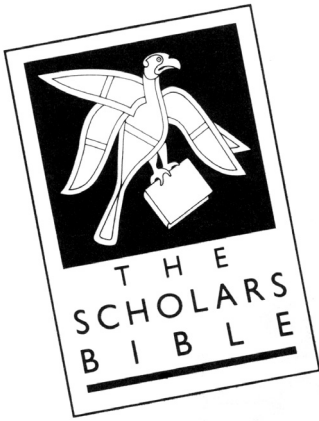


The Pastorals and Polycarp



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The Pastorals and Polycarp

TITUS, 1–2 TIMOTHY, AND
POLYCARP TO THE PHILIPPIANS

The Scholars Bible

RICHARD I. PERVO

Annotated with Introduction



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PREFACE

“Scholars Bible” means “by scholars” rather than “primarily for scholars.” The series attempts to provide accessible introductions and comments to accompany fresh and vivid translations, with original texts for those who have some Greek. This, a continuation of work on the Pauline legacy, is the first of two projected volumes, to be followed by a contribution on Colossians, Ephesians, and 2 Thessalonians.

Because the Scholars Bible is not limited by canonical boundaries, it is possible to place in juxtaposition two works with some striking similarities: the Pastoral Epistles and Polycarp’s letter to the Philippians. Their appearance under a single cover will be of value and interest to a range of readers. Once the debate over authorship, which has introduced almost nothing fresh for over a generation, has been abandoned, the possibility of looking at the Pastorals as literature and examination of other fictitious letter collections arises. This little book engages in some of that work and points those interested toward other resources. I am entirely responsible for the translation.

As always, thanks are due to the patient, diligent, and creative staff of Polebridge Press.

Richard I. Pervo
Saint Paul, Minnesota

ABBREVIATIONS

AcPaul	Acts of Paul
<i>Cels.</i>	Origen, <i>Contra Celsum (Against Celsus)</i>
1,2 Clem	1,2 Clement
Col	Colossians
1,2 Cor	1,2 Corinthians
Eph	Ephesians
Exod	Exodus
Gal	Galatians
<i>Haer.</i>	Irenaeus, <i>Adversus haereses (Against Heresies)</i>
Heb	Hebrews
<i>Hist. eccl.</i>	Eusebius, <i>Historia ecclesiastica (Ecclesiastical History)</i>
IgnMag	Ignatius to the Magnesians
IgnSm	Ignatius to the Smyrnaeans
IgnTr	Ignatius to the Trallians
IgnPol	Ignatius to Polycarp
Jas	James
Matt	Matthew
ms(s)	manuscript(s)
NT	New Testament
OT	Old Testament
PE	Pastoral Epistles
1,2 Pet	1,2 Peter
Phil	Philippians
Phlm	Philemon
PolPhil	Polycarp to the Philippians
Rom	Romans
1,2 Thess	1,2 Thessalonians
1,2 Tim	1,2 Timothy
Tob	Tobit
v(v).	verse(s)



The Roman Empire in the First Century.



THE PASTORALS



INTRODUCTION

1. Ephesus, Provenance

Ephesus, approximately in the middle of the west coast of Asia Minor, was an old Ionian city, evidence for which goes back to c. 900 BCE. After various vicissitudes Ephesus expanded during the Hellenistic period and became, under Rome, the provincial capital and metropolis. Ephesus was a major center of Paul's missionary activity and probably his greatest success. Other early followers of Jesus also labored and battled there, making Ephesus the place best attested in early Christian history. There Paul's letters were quite probably first collected, edited, and published. At Ephesus, Colossians, Ephesians, (possibly) 2 Thessalonians, Luke/Acts, and the Pastoral Epistles (PE) were composed. Outside of the direct Pauline sphere were Revelation and 1–3 John. Ignatius wrote a lengthy letter to Ephesus. The apologist Justin Martyr was long associated with the metropolis.¹

The city also witnessed the climax of several Pauline trajectories. The speculative, wisdom trend visible in 1 Corinthians, where Paul seeks to throw some cold water on the blaze he had kindled, erupts in Colossians and is deflected by Ephesians. The friendly pastoral letter represented by 1 Thessalonians and Philippians gives way to the more formal and less friendly pastoral direction represented by the PE. Paul's dialectical mode of argumentation (Romans, 1 Corinthians, Galatians) is implicitly rejected by the PE, which call for giving opponents the silent treatment.

