

Dr. Robert Yarbrough, Pastorals Epistles, Session 1, Introduction

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This is Dr. Robert W. Yarbrough and his teaching on the Pastoral Epistles, Apostolic Instruction for Pastoral Leaders and their Followers. Session 1, Introduction.

Hello, I'm Robert Yarborough and I teach New Testament at Covenant Theological Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri, United States of America.

I've been teaching for almost 40 years and I've also been involved in a lot of pastoral work. While I've taught primarily in the United States, I've also taught in Romania and Sudan and South Sudan and South Africa. I've also given lectures in Hong Kong, Australia, and in Korea.

So, the fact that today when we teach in one country, we often also have a presence in other countries, and with the internet world, we're all connected everywhere. The church is one all around the world. And so, it's great to be able to be sharing with you primarily from the United States, but also aware that the church is all over the world and the Word of God is needed.

And as Paul says in 2 Thessalonians 3, the Word of God is running. It's doing its work and it's a great thing to be able to study it together. We're going to pray in just a minute, but let me just clarify what part of the Bible we're studying.

And we're studying the pastoral epistles in these lectures. And we're going to start with 1 Timothy. That's the canonical order.

And we don't know for sure if Titus was written after or before 1 Timothy, but it doesn't really matter. I think for our purposes, we'll just go with the canonical order. And I've entitled these lectures, The Pastoral Epistles Apostolic Instruction for Pastoral Leaders and Their Followers.

These are letters that are written to two men who were leaders in the early church, and we'll call them pastors, although they were also church planters. They were missionaries. They were overseers in some traditions.

There's a word bishop that's used in English to denote men who oversee the labor of other pastors. And they also were simply Christians, and they were disciples. So, they pretty much fit the description of just about any kind of a Christian or Christian leader that you can be, but we're going to call them pastors because the title of these, or the name that's given to these books is often the pastoral epistles.

And then we'll see again and again that the graces that are called for these leaders, the things that they're urged to affirm, the kind of service they're called on to render, these are not things that are foreign to call them normal believers. For example, the qualifications for pastor in 1 Timothy 3 and in Titus chapter 2, these are characteristics that should be true of all believers. And so it's not as if these books are esoteric letters, some kind of special counsel for just one segment of the church.

It's really counsel that applies both to leaders and to their followers. So that's why I'm calling these lectures Apostolic Instruction for Pastoral Leaders and Their Followers. Now I have started out with just a reminder that whenever we study the Bible, we're studying a part of the Bible in a larger context.

And I have found over the years that there's a little acronym, P-M-E-E-C, that I find helpful for summarizing the Bible. And I've got a chart, and what we're going to see in this chart is that the Bible has a particular substance and that substance is the gospel. The Bible speaks to many things, and we can derive many truths from Scripture, but I think the central focus of the Bible is redemption.

And there is a word from God, there's what we call good news in the Christian tradition, that Christ Jesus died and rose and ascended and is interceding at the right hand of God as I speak here, and he will return and he will finalize his reign over all the earth and heaven. And as we look at the Bible, we see that we have about 77% called the Old Testament. And it's very important in its own right, and it's also important in terms of how it relates to the Bible, because the Old Testament is the Preparation for the gospel, and so that's where we get the P in the acronym, P-M-E-E-C.

Then the four gospels are the Manifestation of the good news. The promised Messiah came, he lived, he taught, he founded a movement, he died for our sins, he rose from the dead, he ascended to the Father, and he manifested, he grounded, he confirmed this good news of God's salvation in a world that fell into sin with Adam and Eve.

Then we have the Expansion of the gospel. The gospel went somewhere. This movement took root in the Roman world, and the book of Acts gives us a snapshot of that over a period of about 30 years from Jesus' appearance after his resurrection. In Acts chapter 1, he appeared to his disciples over a period of 40 days, and then about 30 years later, we see Paul in Acts 28 in Rome in chains awaiting trial, and that's sometime in the early 60s, so this is 30, 32 years, something like that, where the church is expanding, and we see how the gospel goes forth and how churches are planted.

We're still in that pattern today of the word going forth and churches being planted and Christians seeking to glorify God in their lives and in fulfilling the commission

that Jesus has given the church to make disciples. If we just had the gospels in Acts, we'd be hurting when it comes to, okay, what do we do with this thing that happened in Acts that was manifested in the gospels that was prepared for in the Old Testament?

