

# Dr. Dave Mathewson, New Testament Literature, Session 26, 1 & 2 Timothy Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide, and 5) FAQs

## 1. Abstract of Mathewson, NT Literature, Session 26, 1 & 2 Timothy, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

**Dr. Mathewson's lecture explores the Pauline epistles of 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus.** The lecture examines the historical context and purpose of these letters, particularly in relation to addressing false teachings within the early church. **A key focus is on interpreting specific passages**, such as instructions to women in 1 Timothy, by considering whether they are universally binding or specific to the first-century Ephesian church. **The lecture also discusses the qualifications for elders and deacons** and how these roles were intended to combat erroneous doctrines. **Finally, it summarizes key recurring theological themes in Paul's writings**, like justification by faith, inclusion of Jews and Gentiles, and the importance of community, highlighting the communal aspect of salvation and the church's role in reconciliation.

**2. 15 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Mathewson, NT Literature, Session 26 – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (Old Testament → Major Prophets → Daniel).**



**Mathewson\_NTLit\_S  
ession26.mp3**

### 3. Briefing Document: Mathewson, NT Literature, Session 26, 1 & 2 Timothy

Okay, here's a briefing document summarizing the main themes and ideas from Dr. Mathewson's lecture on 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus, often called the Pastoral Epistles.

#### Briefing Document: Dr. Dave Mathewson on 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus

##### I. Overview

Dr. Mathewson's lecture focuses on the Pastoral Epistles (1 & 2 Timothy, Titus), addressing key interpretative challenges and outlining Paul's dominant theological themes. He emphasizes understanding the historical and situational context of these letters to properly interpret and apply them to the 21st-century church. He also stresses that understanding the background of the issue being addressed can have a significant effect on how one reads sections of the New Testament.

##### II. 1 Timothy: Addressing False Teaching & Church Leadership

- **Context is Key:** Mathewson argues against viewing 1 Timothy as primarily a "church manual." Instead, he sees it as a response to specific false teaching in the Ephesian church. "Paul is addressing...a very specific problem...some type of false teaching or deviant teaching has now infiltrated the church in Ephesus."
- **Women in Ministry (1 Timothy 2):** Mathewson highlights the debate surrounding Paul's instructions to women regarding dress and teaching.
- **Two Interpretations:** He presents the two main approaches:
  1. **Universally Binding:** This view sees Paul's instructions as applicable to all churches at all times, potentially grounded in the creation order (Adam and Eve). "Paul seems to ground his instructions then in creation... the fact that Adam was created first and then Eve."
  2. **Context-Specific:** This view sees the instructions as tailored to the specific issues in the Ephesian church and not necessarily universally applicable.
- **Application:** Mathewson notes that even if the instructions are seen as context-specific, they still have application, though the *how* of application differs.
- **Elders and Deacons (1 Timothy 3):** He stresses that Paul focuses more on the *character* of elders and deacons, particularly their ability to teach sound doctrine, rather than providing a detailed job description. This emphasis stems from the

need to combat false teaching. "The reason Paul addresses this issue is because perhaps the best chance for the church to combat this false teaching is if they have leaders that are qualified, especially able to teach sound doctrine."

- Some suggest that the deviant teaching may have affected some of the church leadership, and giving lists of qualifications would be Paul's way of weeding them out and making sure they did not get into leadership.

### III. 2 Timothy: Paul's Last Testament

- **Imminent Death:** Mathewson emphasizes that 2 Timothy is Paul's final letter, written while facing execution. "Paul is very clear that he is now facing execution and his death is very close."
- **Passing the Torch:** Paul's purpose is to pass on the "Pauline legacy" and gospel to Timothy, ensuring its continuation. "He writes to pass the torch...He wants to ensure that the Pauline legacy and the Pauline gospel continue."
- **Testamentary Nature:** The letter resembles a "testament," common in that era, representing the last words of a dying hero.
- **Theme: Contend for the Faith:** Mathewson identifies the central theme as Paul instructing Timothy to "contend for the faith," preserving the gospel in both life and teaching.

### IV. Titus: Addressing False Teaching in Crete

- **Similarities to 1 Timothy:** Mathewson notes the many similarities to 1 Timothy, indicating a similar situation of false teaching.
- **Titus' Role:** Like Timothy, Titus was left to address the issues in the church, in this case on the island of Crete.
- **After Acts 28:** Mathewson suggests that, like 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus was likely written after the events of Acts 28.
- **Subversive Letter:** Paul's letter appears to "subvert" negative stereotypes and cultural values associated with Crete, which was known for immorality and lying. "Crete was also, a lot of literature we have, Crete seemed to be synonymous with someone who lied and told lies." He points to Paul's emphasis on truthfulness and virtuous living as a contrast to Cretan culture.

- **Purpose:** The purpose is to instruct Titus on how the church should live in a pagan world, engendering trust in God and promoting true virtue as an alternative to Cretan lifestyles.