Unity within particular communities and among various communities is prominent in Romans, potent in Ephesians, embraced by Luke and Acts, enshrined by the PE, and preached by Polycarp and Ignatius, becomes a stable and enduring theme. One of the questions raised by the Pauline tradition that remains vital for groups of every sort is the depth and nature of the prices to be paid for unity. The PE manifest a decisive shift away from the

1. For a detailed bibliography see Pervo, "Acts in Ephesus (and Environs) c. 115." Trebilco, *The Early Christians in Ephesus*, provides a broad and judicious survey. Note the varied essays in Koester, *Ephesos*.

Pauline model of unity amidst diversity. Regrettable as this may be to many, the historian's task is to explore why and how the changes occurred.

2. Text, Style

Although the existence of the PE is certain from c. 135 (see Reception and Influence below), the extant text belongs to the fourth century and later. But one early papyrus, \mathfrak{P}^{32} (early third century), with parts of a few verses of Titus has been identified. The PE were not included in \mathfrak{P}^{46} , the early third-century edition of the Pauline corpus. Codex Vaticanus (B), one of the great fourth-century bibles, lacks the PE because the latter part of the NT is lost. Data suffice to indicate the existence of a D-Text ("Western") edition, although many of its variants are minor or pedantic.

Stylistic questions have long been in thrall to the question of authorship. Striking to any reader is the percentage of *hapaxes*, words found only in the PE. A good 37 percent of the vocabulary fits this character. One third of the words used in the PE are not found in the undisputed letters of Paul. A number of these do not appear in Christian writings before the second century. Quantitative analyses can always generate debate, but the difference between the Pastorals and undisputed Paulines cannot be obscured.² Absent from the PE are such central Pauline terms as *free/freedom*, *circumcision*, *apocalypse*, *testament*, *righteousness of God*, *body of Christ*, *abound*, and *boast*.

The style of these letters is often criticized for its lack of Pauline vigor, logic, and developed argumentation.³ The different styles reflect different eras. Paul wrote at the dynamic and experimental beginning of a movement. The Pastor's style reflects his values: order, stability, and conventionality. More can be said. If the Pastor is no poet, he has a good ear, as is shown by his use of

2. Harrison's studies in *Problem and Paulines* remain impressive.

3. See Nigel Turner's survey, *Style*, 101–5.

Why the "Pastoral Epistles"?

Thomas Aquinas characterized 1 Timothy as a rule for pastors. The specific title is traced to Paul Anton in 1726 and has been employed since then. The term recognizes that these epistles do not pertain to the early days of the Pauline mission, but to the needs of established communities. In the second and later centuries Paul was viewed primarily as a pastor, rather than a missionary.

liturgical/creedal passages (e.g., 1 Tim 2:5–6; 3:16; 6:13–16; 2 Tim 1:9–10; 2:11–13; Titus 3:4–7). This author is sparing in his use of imagery, but those selected are apt and memorable, as in 2 Tim 2:4–7. The ringing triplet of 2 Tim 4:7 has attained familiarity for many to whom the Bible is not a familiar book. This leads to a kindred observation: 2 Timothy represents a sensitive use of pathos, so powerful that people do not wish to deprive Paul of its authorship. At their best the PE offer a stately and sonorous prose, not unlike that of the tradition of *The Book of Common Prayer* (the early editions of which borrowed freely from the Pastorals).

3. Genre, Structure, Order

These three short letters display a complex overall picture. This reflects the relevance of the Pauline letters to communities, administrative correspondence, literature about organizations, popular philosophical advice, testaments (the last words of dying persons), and fiction. The PE follow the form of Pauline correspondence but differ in that the ostensible addressees are individuals rather than communities.⁴ Since the addressees are leaders, 1–2 Timothy have some of the official character of instructions from superiors to subordinates.