What does that look like lived out? And that's when we come to the epistles, and the epistles are the Explanation of the gospel, or sometimes people use the word explication. What does the gospel look like lived out in the Acts heritage in locales, whether it's Corinth or whether it's Ephesus, or whether it's churches in what's now Turkey? When you look at the epistles as a whole, you see that they're addressed to a wide range of geographical areas and cultural backgrounds, and there are a lot of distinctives to the letters, but there are also a lot of consistencies and a lot of constants.

And so, we get an Explanation of how the gospel is lived out, how it looks like on the ground, and when we come to the pastorals, how pastors in particular need to be alert to opportunities and dangers and threats and so forth as they live out this Acts heritage that the New Testament letters explain or explicate in their own settings. And then the good news on top of the good news is that church life is not an endless treadmill.

The world is not just an ongoing cycle of some happiness and a lot of woe, but Christ is going to return, and the book of Revelation talks about God's victory in the world through Christ and through the kingdom of God that Christ established and furthered and also through the church and through the saints who are members of the church.

So, there you have the whole Bible and 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus are part of the epistles, which are an explanation of or a saying in the Proverbs, Proverbs 30, verse 5, every word of God is flawless. He is a shield to all those who take refuge in him.

So, with that thought in mind, let's pause for prayer. Heavenly Father, thank you for Christ. Thank you for the good news of the gospel in a world where there is often so much bad news. And thank you that your word is without error and it is flawless. And through your word, you are a shield to your people as we take refuge in you. And we ask that you would shield us from wasting anybody's time in these lectures, but that you would help us to redeem the time and that you would make your word effective. In the ministries, in the lives of everyone who hears these lectures, and that you would help us to internalize these and by the power of your Holy Spirit, live them out in your world to your glory. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

So, let's look at some introductory matters regarding 1 Timothy.

In our modern world, we have to say a few things about the author of 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus. And on the outline on the screen, you can see that the author is

Paul. Now in the modern world, there have been many objections to Pauline authorship, and books are written on this.

I'm not going to spend a lot of time on it, but I need to alert you to the state of affairs so that if you're hearing these lectures and you keep reading about the pastoral epistles when you stumble upon the theory that Paul didn't write them, you won't feel disillusioned because I didn't prepare you for that. Beginning around 1805 or so in Germany, this was the first time that you could say a church leader really questioned whether Paul wrote the pastorals. And just for the record, his name was Friedrich Schleiermacher.

He was followed by many other German scholars, F.C. Bauer and H.J. Holtzmann. But by the middle of the 19th century in Germany, the theory was established in certain German universities that the writing style of the pastorals was different from the other letters of Paul so he didn't write them. And also, they observed that when you read the Book of Acts, it's not clear where he could have written these letters.

There's not a clear social setting or historical setting or location for them. So, on that ground, they felt that there was warranted skepticism about Paul having written them. And then they found ways when they read the pastoral epistles, I would use the old Latin phrase, although I'll translate it, divide and conquer.

Divide and conquer. You can take certain statements of the pastorals or certain themes and say, well that's not really, that doesn't sound like Romans or that doesn't sound like Philippians. And so, by isolating the pastorals from Paul's other letters or some of Paul's other letters, they felt that there was content in the pastoral epistles that really didn't agree with what Paul said in other letters.

So, somebody else must have written these letters. Now that's the dominant theory in Western academia. If you go to a Western university, if you go to a lot of Western seminaries, you'll be taught that Paul did not write the pastorals.

And if you want a good summary of this, the development of these ideas, and also a good critique of them, Luke Timothy Johnson wrote a commentary in the Anchor Bible Commentary series. In his introduction, which is about 100 pages long, but there are 10 or 20 pages in there that's about how the idea that Paul didn't write 1st and 2nd Timothy, arose. And he critiques it heavily and I think that's a very good critique.

My critique is going to be much briefer. In favor of Paul's writing it, first of all, is a historical argument, just the epistles claim. The first word of all three of the pastoral epistles is Paulos in Greek.

You don't have to know Greek to translate Paulos, that's Paul. And when we read historical documents, first of all, we take them at face value unless there are compelling reasons for saying, well this document has been forged. I don't think there's a compelling reason to say it's been forged, therefore we start out with the claim that Paul wrote it and that's an argument in favor of Paul having written them.

