreements with the government to alter their teaching and proclaim loyalty and alter practices to accommodate the CCP.

Western churches: adopting an ever growing collection of doctrines around the nature and roles of men and women, even sexual identity and preferences.

I can go on and on, around the world several times. Paul is saying, there are endless spirits to draw Christians, churches, and church networks into systems accommodating, mixing, incorporating, and becoming a new complete system different from what Paul is delivering to the churches.

Importance of Apostolic Teaching

How does Paul consider protecting (saving) his churches and networks from these false teachings and systems?

⁶ If you put these instructions before the brothers and sisters, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, nourished on the words of the faith and of the sound teaching that you have followed. ⁷ Have nothing to do with profane myths and old wives' tales. Train yourself in godliness, ⁸ for, while physical training is of some value, godliness is valuable in every way, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come. ⁹ The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance. ¹⁰ For to this end we toil and struggle, because we have our hope set on the living God, who is the Savior of all people, especially of those who believe.

1 Timothy 4:6–10

Importance of Apostolic Teaching

Again a few key words are important:

“the sound teaching that you have followed”: *followed*: “to conform in one’s behavior to a particular system of instruction or teaching” (LN), to attend closely, follow minutely, make a succession of growths (LSJ), follow with the mind, understand, make one’s own (BGD)

“profane myths”: worldly or godless cultural customs and religious practices (LN)

“train” gymnazo “train in gymnastic exercise” (LSJ), exercise (EDNT)

“godliness” The word *eusébeia* literally means well-directed reverence, but does not imply an inward, inherent holiness. It is actually an externalized piety. Paul uses it only in the pastoral epistles (WSNTDICT), “In a number of languages there is no specific term equivalent to ‘religion,’ but one may always speak of this phase of culture by some phrase such as ‘how to act toward God’ or ‘what one does to placate spirits’ or ‘how one worships’” (LN)

Importance of Apostolic Teaching

Paul is saying a very specific thing to Timothy

Timothy, you have “attended closely, followed minutely, made a succession of growths” in the sound teaching; so continue with a great deal of discipline, like a gymnast, in the mastery of this teaching.

Exegetical excursus: Why all the key words and phrases?

Process

- author's intention
- literary design
- key concepts: words and phrases, semantical range, Greek full color
- topoi-based topic statements
- final idea: i.e apostolic teaching

Method of key concepts: Logos exegetical guide (20 plus lexicons and theological word lexicons)

Importance of Apostolic Teaching

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 4:11–16

Importance of Apostolic Teaching

Again let's look carefully at this section. There are so many key ideas in this little selection

“insist on (pass on, give orders, LSJ) and teach”

“despise (“not to be concerned about,” “not to fear” TDNT) your youth” (new, fresh, EDNT)

“give attention (consider carefully, DBL) to the public reading (reading aloud with recognition, LJS) of scripture, to exhorting (come along side), to teaching” (skillful in teaching NIDNTTE)

“the gift that is in you” — stewardship recognized by “the council of elders” see session 1

Importance of Apostolic Teaching

Again let's keep looking carefully at this section. There are so many key ideas in this little selection.

“Put these things into practice (keep thinking about, plot, continue to do, DBL), devote yourself” (an idiom, literally ‘to be in’): to continue to perform certain activities with care and concern, LN)

“may see (widely known, DBL) your progress” (to advance, to progress, to change for better, LN, progress on a journey, IGEL)

“Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; continue”

“you will save (preserve from harm, preserve, rescue, deliver, bring out safe, ANLEX) both yourself and your hearers” (The use of the group in the NT reflects the significance of God's word; hearing corresponds to revelation as its form of appropriation, TDNTA)

Importance of Apostolic Teaching

Timothy's Stewardship as an Apostolic Leader Like Paul

You must assume, with authority, your role as an apostolic leader, with the responsibility of teaching in the network to keep churches and the network solid in the teaching,

rescuing churches from the pull of, or wandering into, wrong teaching systems;

teaching throughout the churches in a way that the progression of your stewardship and apostolic type teaching is widely known and seen as increasing;

seeing to your own plan for continued advancement in your skill on issues affecting the churches.

Importance of Apostolic Teaching

What is *apostolic teaching*? Does it exist?