In so far as these instructions about behavior apply to community members in general, they are indebted to the popular philosophical tradition, which sought to inculcate upper-class men with suitable ethical standards.⁵ This contrast is readily overlooked: early Christians sought to teach people of quite modest status, at best, standards intended for their “betters.” For us the Pastor’s list of qualifications for leaders sets the bar distressingly low. This misses the point: The Pastor’s object was to spread the message that Christians were ordinary members of society, staunch supporters of the social order. If someone were to look at the Pastor’s qualifications for bishops and say, “How utterly conventional,” that worthy gentleman would reply: “Thank you.”⁶

Consonant with these goals is the inclusion of two genres: the Household Code and the Church Order. The former of these emerged in the

4. Philemon is addressed to “Philemon our dear friend and co-worker, to Apphia our sister, to Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church in your house.”

5. General readers will find many references to popular philosophy in the commentary of Fiore, *The Pastoral Epistles*.

6. For a striking illustration, see Onosander’s list of the qualities of a general, appendix 3 in Dibelius and Conzelmann, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 158–60. Many of these would be no less suitable for any profession.

Deuteropauline tradition (Col 3:18–4:1; Eph 5:22–6:9; 1 Pet 2:18–3:7), utilizing three traditional household pairs: husbands/wives, parents/children, and owners/slaves as a basis for family values. The PE blend this type with the emerging Church Order. Elements of the Church Order can be seen in Matthew 18 and Jas 5:12–19. The earliest free-standing example is the *Didachē*. The PE share this combination with only one other text: Polycarp to the Philippians. For the Pastor the rationale is clear: his ecclesiology views the church as the household of faith.

2 Timothy is strongly indebted to the Testament genre, which had deep and widespread roots, from Plato's dialogues about Socrates' last days to the farewell address of Joseph found in Genesis 48–50. The genre flourished in

The Pauline Letter

Letters are substitutes for personal conversation. Antiquity witnessed many types of correspondence. Paul's letters are more like official missives than notes to friends. They reflect the utilization of many forms and types. Attention to formal features helps interpretation and can be of considerable use in determining questions of authenticity and integrity. The following is a standard outline with references to Romans as examples.

Opening

- 1:1 a. Sender
- 1:7 b. Addressee
- c. Greeting
- 1:8–17 d. Thanksgiving

Body

- 1:13–8:39 a. Formal Opening
- b. Text
- 8:31–39 c. Eschatological Close
- 15:14–33 d. Parousia/Travel Plans

Paraenesis

12:1–15:13

Closing

- 16:3–23
- a. Greetings from Others
- b. Doxology
- c. Blessing (15:33)

Second Temple Judaism, as in the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs. The Jewish testaments abounded in ethical exhortation and utilized personal example, as well as novelistic features. Paul's farewell to the presbyters of Ephesus (Acts 20:17–38) offers many close correspondences to the PE, for which it may have been an inspiration. Use of the Testament style transports the PE into the realm of literature. That generates hypotheses argued for in the following paragraphs.

Firstly, the PE are a collection, a group intended to be read as such. One may reasonably ask why the Pastor did not compose a single letter. Squeezing out the repetition and redundancy, he could have produced an epistle of about ten chapters. Reasons for producing a group will emerge in the ensuing discussion. The order of the collection is important. The canonical order is based upon length, from longest to shortest, as well as grouping the letters to Timothy together, but this order should not be taken at face value. 2 Timothy is quite apparently the final item. The order of the other two is debatable; I propose Titus, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy. Support for this comes from the structure: Titus, the shortest piece, has the longest epistolary opening, while 2 Timothy has the longest closing. Although comparison to fictitious letter collections is appropriate (below), the PE probably assume an edition of Paul's letters.⁷