His name is on it, especially when you get to 2nd Timothy, there are a lot of biographical and autobiographical details that don't make a lot of sense if Paul didn't write it, and if Timothy's not the person that the 1st and 2nd Timothy represent him to be.

Secondly, there's an Ecclesia argument, Ecclesia having to do here with the church. There's a consensus in Christian writers from the late 1st century where we first see glimmers of the pastoral epistles being cited by writers like Clement, Ignatius, or Polycarp.

There's a consensus that Paul wrote these and for the first 4 or 5 centuries of the church down to at least John Chrysostom in the 5th century, these were Greek-speaking people and they did not wonder, I wonder how these could be called Paul because clearly Paul didn't write these. They didn't feel like this was out of the sphere of possibility of Paul writing them. In fact, they never raised the question, did Paul write these? And when there's a consensus in the church down through about 1800 years about the authorship of a book and then suddenly there's a theory he couldn't write them, then I think we need very strong arguments for why everybody missed this until Friedrich Schleiermacher came along.

And so, on that basis, I would rather side with the first 1800 years of people who read these books and thought Paul wrote them than go along with the consensus in the German university, which by the way has turned out to be very negative and destructive for world Christianity because it's a skeptical approach to the Bible. It's a skeptical hermeneutic. It's called historical-critical.

And while under historical-critical auspices, there have been a lot of good and true things said about the Bible and there's been a lot of hard work done on the meanings of words and meanings of books. If you look at the church in the West, you'll see that it has shrunk and shrunk and shrunk. And the fewer people have believed that the Bible is true, the more ministers in the churches have sort of been whittling down their membership, because if it's not true, why should we devote our lives to following it? If Paul didn't write this, then isn't that kind of shady? Isn't it kind of dishonest? And how much more of the Bible maybe should we suspect as not being true? This is especially important in the large parts of the world that are affected by Islam because Islam is sure the Quran is true and Islamic scholars argue, often citing people like Schleiermacher or Holtzmann or Bauer, that they love to be skeptical

toward the Bible based on what I'll call liberal or historical-critical Western scholarship.

So, I'm not inclined to side with the historical-critical approach, the skeptical approach, on this particular issue. First of all, because I don't think there are grounds to, and then secondly, you can see the results of it have been very negative for the church. Now there's also a dark, doctrinal argument.

In the skeptical view, you find divisions between the pastorals and Paul's other letters and between the pastorals and the book of Acts. But I think that there's a lot of agreement between Acts and the pastorals. And I think there's a lot of agreement between the pastorals and Paul's other letters.

So, on the basis of what they teach, I'm quite happy to say, well, the same writer who wrote Romans, who wrote Colossians, who wrote Philemon, that same writer wrote 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus. And then there is the bibliological argument, bibliology being the doctrine of the Bible or the doctrine of Scripture. And I affirm that all of Scripture is true.

And we can go back to Isaiah 55, that God's Word, does what he sends it out to do. And we can cite 2 Timothy 3.16, all Scripture is God-breathed. It's given by God.

And Paul says in Titus, God does not lie. And the writer of Hebrews says God does not lie. And we don't really need a statement in the Bible that actually says that because it's so clear that God's truthfulness, is baked into all that Scripture affirms.

God is faithful. God is unerring. God is holy.

God is perfect. Certainly, everything he says is going to be true. But we do get these verses that affirm the relationship between a true, holy, righteous, perfect, truth-telling God and the words that he has given to his prophets and to his apostles and to Jesus to be recorded for the salvation, for the illumination of people who need to be saved through the Word of God.

So we have the word in English inerrancy, and I'm happy to use inerrancy. Other people like the word infallible. Those two words can be almost synonymous, whichever word you prefer.

We learn in the Bible and we learn in the Christian tradition to have a high regard for the Bible. And on the basis of our high regard for the Bible, I think we have a fourth argument in favor of Paul writing the pastorals. So that's all I'll say about that in a formal way.

I may touch on it again here and there as we go through our look at the pastoral epistles. When were the pastorals written? I think all we can say for sure is sometime during Paul's later lifetime. They seem to come from an era either well into the book of Acts, where Paul is traveling to various cities, and he's at Ephesus for a couple of years, and he's at Corinth for a year or two, or he's traveling up into Macedonia and he leaves Titus and Timothy somewhere.

