

# 2020-2021 Bible Study

## #30

5/10/21

# Reminder

- We will not meet next week **May 18** for Bible Study
-

# Review of our Last Class

- Last week, we completed our study of the Captivity Epistles (Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon)
- Paul discussed how one is saved through Baptism in Jesus (even though not said), and not via an altar call
- Further, at the Second Coming, we will receive a resurrected body for eternity
- We also saw how Paul was always speaking of the Torah when he spoke of the works (of the Law)

# Review of our Last Class (Cont)

- He further directed the Ephesians not to look to all the Gnostic mysteries and intermediaries as Christ was all that was necessary
- We saw another Pauline teaching concerning the sacrificial role of husbands and wives (as well as his views on slavery)
- The Philippians appear to have been his favorite community as they supported him in his imprisonment
- We observed the major difference in his impersonal letter to the Colossians as he had not founded that church

# Review of our Last Class (Cont)

- Again, we learned of their problems via a member of that community who visited him in prison
- He sent his replay (concerning Gnosticism and Dualism) via the return of a runaway slave who he sent back to (Philemon) to his friend in Colossae
- We concluded with a short letter to Philemon that gave insight into Paul's concern for slavery

# The Pastoral Epistles

# Pastoral Epistles

- These epistles are “pastoral” in nature and written to two of Paul’s disciples whom he made bishops:
  - *Timothy* – Bishop in *Ephesus*
  - *Titus* – Bishop in *Crete*
- Neither Bishop was dealing (to any significant degree) with the *Judaizer* or *Gnostic* problems so these letters addressed the basics of pastoral work from the time of Paul until the second coming of Christ
- They were written to provide pastoral advice concerning how to be an effective pastor to two specific individuals and their audiences
- To understand them, we need insight into Paul’s theology

# Pastoral Epistles (Cont)

- After his release from prison in Rome, it is believed that Paul (according to a long-hoped for opportunity), traveled to Spain
- Upon his return, it appears that he traveled south to *Ephesus* and *Crete*, and then returned to Macedonia
- It was from there that he wrote his first letter to *Timothy* and his letter to *Titus*
- At some point, during the reign of Emperor *Nero*, Paul was again imprisoned (this time due to the persecution against the Christians) where he remained until his execution in 69 AD
- Thus, the second letter (written from his second imprisonment) took on a sense of urgency, and seems to reflect his last will and testament
- Father said that in this letter, we can hear that Paul is resigned to his not going to get out of prison and his impending death



# Pastoral Epistles (Cont)

- At this time, the Roman Empire was aware of the Christian movement and was actively persecuting them and seeking to kill them
- The Church has always held that these pastoral letters were written by Paul even though some (Protestant scholars) label them as Deutero-Pauline
- Again, the early church arranged them in the bible based on length of each letter

# 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy

# 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy

- **1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 1:1-5** *“Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by command of God our Savior and of Christ Jesus our hope,...and a good conscience and sincere faith”*
  - We believe that Paul was in *Macedonia* (most likely in *Philippi*) right after he left *Timothy* in *Ephesus*
  - He began to explain to *Timothy* how he needed to make sure that *Timothy* was dealing with the issues of the false doctrines

# 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy (Cont)

- **1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 2:1-4** *“First of all then,...This is good, and it is acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth”*
  - One of the first things Paul asks for was that *Timothy’s* congregation pray for him and everyone who needed salvation (especially those in high places)
  - He stated that it was good and acceptable to pray for all men including *Caesar* and the rest of the pagans
  - This was because God desired that all men be saved as all men were descendants from *Adam*

# 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy (Cont)

- **1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 2:5-15** *“For there is one God and there is one mediator between God and men the man Christ Jesus, in faith love and holiness, with modesty”*
  - Paul told *Timothy* that the only way all men could be saved was through Jesus (in order to attain access to God the Father)
  - Once again, Paul expounded on how men, women, slaves and masters should behave
  - He also discussed how women should behave in church as well as how they should be submissive to their husbands

# 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy (Cont)

- In this passage (that is often misunderstood), he talked about how women should be adorned with virtue rather than expensive jewelry
- He was not prohibiting women from wearing earrings (he was simply suggesting that their beauty should be from inside rather than externally)
- He suggested that someone might implore many external items while interiorly they were like a whitewashed tomb
- He was calling them to be virtuous

# 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy (Cont)

- **1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 3:1** “The saying is sure: If anyone aspires to the office of bishop, he desires a noble task”
  - The Greek literally says he: *“offers himself, or presents himself” to the office of bishop*
  - It was *Timothy* and *Titus*’ job to make sure to appoint some pastors to the local churches they established
  - All new pastors were bishops and most were assisted by deacons (an office established in the very early church)
  - It was well into the 70s or 80s before the office of *Presbiteros* (Priest) was established

