



## Exploring God's Love through the Bible: God's Love in the Pastoral Epistles

1 & 2 Timothy and Titus: Order in the Church

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In my humble opinion, there are a few Texts that frame God's love in the Pastorals...

### Texts:

*1Ti 3:14-16* These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: **15 But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.** *16* And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory. (KJV)

*2Ti 1:10-13* But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel: **11** Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles. **12** For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day. **13 Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.** (KJV)

### UNDERSTANDING GOD'S LOVE IN 1 & 2 TIMOTHY AND TITUS

In three short letters, the Church of Jesus Christ has understood the essence of church order and ministry for 2000 years (with a shout out to 1 Corinthians as well!). Paul, through the Holy Spirit, writes to ensure God's name is honored in **truth**, His desires are made **manifest** in His own Church, and His Word is not **blasphemed**.

### Our Outline

These epistles, in short order, commands the silencing of false teachers in the church (1 Tim 1), Godly leadership (1 Tim 3), God's desire for order in prayer and preaching (1 Tim 2), care for widows (1 Tim 5), the fidelity and faithfulness of God's people (1 Tim 6; 2 Tim 1 & 2) and Scripture alone as the standard for ministry and practice (2 Tim 3:16-17; 4:1-5).

2 Timothy closes with what many feel are the final written words of Paul before his death. One commenter wrote:

The last words of famous people are generally cherished by those who loved the individuals. While 2 Timothy does not constitute literally Paul's last words, it is his last known writing to the Christians, originally sent to his beloved young lieutenant, Timothy.

Sitting in his dank dungeon in Rome, with only a hole in the ceiling for light, and awaiting execution by beheading, the spiritual, intelligent, and tenderhearted apostle, now aged and worn out from his long and arduous race for God, pens a final appeal to hold firmly to the truth and life that Timothy has been taught.

May we do the same! May the "last written words" by Paul help us receive God's tender and careful instructions for the Church He birthed by His own precious blood (2 Tim 4:4-6, 9-18)!

#### LOVE THAT PROTECTS THE CHURCH (1 TIM 1:3-7; TITUS 1:7-11)

- Can you sense God's fervent and loving desire to protect His precious church from **error**?
- Can you see the need for pastors to labor in sound doctrine and correct with **authority**?
- How might you too be a protector of the Lord's Church in love and grace?

#### LOVE THAT ORDERS THE CHURCH (1 TIM 2:8-14, 5:17-20)

- God's desire for order and modesty in the church isn't often accepted today. We call verses like this "out of touch" or "not relevant in our context," etc.
- Yet, as we were reminded last week, **Christ is Head of the Church** (Col 1:18)!
- Elders and Deacons aren't above the law. They have qualifications (1 Tim 3:1-13) and can be corrected and rebuked.
- God is not a God of **confusion** but wants His church to run decently and in order. How might you contribute, in love, to an orderly, powerful, Spirit-filled gathering of the saints?

#### LOVE THAT CARES FOR THE CHURCH (1 TIM 5:3-10)

- Scripture declares, "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith." (Gal 6:10)
- Jesus is especially concerned about His Bride, particularly those at a disadvantage.
- The Lord's Brother James wrote, "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." (Jam 1:27)
- The church is **commanded** to honor true widows and to support them.
- Who do you know that meets the qualifications for such aid? Would you pray about bringing them to the attention of the Elders? How might you be a blessing to them?

#### LOVE THAT PRESERVES THE CHURCH (1 TIM 6:12-14; 2 TIM 2:15-19)

- God, in love and mercy, encourages us through Paul's words to Timothy, to fight on and to never quit!
- Always remember that **perseverance** is a preservative; it is the faithful who ensure more are faithful...the truly disciplined who disciple others!
- The Church is to hold fast to the name of Christ and never deny the faith, despite the activity of the enemy (Rev 2:13)!
- Who do you know that is struggling and barely holding on? Who have you encouraged to "avoid irreverent babble?" Who do you need to warn away from "Hymenaeus and Philetus" types, and exhort to depart from iniquity?

#### LOVE THAT REGULATES THE CHURCH (2 TIM 3:16-17; TITUS 2:1-8)

- Given by the Spirit (2 Pet 1:19-21) in love, the Scriptures are our marching orders for life and ministry.
- In them, we find great profit: teaching, correction, training, sound doctrine, godly patterns, and much more!
- When we decide to disobey, the "Word of God" is "blasphemed" or spoken **evil** of, both inside the church and without.
- Disobedience damages the testimony of the Church.
- First, do you believe that Scripture regulates life and ministry? Do you see the precepts of God as loving instructions given by a good, good Father? Who might you encourage this week to submit to the Word of God?

CRCC, may we never forget the reason for epistles such as these. Paul sums it up in Titus 2:11-15:

*Tit 2:11-15 **For the grace of God has appeared**, bringing salvation for all people, 12 training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, 13 **waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ**, 14 who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works. 15 Declare these things; exhort and rebuke with all authority. Let no one disregard you.*

It is always about **Jesus**. His Name be praised in the Church, now and forever!

Amen.