Some people have argued that you can fit the pastorals, that is 1 Timothy and Titus, you can fit them into Paul's movements in the book of Acts. And I can't disprove that. It can't be air-tightly verified, but it is possible that Paul wrote them sometime in the 55-60 range, which is still covered by Acts.

Other people think that Paul wrote the pastorals after the book of Acts ends and that after Paul is at Rome in Acts 28, he gets released, and then he has several years where he travels, and it's during this time that he writes to Timothy and he writes to Titus. This is probably the most ancient and most common view in the church, that after Paul's release in Acts 28, he wrote 1 and 2 Timothy. Then he gets re-arrested, and he's imprisoned in Rome for a second time where he will be martyred, and it's right before his martyrdom that he writes 2 Timothy.

So those are the rough dates that we will use to locate 1-2 Timothy and Titus. Why does he write 1 Timothy? And I'll ask this question later for 2 Timothy and for Titus when we get to them. Well, we can see from 1 Timothy 1.3, he says, As I urged you when I went into Macedonia, stay there in Ephesus, so that you may command certain people not to teach false doctrines any longer.

And he goes on, and I'll be using the NIV in these lectures. He wants to exhort Timothy to weather pastoral difficulties. Now, there weren't only difficulties, there were opportunities as well.

But I think 1 Timothy stresses the stresses that Timothy was under. And he wants Timothy to preserve the gospel presence there, and he wants to extend it, because that's the nature of Christ's Lordship. Just as the nature of sin is to expand and to destroy, the nature of Christ's Lordship is to expand and to redeem, and to perfect, and to improve, and to bring glory to God.

So that's the occasion. It's very, very focused on Timothy weathering the difficulties. And since probably everybody who's serious enough about the gospel to watch a lecture on 1 Timothy, if you're that serious, you probably are facing difficulties.

Because being a serious Christian always brings difficulties. And so, this is a book that's going to resonate with us because we can often sort of feel exactly where Timothy is at, and why this council is so important. A fourth consideration by way of introduction, I love to count words.

And we have now, software that we can easily do sophisticated searches. And so, I've made up a chart of the prominent significant words, not articles like the, or a, and not conjunctions like, and, or so, or but. But significant words, typically nouns or verbs.

And what I'm thinking here is that frequency implies focus. The more a writer talks about something in principle, that probably means that it is what the document is focusing on. And I say this because many times in the literature, people get focused on background material.

And what the writers talk the most about doesn't get talked about very much. And you're going to find with all New Testament epistles, but especially with Paul, what God talks the most about, excuse me, what Paul talks the most about is not the social setting, or the reason that he writes, or some conflict between different parties. He doesn't talk about sociology, he talks about God.

And as you look at the chart, and I've yellowed the words for God, you've got God occurring 22 times. You've got Christ and Jesus coming in at number four and five in frequency, and they're most often listed together. And then later on, 15th in frequency, you've got Lord mentioned six times.

So, when you add those up, you've got, almost 40 occurrences or right at 40 occurrences of the word God. And it's not that Timothy needs to learn about God or Jesus. He doesn't need a lesson in these things.

It's just that as Paul wants to help Timothy, whether his difficulties, what he's going to revert to again and again is God or Christ Jesus. Because he is the one that we look to. He is the one for whom Timothy labors.

He is the one who will make or break Timothy's success. And that will be through faith. Faith is what Timothy needs.

He needs to be trusting God. And that's the second most frequent word. And that faith is often going to take the form of acts that God prescribes, that the gospel calls for.

And often these are called works, and they are good works. And there are a lot of other things good that Paul talks about. So, he uses the word good or beautiful or noble 16 times in the pastorals.

And then you can see number six is faithful. Seven and eight, man or person and woman or wife. And then number down number 17, five times he mentions man or husband.

The pastorals are focused on people as well as God. And that's reflected in their frequency list. And then we get number nine, the teaching, didascalia.

And we'll see again and again that the pastor's role is fulfilled not solely by teaching, but substantially by teaching. Pastors are teachers. Remember the word pastor is cognate in English and in Latin with the word shepherd.

A pastor is a shepherd. A pastor is not a bureaucrat. A pastor is not a ruler, although he does exercise leadership.

But a pastor is someone who shepherds. And we have someone in our tradition called the good shepherd. His name is Jesus.

And when you look at the Gospels, Jesus' main activity was teaching. He wasn't legislating. He wasn't arresting people.