1. Paul had a special apostolic role in not only revealing the teaching but also holding the churches to it.
2. Timothy had special recognition of his function as an apostolic type leader.
3. Paul challenged him to spend his life continuing to master this teaching, in the context of a constant barrage of false teaching systems.
4. In keeping the churches within this teaching, Paul saw Timothy's special role as essential to saving his churches and network from these false systems.
5. The elders recognized this special stewardship. And while elders were accountable for their churches, Timothy carried a stewardship that the elders deeply respected, enough so, that his stewardship enabled him to use his apostolic authority (next chapter) to correct and appoint elders.
6. I call this *apostolic teaching* because it was teaching that was uniquely part of Timothy's stewardship, which was assisted by elders and gifted teachers and shepherds.

Importance of Apostolic Teaching

What do we mean when we say Paul was not just talking about *teaching*, but *apostolic teaching*? We are talking about teaching that was done by gifted apostolic leaders, which is a lifelong guarding of the sound teaching delivered by Paul to the churches.

1. Apostolic teaching is designed to encounter entire systems of unsound, erroneous doctrine that causes believers, churches, and even church networks to wander away from the sound teaching, weaving error into an entire system, such as the Roman Catholic Church.
2. God is going to raise up leaders in every generation, with a special recognition of their giftedness through a lifelong progress in this teaching; they will be key in networks of churches, saving them from all these false teaching systems.

Importance of Apostolic Teaching

What do we mean when we say Paul was not just talking about *teaching*, but *apostolic teaching*?

3. These leaders are responsible for apostolic teaching like Paul amongst networks of churches—along with the assistance of elders and gifted shepherds and teachers—teaching and guarding that teaching, which demands a lifelong progress in the teaching as false teaching system after system arises.
4. This role demands a singleminded focus on establishing churches in this teaching and great insight into the systems of teaching beginning to become embedded into our churches, in every culture, which requires a lifelong study of the teaching in cultural context.

Importance of Apostolic Teaching

Think again about the networks of churches globally today.

Remember, I can go on and on, around the world several times. Paul is saying, there are endless spirits to draw Christians, churches, and church networks into systems, accommodating, mixing, incorporating and becoming complete new systems, which are different from what Paul was delivering to the churches. A few more...

Latin American churches, out of major poverty issues in the 1970s, were drawn into liberation theology, which aligned with revolutionary governments, and the gospel became confused with salvation from poverty.

North American denominational churches developed over a few decades a social gospel; so what is called “mainline denominations” have completely lost the gospel.

Importance of Apostolic Teaching

Think again about the networks of churches globally today.

North India church-planting movements have adopted the Anglican system of South India missionaries; and many have begun institutionalizing aspects of their networks around the Anglican diocese system.

In China, a major house church family, of several million believers, originally developed by mostly businessmen, has developed both Reformed denominational structures and their theological system.

In Nigeria, 50 of the 80 million who have come to Christ in the late half of the 20th century, have developed Western denominational structures (Evangelical, 10 million; Baptists, 10 million; Church of Christ, 10 million; and Anglican, 20 million); as a result, the 3rd generation has a desperate lack of leaders and 4th generational nominalism is emerging.

Paul's Later Letters

Importance of apostolic Timothy-types and apostolic teaching today

Worldwide, the need is to find key apostolic leaders, challenge them to grasp the teaching, and begin the process of serious, strategic apostolic teaching throughout their networks.

In our own church network, we need to fully establish the 2nd and 3rd generation leaders and churches and identify and fully develop young, emerging apostolic-type leaders as our network grows into a network of networks. This is why, for now, we meet Sunday mornings for what we call apostolic teaching: to establish these leaders and to produce the resources to assist these ends, here and globally.

Paul's Later Letters

Issue: The The Importance of Apostolic Teaching Today

Questions:

1. Why is apostolic teaching, as seen in Paul's challenge to Timothy, important for our churches and church networks today?
2. What is our process today for identifying and developing these Timothy-type apostolic leaders and encouraging them to important roles of moving amongst our churches and church networks with apostolic-type teaching?
3. What are some of the false teaching systems infiltrating our churches and church networks today?
4. What is likely to happen to our churches and church networks if we do not recognize the importance of these Timothy-type apostolic leaders and the important role of their teaching?