

The First Epistle of Paul the Apostle to Timothy

Paul's Intended Visit

1 Timothy 3:14-15

- I. PAUL'S EXPECTATION OF VISITING (1 Timothy 3:14)
 - A. The Association of Paul's Writing
 1. The choice of subject matter in this epistle is given with an expectation of additional information being discussed face to face.
 2. At the same time, it must be remembered that these are God's words.
 - B. The Hope of Paul's Visit
 1. It must be remembered that Paul's epistles are broken down into:
 - a. Missionary epistles—This group of books (Romans through Galatians, plus First and Second Thessalonians) encompasses the period covered by the missionary journeys found in Acts.
 - b. Prison epistles—This includes Paul's letters to Ephesus, Philippi, Colosse, and Philemon. It is appropriately identified as prison epistles because they were authored while Paul was in prison.
 - c. Final epistles—Paul's other epistles were written either between two distinct imprisonments or during his final imprisonment.
 - (1) Paul wrote to Titus from Nicopolis of Macedonia and began the epistle with a reminder to Titus concerning why he left Titus in Crete (see Titus 1:5; Acts 27:12). This correspondence to Titus took place after Paul's initial Roman imprisonment, which is confirmed by no mention of Paul's bonds in the epistle.
 - (2) Also, during this final journey, Paul visited Laodicea where he penned an epistle to Timothy. Sometime after this was written, Paul traveled through Miletum where an illness forced him to leave Trophimus behind sick (2 Timothy 4:20).
 - (3) Paul returned to Rome (likely with Timothy) where he was again imprisoned. According to the postscript in the book of Hebrews, Paul wrote that book from Italy and within the epistle he mentioned that he either was, or had been, imprisoned and hoped to visit the recipients (a visit that likely never took place).
 - (4) Paul's second epistle to Timothy was his last and was sent from Rome (again in bonds) where the postscript says, "written from Rome, when Paul was brought before Nero the SECOND time."
 2. This epistle, as noted above, was written between Paul's imprisonments and Paul's expectation was that he would see Timothy again shortly. It seems likely that this happened and that Timothy rejoined Paul for a space of time before going to Ephesus to serve as their bishop.



II. SHOULD PAUL BE DELAYED (1 Timothy 3:15)

A. The Possibility of Delay

1. Paul's desire was to come unto Timothy "shortly" (1 Timothy 3:14).
2. However, in the spirit of wisdom also set forth by James (James 4:13-15), Paul allowed for the possibility that he might "tarry long."

B. The Desire for Proper Behaviour

1. The recipient of the request—"thou"
 - a. While it is known that the overall epistle was written to Timothy, it should also be understood that Paul's desire at this point was that Timothy behave himself appropriately.
 - b. It is likely that Timothy was not yet a bishop in the first epistle but there was still talk and preparation for how he should behave when the time came (1 Timothy 3:2).
2. The purpose of the request—"mayest know how"; Obviously, the purpose was to provide knowledge and insight to Timothy.
3. The standard of the request—"oughtest to behave"; If there was a way that Timothy ought to behave, there would also be an inappropriate way to behave.
4. The place of the request—"in the house of God"

C. The Purpose of the Church

1. As the center of God's presence—"the house of God"
 - a. Throughout scripture God has had a place to meet with His people.
 - (1) Eden (Genesis 3:8)
 - (2) Beth-el (Genesis 28:17)
 - (3) The tabernacle at Shiloh (Judges 18:31)
 - (4) The temple in Jerusalem (2 Chronicles 7:5; Ezra 5:2)
 - (5) The church of the living God (1 Timothy 3:15)
 - b. The indwelling presence of God is twofold in the New Testament church.
 - (1) God indwells each believer (Romans 8:9).
 - (2) God indwells a body of believers collectively (1 Corinthians 3:16; 1 Corinthians 6:19; 2 Corinthians 6:16; see Matthew 18:20).
2. As the center of God's activity—"the church of the living God"
3. As the center of God's truth—"the pillar and ground of the truth"; Note: It should be understood that this is clearly a reference to the local church. After all, the admonition was for Timothy to behave properly within it. This could only be true of a local church. It also comes on the heels of the discussion of offices applicable only within local churches. As such, the local churches are the pillar and ground of the truth. Why? Because they serve as the foundation and propagation of truth.