He wasn't agitating. He was instructing people. And you can use the word teaching to summarize the main thrust of Jesus' service to people while he was on earth.

He instructed them. And in English we often, this is sort of a formal term, but we'll talk about under-shepherds. There's the great shepherd and then there are the under-shepherds and then those are pastors.

And pastors teach. So that's why that word is prominent in the pastorals. Then what do they teach and what should the effect be? And now we come to a very distinctive word, Eusebia, which we can translate as godliness.

And it doesn't occur in Paul's other letters. Nobody can really explain why it doesn't occur in Paul's other letters, but I will say that if you get into the literature, you'll see that every letter of Paul has words that don't appear in any other letter. And I think what this indicates is he was a smart man with a big vocabulary.

And when he wrote certain letters, he used certain words. And when he wrote other letters, he used other words. There are a lot of books in Paul that don't mention the word cross, but that doesn't mean, well, he didn't believe in the cross anymore or somebody else wrote these letters.

It's just that different letters call forth a different vocabulary. In the pastoral letters, he's very concerned that people reflect a certain kind of piety and integrity. And we could even use the word holiness in their comportment.

And so, this word is frequent in 1 Timothy, and we'll see it again and again as we go through. Then the word *logos* occurs, and often it's referring to the Christian message. Not always, but often.

Widows will figure prominently in chapter five. It's a great chapter. Then truth and work and love.

This is part of everyday Christian vocabulary, everyday pastoral care, and everyday church life. You want things to be true. You don't want untruths and lies floating around everywhere.

You want there to be labor for the Lord. That's *ergon*, work. And suffusing it all.

And Paul says, he's going to say in chapter one, the whole goal of what he's saying to Timothy is *agape*. It's love. As John says, God is love.

And everything that the gospel brings out of people and everything that the grace of God through the gospel pours into people, it all can be put under the rubric, finally, of love. And because this is so self-evident, and again, because this is not like a formal new Christian instruction plan, he doesn't talk about love a lot. But the places that he does talk about reminds us of how fundamental it is to the effect that the internalization of the gospel has on someone like Paul or Timothy.

Why were they giving their lives in service to people that weren't even their ethnicity? Remember, Paul and Timothy are both Jewish, and they're working in a Gentile setting. Why would they do that? Especially because the Roman world was about 90% non-Jewish, only maybe 8 to 10% Jewish, and Jews were looked down on in the Roman Empire. And they were out there in a non-Jewish setting, caring for others, proclaiming the gospel to others, often being endangered, especially by the majority population, but also by the minority population, because their fellow Jews often didn't accept their teaching on Jesus.

Why did they bear with it all? And one of the answers is, well, love. The same reason that God bears with a world that's, in large measure, in rebellion against Him. God so loved the world.

And so, Timothy reflects this fundamental characteristic of God that the gospel implanted in Paul in his conversion, and that Paul manifested through his ministry, and that he continues to manifest as he writes this letter. We need to say a few words about the city of Ephesus. We don't know exactly when Timothy received this letter at Ephesus, but we can track back into the book of Acts and see that there was a Jewish synagogue, and probably there were many Jewish synagogues.

Ephesus was a very large city. It was also the site of the temple of Artemis, or Diana, and that was one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. I call Ephesus the Disney World of the Roman Empire.

People would travel there because it was the seat of this magnificent temple, but also it was a center of magic and occult practices, and I'll come back to that. Apollos teaches about Christ, the Messiah, through John the Baptist at the end of Acts, chapter 18, and I need to read these verses. Acts, chapter 18, verses 24 through 26.

It's humid here today, so these pages are sticking together. This is Acts 18:24. A Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, which is in Egypt, came to Ephesus.

He was a learned man with a thorough knowledge of the scriptures. He had been instructed in the way of the Lord, and he spoke with great fervor and taught about Jesus accurately, though he knew only the baptism of John. He began to speak boldly in the synagogue.

When Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they invited him to their home and explained to him the way of God more adequately. Then he rotates on and moves to Achaia or to Corinth, but then Paul comes to Ephesus. You can read about this in Acts, chapter 19.

In fact, the best commentary on Ephesus is chapter 19 of Acts. If you're reading Ephesians or if you're reading 1 Timothy, soak yourself in Acts, chapter 19, because we learn how the Holy Spirit came and that little cell group that Apollos established through his teaching, it took on new life. When Paul came, and I just want to read a few verses here, Acts, chapter 19, beginning with verse 2, Paul asked them, did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed? They answered, no, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.