# 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy (Cont)

- The Apostles duplicated themselves by appointing bishops (Apostles who did not move around)
- A bishop governed every main church in every city
- Eventually, the need grew so great that the church decided to create underlings (priests) to assist the bishops for the smaller churches
- Eventually, when the church grew in size, it was given its own bishop (which is basically the way it works today)



# 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy (Cont)

- **1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 3:2-7** *“Now a bishop must be above reproach,...or he may fall into reproach and the snare of the devil”*
  - Paul was telling *Timothy* that a bishop of a local church must be above reproach, a husband having only one wife, be temperate, sensible, dignified, hospitable, an apt teacher, and able to manage his own household well
  - If a bishop can not manage his own house, how could he manage a parish?
  - At that time, both deacons and bishops could be married
  - Shortly after, this practice faded away as the demands on pastors increased
  - By the 6<sup>th</sup> century, a bishop’s job had increased exponentially with him managing from 20 to 100 churches consisting of thousands of parishioners

# 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy (Cont)

- There was no way a bishop could take care of all of this while managing a family
- Both in the East and West ordinarily, (by the 10<sup>th</sup> century) bishops were celibate
- But, they reserved for extraordinary situations the permission for them to be married (as we believe were the Apostles)

# 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy (Cont)

- **1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 3:8-10** *“Deacons likewise must be serious, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for gain...let them serve as deacons”*
  - We see Paul’s criteria for deacons who assisted the bishops in running the parishes
  - They were to be good, faithful, and well-educated
  - Again, at that time many of the bishops were married because the average parish only contained 50 to 100 or so parishioners so they had more time on their hands to raise a family as well
  - This is vastly different than our modern dioceses with thousands of members

# 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy (Cont)

- **1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 4:1-5** *“Now the Spirit explicitly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith...for then it is consecrated by the word of God and prayer”*
  - Again, what Paul was addressing was not married clergy, but practices found in many of the Gnostic dualist sects <sup>1</sup>
  - In the Catholic tradition, “celibacy” is the giving up of something that is good (marriage) for a greater good for the sake of something that they can do to help the church more effectively

# 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy (Cont)

- Father pointed out that Paul, was a celibate, founded countless churches and wrote at least 14 epistles
- Peter, who was married, only wrote two short epistles and most likely did not found a single church
- They experienced two different efficiencies
- In **1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 7**, Paul said: *“I wish that everyone was like me, and we could conquer the world”*
- So, what Paul was addressing here was a condemnation of the pagan practices of celibacy and abstaining from certain foods

# 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy (Cont)

- They believed that the body and the material world were evil so they rejected:
  - Sexual relations (which gave pleasure to the body)
  - Certain foods like meat (which strengthened the body)
  - Wine (which loosened a person's stoic behavior)
- On the other hand, there were some sects who believed that since the material world (especially the body) was evil, you could do anything you wanted with it to include:
  - Sexual perversions
  - Gluttony
  - Excessive consumption of wine and strong drink
- These were the issues Paul was addressing to *Timothy* as his main concerns in dealing with "*Gnostic dualism*"

# 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy (Cont)

- **1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 5** again, dealt with a vow of celibacy, especially as it applied to dedicated widows
- When an older woman's husband died, they would often join a group of older widows and dedicate their lives to supporting the church (this was the first stage of what later became known as the sisterhood) <sup>2</sup>
- Paul's warning to *Timothy* was how to deal with "young widows"

# 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy (Cont)

- The last thing a young widow should do is join the “widow’s group” via a vow of celibacy, and then fall in love again and wish to marry
- Father said that the first stage were the dedicated widows, then those dedicated virgins who came in to fill the ranks, and before long each parish had this sisterhood who were helping the bishops and deacons with their work (this group was often described as deaconesses)
- In fact, many were trained for specific tasks



# 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy (Cont)

- Since those being baptized were nude, there was a need for such women to assist the bishops and deacons in this task to make sure everything was done modestly
- Since only a bishop could do the laying on of hands, there was a need for such women to ensure they were properly covered

# 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy (Cont)

- **1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 6** deals with matters that we have already discussed
- Paul warned *Timothy* to guard what has been entrusted to him, namely the teaching of the Gospel

Titus

# Titus

- Around the same time, Paul wrote a letter to *Titus*, whom he had left as the Bishop of *Crete* on his way to *Macedonia*
- He may have written both letters at about the same time

# Titus (Cont)

- **Titus 1:1-9** *“Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ,...he must not be arrogant or quick tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain”*
  - It is important to understand that the word *Presbiteros*, used here, does not mean “priest” at this point in time
  - The term will later be used by the early church to refer to an office between bishop and deacon known as a priest
  - At this point, the Greek word *Presbiteros* (an elder in the community) referred to a member of the clergy, usually referring to a bishop
  - This is made clear by Paul’s statement, “In every town as I directed you” (everywhere there was a church, it was led by a bishop)