## V. Dominant Themes in Paul's Letters (Synthesis)

Mathewson synthesizes the dominant theological themes found throughout Paul's letters:

1. **Justification by Grace through Faith:** Salvation comes through faith in Jesus Christ, apart from works of the law, although good works are a necessary result of a Spirit-transformed life.
2. **Jew and Gentile United in Christ:** Both Jews and Gentiles can become God's people equally, without adherence to the Mosaic Law. The promises of Abraham are now available to all who have faith in Jesus Christ.
3. **God's Grace Manifested Through Suffering:** Suffering is not a deterrent but a means through which God's power and grace are revealed.
4. **Victory Over Sin and Death Through Christ:** Believers are united with Christ in his death and resurrection, overcoming sin and death. This reflects the "already but not yet" tension.
5. **Gospel-Shaped Life Combats Error:** A correct understanding of the gospel and its ethical implications are essential to combating false teaching.
6. **Concern for Community (The Church):** Salvation has corporate as well as individual implications. The church is a signpost for the reconciliation of all things. The unity of the church is vital. "Salvation is not just individual, it also has communal dimensions."

## VI. Conclusion

Mathewson's lecture provides a framework for understanding the Pastoral Epistles by focusing on their historical context, the specific problems they addressed, and the enduring theological themes they convey. He urges a careful and nuanced reading of these texts to apply them effectively to the modern church.

## 4. Study Guide: Mathewson, NT Literature, Session 26, 1 & 2 Timothy

### Pastoral Epistles: A Study Guide

#### Quiz: Short Answer Questions

1. What is the traditional label given to 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus, and why might this label be considered inadequate?
2. What are the two main ways to interpret Paul's instructions to women in 1 Timothy 2, regarding silence and teaching in the church?
3. What argument do those who believe Paul's instructions to women are universally binding typically emphasize from 1 Timothy 2:13-14?
4. According to Mathewson, what is the primary issue Paul is addressing in 1 Timothy, and how does this affect how we interpret passages like 1 Timothy 3?
5. What is the main role of elders in the church according to 1 Timothy 3?
6. According to Mathewson, why did Paul write 2 Timothy, and how does this relate to the concept of a "testament" in the ancient world?
7. What is the major theme of 2 Timothy according to Mathewson?
8. How does Paul's approach in the pastoral epistles (1 & 2 Timothy and Titus) differ from his approach in many of his other letters, regarding the intended recipients?
9. What is distinctive about the letter to Titus in comparison to 1 and 2 Timothy?
10. Give a brief summary of one of the dominant theological themes found throughout Paul's letters, as highlighted in the lecture.

#### Quiz: Answer Key

1. The traditional label is "pastoral epistles." This label may be inadequate because it suggests the letters are primarily about pastoral care when they are focused on addressing false teaching and other problems.
2. One way is to see the instructions as universally binding, applying to all churches at all times. The other way is to see them as specific to the situation in Ephesus, addressing a particular problem in that church.

3. They emphasize that Paul grounds his instructions in creation, specifically the order in which Adam and Eve were created, suggesting a divinely ordained hierarchy.
4. Paul is primarily addressing a specific problem of false teaching in the Ephesian church. This means that his instructions are tailored to this issue and may not be a comprehensive manual for church governance.
5. The primary role of elders was the primary oversight of the church, particularly teaching, and ensuring sound doctrine.
6. Paul wrote 2 Timothy to pass the torch of the gospel and the Pauline legacy to Timothy, as he was facing imminent execution. This resembles a "testament" in that it contains the last words and instructions of a dying hero to his disciples.
7. The major theme of 2 Timothy is instructing Timothy to contend for the faith, preserving the gospel in his life and teaching as Paul departs.
8. In the pastoral epistles, Paul addresses individual leaders (Timothy and Titus) rather than the churches directly.
9. The letter to Titus appears at times to subvert a number of ideas, beliefs, traditions, or part of the reputation of the island of Crete.
10. Justification/salvation comes by grace through faith, apart from works of the law, and that works are, however, works are still a necessary corollary of a life transformed by the Holy Spirit.

## **Essay Format Questions**

1. Discuss the implications of interpreting 1 Timothy 2:11-15 as either universally binding or context-specific. How might each interpretation affect the role of women in the church today?
2. Explain how understanding the historical and cultural context of Ephesus and Crete can impact our interpretation of 1 Timothy and Titus. Provide specific examples from the text.
3. Compare and contrast the roles of Timothy and Titus in the context of the pastoral epistles. How do Paul's instructions to each of them reflect their specific situations and responsibilities?

4. Analyze the concept of "false teaching" in the pastoral epistles. What were the characteristics of this teaching, and how did Paul instruct Timothy and Titus to combat it?
5. Discuss how Paul's emphasis on suffering in his letters, particularly in 2 Timothy, informs our understanding of Christian discipleship and leadership.