So, Paul asked, then what baptism did you receive? John's baptism, they replied. Paul said John's baptism was a baptism of repentance. He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in Jesus.

On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them and they spoke in tongues and prophesied. There were about 12 men in all.

And that 12 is probably not accidental, it's probably sort of reverberating with the apostolic 12. What happened here in Ephesus confirms what Paul, what God did in Jerusalem in Acts 2. He sent his Holy Spirit. And a lot of the Jewish believers would have thought, well, this is Jerusalem, this is the place where God's Holy Spirit gets sent.

And it would have been a temptation to sort of think this is the only place that the church can really be the church. But in Acts, chapter 8, through Philip, there's the same manifestation of the Holy Spirit on believers in Jesus at Samaria. Samaria is not a place that a lot of Jews or early Jewish believers would have thought would be a center of the presence of the Holy Spirit of God.

They would have associated the Holy Spirit with the holy city. But in Acts 8, we see God manifesting his Holy Spirit's presence through the gospel in Samaria. And then in Acts 10 and 11, we see him manifesting his Holy Spirit presence with Cornelius in Joppa, a completely Gentile area.

And so for the fourth time in Acts, we see these manifestations of the Holy Spirit. And that confirms two things. Number one, Paul's ministry, which had been going on for decades already.

But as far as we know, this is the first time there was this kind of manifestation through Paul's hands. And I think it's significant that it's at Ephesus because Ephesus is such a demonic stronghold. And I think that it was very fitting that there be this fresh manifestation of the Holy Spirit.

About 25 years after Pentecost, there's this fresh manifestation of the Holy Spirit that reinforces for the pagans in Ephesus, but also for the Jews in Ephesus, that the same God and the same effects and the same gospel that had begun this movement in Jerusalem at Pentecost, that same complex is at work at Ephesus. So, I've mentioned a number of times the demonic and the occult. The occult just means the hidden black arts, black magic.

Ephesus was the center of the practice of these kinds of beliefs and actions. First of all, in Acts 19, beginning in verse 13, we're reminded, that as Paul is ministering, there were Jews going around driving out evil spirits. So Jewish exorcists, and it says, they tried to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus over those who were demon-possessed.

And they would say, in the name of the Jesus whom Paul preaches, I command you to come out. And these were seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest. And you can read on there in verses 15 and 16, you can see how evidently Satan got tired of being pushed around by these phonies.

And so, he filled this one man with an evil spirit that overpowered the seven brothers and gave them such a beating that they ran out of the house naked and bleeding. So, this is some very strong magic that is at work. And this story went out, this account went out, and it says that when this became known to the Jews and Greeks living in Ephesus, they were all seized with fear.

And the name of the Lord Jesus was held in high honor. You don't take that name in vain. Something bad might happen to you.

And then it says, many of those who believed now came and openly confessed what they had done, because lots of people were involved in these magical arts. It was part of the culture. Just like where I'm living right now, more and more in the United States, people are involved in gambling.

Gambling is not good stewardship of the money that God gives his people for their support and for the support of God's work in the world. But it's a hit, and a lot of times people hide it. Or they'll be using some kind of drugs, and they know they probably shouldn't be doing this, so they hide it.

But it's a part of the culture. And that's part of the culture that is often a part of the church when it needs to not be in the church. Well, this is what was true at Ephesus.

People were involved in demonic and occult observances. It says a number who had practiced sorcery, this is Acts 19.19, brought their scrolls together and burned them publicly. When they calculated the value of the scrolls, the total came to 50,000 drachmas.

That's a fortune. In this way, the word of the Lord spread widely and grew in power. I'm reminded of Paul's saying when he wrote to the Ephesians, our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world, and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

He wrote that to the Ephesians because he had lived in Ephesus, he had observed these things, and he knew that the Ephesians needed to put on the armor of God because it's a world in which there are many dark and powerful forces militating against God's work and against God's people. I won't go on through the rest of Acts 19, but a very large portion of Acts 19 is devoted to what the NIV says in its heading, is a riot, or the riot in Ephesus. As the gospel took effect in the population, people who worshipped the gods by buying idols that were made of silver, quit buying these idols because they had become Christians and they knew that idolatry is a sin.