The First Epistle of Paul the Apostle to Timothy

The Mystery of Godliness

1 Timothy 3:16

I. THE MYSTERY OF GODLINESS

A. Its Magnitude

1. The indisputability of its magnitude—“without controversy”
2. The declaration of its magnitude—“great”

B. Its Mystery

1. Identifying the Church age mysteries
 - a. Israel’s blindness (Romans 11:25)
 - b. The church’s translation (1 Corinthians 15:51-52; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17)
 - c. The mystery of Christ—that all [Jew and Gentile] are one in Christ (Ephesians 3:3-6; Ephesians 5:29-32; Colossians 4:3)
 - d. The mystery of Christ in you (Colossians 1:26-27; Galatians 2:20)
 - e. The mystery of godliness—the incarnation and ministry of God in that incarnation (1 Timothy 3:16; Colossians 2:2)
 - f. The mystery of iniquity—the Devil incarnate in the Antichrist (2 Thessalonians 2:7)
 - g. The mystery of the gospel—evidently, the gospel of the grace of God (Ephesians 6:19; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4)
 - h. The mystery of the faith—that the word is the source of salvation and all doctrine (1 Timothy 3:9; Titus 1:9; Romans 10:17; 1 Peter 1:23-25)
 - i. The mystery of His will—God’s purpose for the ages (Ephesians 1:9-10; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28)
 - j. The mystery of God—God’s plan for the ages (Colossians 2:2)
2. Defining a Bible mystery
 - a. A mystery involves that which had not been previously revealed.
 - b. The Church Age and its companion mysteries remained such during previous dispensations. The apostle Paul was among a group identified as “stewards of the mysteries of God” (1 Corinthians 4:1).
3. The uniqueness of this mystery
 - a. The punctuation is telling. The information following the colon is intended to offer a further explanation of the statement preceding the colon.
 - b. While we tend to minimize this mystery to the incarnation, it obviously includes the ministry of the incarnate Christ up through His ascension.



II. THE MINISTRY OF THE SON

A. His Incarnation

1. His deity—"God"
 - a. Seen in His eternal existence
 - (1) He was before John (John 1:15).
 - (2) He was before Abraham (John 8:58).
 - (3) He was sent by the Father from heaven (John 3:31; John 6:38; John 16:28).
 - (4) He is the beginning and ending (Revelation 1:8).
 - (5) He was before all things (Colossians 1:16-17).
 - (6) He was there in the beginning (John 1:1-2, 14).
 - (7) His goings forth have been from everlasting (Micah 5:2; Matthew 2:5-6).
 - (8) He is called the everlasting Father (Isaiah 9:6).
 - (9) He had glory with the Father before the world was brought into existence (John 17:5).
 - (10) He was loved of the Father before the foundation of the world (John 17:24).
 - b. Seen in His immutability
 - (1) Immutability is a trait connected to the Father (Malachi 3:6; James 1:17).
 - (2) The scriptures declare this truth of the Son (Psalm 102:24-27; Hebrews 1:8-12; Hebrews 13:8).
 - c. Seen in His right to receive worship
 - (1) He is declared to be God or the Son of God (see notes above).
 - (2) He is worshipped as God.
 - a) Peter refused worship (Acts 10:25-26).
 - b) Herod was killed for receiving worship from those around him (Acts 12:21-24).
 - c) Paul refused worship (Acts 14:11-16).
 - d) An angel refused worship (Revelation 19:5-10; Revelation 22:8-9).
 - e) Christ received worship (Matthew 2:11; Matthew 8:2; Matthew 9:18; Matthew 14:33; Matthew 15:25; Matthew 28:9, 17; Luke 24:51-52; John 9:38).
2. His humanity—"was manifest in the flesh"
 - a. Christ is called a man (John 4:29; John 7:31; 1 Timothy 2:5).
 - b. Christ was known after the flesh (2 Corinthians 5:16).
 - c. The Word was made flesh (John 1:14).
 - d. God was manifest in the flesh (1 Timothy 3:16).
 - e. Jesus Christ is come in the flesh (1 John 4:2-3; 2 John 1:7).
 - f. He was found in fashion as a man (Philippians 2:8).
 - g. He was made like unto His brethren (Hebrews 2:17).
 - h. A body was prepared for Him (Hebrews 10:5).

B. His Justification

1. Understanding justification
 - a. Some have narrowed the meaning of justification to be *making one just*; however, this definition is quite problematic in light of some of the scriptural usage (i.e., Luke 7:29; Luke 10:29).
 - b. The more accurate definition when compared to scripture is to show or declare one to be right (Deuteronomy 25:1; 1 Kings 8:31-32; Job 9:20; Proverbs 17:15).
2. The saint's justification through Christ (Romans 3:21-26)
 - a. The plan—"without the law" (Romans 3:21)
 - b. The prerequisite—"by faith of Jesus Christ" (Romans 3:22)
 - c. The problem—"all have sinned" (Romans 3:23)
 - d. The price—"redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Romans 3:24-25)
 - e. The position—"in Christ Jesus" (Romans 3:24)
 - f. The pronouncement—"that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (Romans 3:26)
3. Christ's justification in the Spirit
 - a. The Spirit's desire to bring Jesus to view
 - (1) At special events
 - a) At the birth of Christ (Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:35)
 - b) At the presentation of Christ (Luke 2:25-35)
 - c) At the baptism of Christ (Matthew 3:16-17)
 - d) At the temptation of Christ (Matthew 4:1)
 - e) At the resurrection of Christ (1 Peter 3:18)
 - (2) Through special means
 - a) Through prophecy (Mark 12:36; 1 Peter 1:10-12)
 - b) Through preaching
 - i) Of John the Baptist (Luke 1:15-16; John 1:29)
 - ii) Of the apostles (Acts 4:23-33; Acts 5:26-33)
 - iii) Simon Peter (Acts 4:5-14; Acts 10:19-44)
 - iv) Stephen (Acts 6:5; Acts 7:51-53)
 - v) Philip (Acts 8:29-40)
 - vi) Paul (Acts 9:17-20; Acts 13:2-3, 14-39)
 - c) Through pictures (Hebrews 9:3-8)
 - b. The Spirit's declaration of Christ (Romans 1:4)

C. His Declaration

1. Seen of angels
2. Preached unto the Gentiles
3. Believed on in the world

D. His Ascension

1. The description of His ascension—"received up"
2. The place and nature of His ascension—"into glory"