# Titus (Cont)

- **Titus 1:10-14** *“For there are many insubordinate men,...people following Jewish myths”*
  - Then, he talked about husbands and wives being submissive and loving each other and children and made sure everyone is happy and nice

# Titus (Cont)

- **Titus 3:3-7** *“For we ourselves were once foolish,... which he poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior”*
  - Father asked, how did *Titus* know that Jesus would save us?
  - Most likely, *Titus* did not need every detail explained, as he had been a disciple for many years
  - We, however, need to seek an understanding of what Paul meant by *“he saves us, not because of deeds...but in virtue of his own mercy by the washing of regeneration”*

# Titus (Cont)

- Paul meant that we were not saved by works of the *Torah*, but by the waters of Baptism
- Even Peter said that we will be baptized and reconciled from our sins and receive the Holy Spirit
- Jesus said that we would be saved by water and the spirit
- Salvation is a gift from Jesus (not as a result of the works of the Law)
- This is about the hope for eternal life (resulting from the resurrection we will inherit)



# Titus (Cont)

- **Titus 3:8** *“This saying is sure. I desire you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to apply themselves to good deeds”*
  - Paul always said that the life of the Christian did not come from the works of the *Torah*, it came from the gift from Jesus Christ through baptism in Him
  - Father pointed out that this did not mean that the baptized person did not have to do anything
  - There was plenty to do as one walked in the ways of Jesus
  - Paul spoke of this as a life of good works

# Titus (Cont)

- **Titus 3:14-15** *“And let our people learn to apply themselves to good deeds”*
  - Father said that the RSV says “good deeds” at this point, but the Greek means good works
  - Again, originally this was a Protestant translation, and they do not like the saying “good works”
  - Even though the “Catholic Edition” of the RSV cleared up many issues, it did not catch everything
  - Father said we really need a fresh translation in a third edition

# 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy

# 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy is very similar to 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy except for the fact that Paul is back in prison in Rome
- Once again, it contains his pastoral advice concerning the need for Timothy to be strong and to do what he was called to do
- Father indicated that we needed to look at a particular passage (which the Protestants based on Luther) have continued to misunderstand

# 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy (Cont)

- **2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 3:10-16** “*Now you have observed my teaching,...equipped for every good work*”
  - Paul reminded *Timothy* that he had been with Paul throughout it all
  - Paul used the plural form whom to indicate that *Timothy* received his faith from his mother, grandmother, other local Christians, and Paul
  - He learned them from the local Christian community and its bishop
  - So Paul tells *Timothy* to stay close to these teachings, not only what he has learned of the Christian faith, and from the sacred writings of his childhood (remember that his mother was a Jew)

# 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy (Cont)

- Therefore, *Timothy* grew up with the writings of Israel which were able to instruct one for salvation through Christ Jesus
- Father pointed out that this was what the New Testament authors did (quote from the Old Testament to instruct on about who Jesus was) because “all Scripture is inspired by God”
- Paul said this because at the time Judaism was divided into two different groups each supporting a different canon
  - The Pharisees supported all of the Old Testament
  - The Sadducees (and the Samaritans) only supported the Torah (first five books)

# 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy (Cont)

- Paul, being a former Pharisee, believed that the entire Old Testament was important as all of these writings that came from ancient Israel were inspired by God
- Father pointed out that once again Luther did not understand the context here, and believed that Paul was speaking about the “Bible”
- The “Bible” was not compiled until centuries later when all of the canonical books were collected for use in the liturgy
- For clarification, we need to look at how Paul used the word “scripture” in his epistles
- Every time he used the word “scripture,” he was speaking of an Old Testament text

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy (Cont)

- Again, at that time, the Jews were debating this issue
- Thus, if a Sadducee or Pharisee became a Christian, they had a different understanding of what was inspired or not inspired
- Thus, Paul was explaining that the full Cannon included all the books that the Pharisees accepted



Hebrews

# Hebrews

- Most scholars believe that the **Book of Hebrews** was either written by Paul or one of his followers
- For most of Christian history, **Hebrews** was considered a product of Paul
- Father said that when he teaches the course on Paul and reads **Hebrews** in great detail you will hear Paul's words dripping from almost every verse
- Since his audience was made up of Jewish Christians, he was very concerned about the possibility of these Jewish Christians apostatizing

# Hebrews (Cont)

- He pointed out the futility of returning to Judaism as going from reality to the shadow
- Why return to the earthly Jerusalem when one has been introduced to the heavenly Jerusalem
- When we read this epistle, we hear Paul on many occasions caution against apostatizing
- He said that the Jewish Law was a shadow of what was to come (so do not choose shadows because you already have reality)
- Next class, we will look at the *Catholic Epistles*