You shall have no other gods before me was in the early Christian Bible. It's the first commandment. And so the silversmiths, the people that made the idols, were very upset because they were losing money, and so they stirred up a rebellion and a riot, and some Christians were beaten, and so forth.

But the takeaway is that there was not only Jewish resistance to Christ and the gospel in the church at Ephesus, there was also pagan resistance, political resistance,

and commercial resistance. In general, the culture was very upset by these counter-cultural people. And God delights to do great work in hard areas.

The famous saying of Tertullian is, the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church. And thank goodness, gospel resistance doesn't always result in martyrdom, but in the history of the church, it often has. As we stand today, there has never been a period of the church where more people die every day for their Christian confession.

The Center for the Study of Global Christianity at Gordon Conwell Seminary calculates that in these decades, the early decades of the 21st century, and projecting down to around the middle of the 20th century, we're talking about roughly 90,000 Christians a year die of persecution. And that's 247 a day. So, some days fewer, some days more, but there's no day probably that in Nigeria, or in China, or in Egypt, or somewhere that Christians are not being put to death in connection with their Christian confession.

Recent history shows that the more this happens, while it is tragic, and while we lament it, and while probably none of us is volunteering to be put to death today for a Christian confession, nevertheless, God brings growth numerically and in-depth to his people when Satan gets so out of hand that he starts slaughtering God's people. God pushes back, and God was pushing back at Ephesus. And I think that that tension is why Timothy is having to weather so many difficulties, because this is a thing in church history, that the powers of darkness try to prevail, and God rolls up his sleeves and says, well, that's not going to happen here.

But then he calls his servants to stand up and be counted, and to be part of his pushback, and it can be very challenging and difficult. Just a couple more points of introduction. There's a lot to be said about Timothy.

His name is stated four times in the pastoral epistles, and in Acts, we are reminded that he was a disciple whose mother was Jewish, but whose father was a pagan, a Greek. And in rabbinic reckoning, rabbis believe that you are what your mother is. So, by that reckoning, while I'm in the United States, I'm a Canadian because my mother was born in Canada.

And the Jewish rabbi said, well, if you're born to a Jewish mother, then you're Jewish, and Timothy was born to a Jewish mother. Furthermore, in 2 Timothy, Paul underscores his upbringing from his mother and his grandmother and implies that they were Jewish and that they raised him faithfully in the scriptures from childhood, that is, the Old Testament scriptures. So, we gather, because the town he was from, Lystra, L-Y-S-T-R-A, is one of the towns that was evangelized in Acts 13 and 14 in Paul's first missionary journey.

While Timothy doesn't appear there, it must have been that time that his mother, his grandmother and he heard the gospel. And in Acts 16, Paul asks him to go along with him and Silas on the second missionary journey. And just for your recollection, Acts 13 and 14 is the first missionary journey.

Acts 15:36, after the Jerusalem Council, down to chapter 18, verse 22, is the second missionary journey. And the third missionary journey is from Acts 18:23, until Paul returns to Jerusalem in Acts 21:17. Timothy enters the scene then in the second missionary journey, and he's with Paul off and on through the rest of his life.

When he's not with Paul physically, he's with Paul ideologically or missionally because Paul sends him out on various assignments. Or, as is the case with 1 Timothy, he leaves him behind and he goes on. So, we could say Timothy is Paul's right-hand man in much of his ministry.

I'm not going to read this table to you, but I do have a table that also occurs in this commentary. I've written a commentary on the letters to Timothy and Titus. And this is, I think, about a quarter of a million words.

And I think I talk about 125 words a minute. So, I could read this commentary to you, we could be here for a week or two, or I could sort of summarize it in these lectures, what I'm trying to do. But I have a chart in that commentary that has all the mentions of Timothy chronologically.

And they begin in the early AD 50s where Paul writes to the Thessalonians. When he starts his letter, he says, Paul, Titus, and Timothy to the church of the Thessalonians. And in 1 Thessalonians 3, he says, we sent Timothy.

And more references to Timothy in 2 Thessalonians, in 1 Corinthians, in 2 Corinthians, in Romans, at the end of Romans, Romans 16:21, Timothy, my co-worker, sends his greetings to you. And this would be in about AD 57 as Paul is ending his third missionary journey. Philippians mentions Timothy in the first verse, Paul and Timothy to the Philippians.