## Glossary of Key Terms

- **Pastoral Epistles:** The letters of 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus, traditionally viewed as addressing issues of church leadership and pastoral care.
- **Hermeneutics:** The theory and practice of interpretation, especially of biblical texts.
- **Universally Binding:** The idea that a biblical instruction or principle applies to all Christians in all times and places.
- **Context-Specific:** The idea that a biblical instruction or principle applies only to a particular situation or group of people in a specific historical context.
- **New Roman Woman:** A cultural phenomenon in the first century associated with women who pursued education, financial independence, and greater social freedom, sometimes perceived as challenging traditional gender roles.
- **Elders:** Leaders in the early church, often responsible for teaching, oversight, and spiritual care of the congregation.
- **Deacons:** Servants or ministers in the early church, often involved in practical tasks and assisting the elders in their ministry.
- **Testament:** A literary genre common in the ancient world, consisting of the last words and instructions of a dying hero or leader.
- **Libation:** A drink offering poured out to a deity.
- **Prescript:** The opening section of a letter, typically including the sender, recipient, and a greeting.
- **Crete:** An island in the Mediterranean Sea, known in antiquity for its culture and, according to some sources, its association with lying and immorality.

- **Justification:** Being declared righteous before God; being in right standing with God.
- **Grace:** God's unmerited favor and love.
- **Faith:** Trust in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.
- **Mosaic Law:** The Law of Moses, consisting of the commandments and regulations given to the Israelites in the Old Testament.
- **Indicative:** Statements of fact or reality, often used by Paul to describe the believer's new identity in Christ.
- **Imperative:** Commands or instructions, often used by Paul to exhort believers to live in accordance with their new identity in Christ.
- **Corporate Salvation:** The idea that salvation has implications for the community of believers, not just for individuals.
- **Subversive:** Seeking to undermine or overthrow an established system or institution.



## 5. FAQs on Mathewson, NT Literature, Session 26, 1 & 2 Timothy, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

### FAQ on 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus based on Dr. Mathewson's Lecture

- **What are the Pastoral Epistles, and why is that label potentially problematic?**
- The Pastoral Epistles commonly refer to 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus, the last three letters studied in the lecture. The term is used because these letters are addressed to individuals (Timothy and Titus) who are overseeing churches, offering them guidance on pastoral matters. However, the term "pastoral" might not be the best label because it potentially oversimplifies the letters' purpose, suggesting they are primarily church manuals, when in reality they address specific problems within the churches.
- **What is the central interpretive challenge when approaching passages like 1 Timothy 2 (regarding women)?**
- The primary challenge is determining whether the instructions given, such as those concerning women's dress, silence, and authority, are universally binding for all churches in all times, or whether they were intended only for the specific context of the first-century Ephesian church facing particular issues. Understanding the historical and cultural background is crucial in making this determination.
- **What are the two main approaches to interpreting Paul's instructions on women in 1 Timothy 2?**
- One approach views the instructions as universally binding, arguing that Paul grounded them in creation order (Adam and Eve), implying a divinely ordained structure for all churches. The other approach sees them as specific to the problems in the Ephesian church, addressing particular issues of false teaching and potentially the influence of the "new Roman woman." Even if the latter approach is taken, the text can still be applied in some way, though differently than if considered universally binding.

- **How does understanding the background of 1 Timothy affect the interpretation of chapter 3 on elders and deacons?**
- If 1 Timothy is seen primarily as a church manual, chapter 3 would be interpreted as a comprehensive guide for selecting elders and deacons. However, if the letter is understood as addressing the problem of false teaching in Ephesus, then chapter 3 is more likely focused on ensuring that the church has qualified leaders, especially those able to teach sound doctrine, to combat that false teaching. This perspective explains why the letter focuses more on the character and teaching ability of elders and deacons than on their specific duties, assuming the church already understood their roles.
- **What is the significance of 2 Timothy being considered Paul's last letter?**
- As Paul's final letter, written while facing imminent execution in Rome, 2 Timothy serves as a testament, similar to ancient "last will and testament" writings. In this letter, Paul passes the torch of the Pauline gospel to Timothy, urging him to contend for the faith and preserve the gospel message in the face of Paul's impending death. It represents Paul's final instructions and legacy to the church.
- **What are the key themes in 2 Timothy, considering its context as Paul's final letter?**
- The central theme is Paul's instruction to Timothy to "contend for the faith." This involves preserving and upholding the gospel message, living a life consistent with that message, and passing it on to others. Paul uses various metaphors to encourage Timothy to safeguard the gospel in both his life and teaching, emphasizing the importance of carrying on Paul's legacy.
- **How does Titus' role in Crete relate to the purpose of the letter?**
- Like Timothy in Ephesus, Titus was left in Crete to address problems, specifically false teaching, within the church. Paul's letter to Titus instructs him on how to deal with this false teaching and guides the church's life in a pagan environment. Paul's instructions and directions are meant to address and guide a church facing issues and concerns common in the area.

- **What are the dominant themes that run throughout Paul's letters?**
- Several dominant themes are central to Paul's letters: (1) Justification/salvation by grace through faith, apart from works of the law, with good works as a necessary result of a Spirit-transformed life. (2) Jew and Gentile can equally become God's people through faith in Christ, with no need for connection to the Mosaic Law. (3) God's grace and power are made manifest through suffering. (4) God's people have overcome sin and death through union with Christ, though sin remains a present reality. (5) A correct understanding of the gospel and a life shaped by it are the best way to combat error and false teaching. (6) Salvation has corporate and individual implications, and the unity of the church is fundamentally important.