He's commended in Philippians 2. He's mentioned in Colossians chapter 1. He's mentioned in Philemon chapter 1. So, Timothy's name appears in eight of Paul's letters. And he is, of course, addressed in two of the pastorals. And this means only three Pauline letters do not name Timothy.

Galatians, Ephesians, and Titus don't give us Timothy's name. But, from the references that we have, we can say that there were very few, if any, people as privy to Paul's movements and his teachings over the years as Timothy. If there's a second, or if there's a candidate that would vie for being named here, it would be Luke.

Luke was also a traveling companion of Paul and a confidant of Paul, but he was not a pastor leader like Timothy. There were hardly any people if any, people that were so closely complicit in Paul's evangelization and in his maturation of the churches. Timothy and Paul shared a call to gospel service.

They shared the drama of sweating it out in the trenches. And probably some of you who will watch these lectures live in places where you can be arrested for being a Christian. And about the adrenaline, and you know about the fear, and you know about how you have to hide things, and how you don't want to be discovered.

And you don't like to admit it, but you're always suspicious about new members in the congregation or visitors because they could be security people. And they could cause you a lot of grief down the line. Timothy knew all about these kinds of things because for years he had served with Paul in very difficult places and had a lot of responsibility placed on him.

Consequently, when we get to 2 Timothy, we'll see things like this. Paul writes in 2 Timothy 1:8, Do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord or of me, his prisoner. Join me in suffering for the gospel by the power of God.

In 2 Timothy 1:12, he says, This is why I'm suffering as I am, yet this is no cause for shame, because I know whom I've believed, and I'm convinced he's able to guard whom I've entrusted to him until that day. And then in 2 Timothy 3:12, Everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. So, these are things that Paul shared also with new believers.

When you read 1 Thessalonians and 2 Thessalonians, you'll see that he says, You knew that this persecution that you're undergoing would come because I told you from the beginning that when we serve Christ, there will be resistance to the gospel. But Timothy had lived through this. He knew about it.

He was a seasoned veteran. And so, there's a deep bond between these men as we read 1 and 2 Timothy, and for that matter, Titus 2. It's a bond that the gospel forges between people, first of all, because of the fellowship in Christ. But secondly, just as in marriage, there's great joy.

But in marriage also over the years, the bond deepens because you suffer together. And especially if you're a Christian, you find the grace in Christ to remain committed to each other and to remain committed to Christ in your daily lives and in the ministries and the duties that God gives you. And this creates an unbreakable bond where you are faithful unto death to the person.

Well, how much more were Timothy and Paul being faithful unto death to God and also being faithful to each other as co-ministers, co-laborers with God at Ephesus and

elsewhere? I want to conclude just by calling your attention to a distinctive of the pastoral epistles. And this is one of those distinctives that critics will say, well, we don't find this in other Paul's letters, so this must mean these letters aren't from Paul. But for some reason, when Paul writes the pastorals, he uses this idiom, *logos pistos*.

Logos is word, and then *pistos* means faithful. So, the way the Greek works, you don't always have to use verbs. You can just say two nouns and you get a sentence, or in this case, a noun and an adjective.

So, *logos pistos*, it means faithful is the word. And books are written on what this means. And, nobody has convinced everybody of just exactly what it means.

But I like to think of it as a sort of a saying that was current at the time for Paul and maybe Paul and his immediate co-workers, you can take this to the bank. There's no doubt about what I'm about to say. He's just underscoring that this is a saying that deserves our support.

And it's in 1 Timothy 1:15, which we'll get to. It's in 1 Timothy 3:1. This is a trustworthy saying, whoever aspires to be an overseer desires a noble task. It's in 1 Timothy 4:8. And then we run into it in 2 Timothy 2:11. If we died with him, we will also live with him.

Then also run into it in Titus 3:7-8, where Paul says, so having been justified by his grace, we become heirs, having the hope of eternal life. This is a trustworthy saying. And he's just said several things about Christ's appearing and about justification.

And he says I want you to do things. So, I'll end this lecture on that note, dotting the pastoral epistles is this phrase, faithful is the word. And I'm sure that word will prove faithful to us as we continue our investigation of it.

And as you and I continue to go about putting that great word into practice in our lives and service.

This is Dr. Robert W. Yarbrough and his teaching on the Pastoral Epistles, Apostolic Instruction for Pastoral Leaders and their Followers. Session 1, Introduction.