A second proposition is that the PE relate a story or stories, that is, they have narrative as well as thematic coherence. Epistolary narratives are rarely sequential. Readers must often engage in some labor to piece out the sequence provided and presumed by various bits and pieces, and must fill in gaps, as well. Characterization is another literary feature of the PE. The text is accessorized with minor characters, about whom readers wish to learn more and who may reappear and otherwise fit into the broader story. Among them are opponents, who, contrary to the tradition, are identified. Some names recur, such as Hymenaeus (1 Tim 1:20; 2 Tim 2:17) and Alexander (1 Tim 1:20; 2 Tim 4:14). We should like to know what harm Alexander the coppersmith did to Paul. On the other side is Onesiphorus and family, richly evoked (2 Tim 1:16–18; 4:19). In 2 Timothy 4 the demands of pathos and the desire to provide a supportive entourage collide: After lamenting that Luke alone remains with him, Paul goes on to mention three others who send greetings. As much as the Pastor worries about women, he does not name any of those regarded as enemies. Although it was customary not to mention the names of living women, the ubiquitous Prisca receives a greeting in 2 Tim 4:19.

7. Alfred Barnett, *Paul Becomes a Literary Influence*, concludes that “the author of the Pastorals was acquainted with Paul's letters as a collection and that he knew each of the ten letters” (277). Others are less generous, but wide acquaintance is accepted.

Major characters are Paul, Titus, and Timothy. The latter two are young (Titus 2:7, 15b; 1 Tim 4:12) and utterly devoid of experience, competence, and discernible intelligence. The advantage of this is that the Pastor can convey basic instruction to them—and thus to those peeking over their shoulders. Titus, like Paul, once led a sinful life (Titus 3:4–5; 1 Tim 1:12–17), whereas Timothy can look back to generations of faithful forebears, as can Paul (2 Tim 1:3–14; 3:15).

Their roles are managerial, involving limited authority and considerable responsibility. Titus' sphere is that of a “new mission field,” Crete, whereas Timothy serves the well-established metropolis of Ephesus. False teachers are nonetheless a problem for each (Titus 1:10–16; 3:8–11). For Titus rivals are outsiders; members of the community plague Timothy. Unlike Paul's polemics, which engage those who disagree with his theological positions, in the PE opponents are in conflict with the *tradition*. In sum, the PE show how leaders of a now defined movement are to deal with a variety of situations by employing their different gifts.

The chief character is Paul, who rose from being a vicious enemy of Jesus' followers and essentially a “pagan” to becoming a great and suffering apostle to all. 1 Timothy and Titus do not imply a “late” setting in the life of Paul. Paul is engaged in his great missionary labors in the Aegean region, what has been called the “Third Missionary Journey.” Outside of winter, when travel was avoided, the apostle is constantly in motion. 2 Timothy brings a new and unexplained situation. Paul is incarcerated and being tried at Rome, on unstated charges that will lead to his execution. Once more, readers are compelled to fill in narrative gaps.

Similar observations may be made about the abundance of personal references in the PE, which surpass those of the church letters in detail and frequency. Their verisimilitude lent strength to the claim of Pauline authorship and an interim theory that the Pastor made use of a number of authentic fragments.⁸ This was a categorical error. When the PE are studied alongside fictions of the same era, the author's need for adherence to some conventions of realism (which vary in literary cultures) and the quest for verisimilitude are immediately apparent. The fictional character of the PE emerges in a manner that would make a literary editor wince. At Titus 3:12, after detailed instructions for setting up and taking charge of communities on Crete, Titus is abruptly told to drop everything and hasten to Paul's winter quarters. All of the personal details are decorations for the timeless content of the church order.

8. So Harrison, *Problem*. He later abandoned that position.

Some pages are omitted from this sample.

TITUS



Epistolary Opening

1 Παῦλος δοῦλος θεοῦ, ἀπόστολος δὲ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ κατὰ πίστιν ἐκλεκτῶν θεοῦ καὶ ἐπίγνωσιν ἀληθείας τῆς κατ’ εὐσέβειαν ἔπ’ ἐλπίδι ζωῆς αἰωνίου, ἣν ἐπηγγείλατο ὁ ἀψευδὴς θεὸς πρὸ χρόνων αἰώνων, ἕφανέρωσεν δὲ καιροῖς ἰδίους τὸν λόγον αὐτοῦ ἐν κηρύγματι, ὃ ἐπιστεύθη ἐγὼ κατ’ ἐπιταγὴν τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν θεοῦ, ἵνα τὴν ἐπιταγὴν ἐγὼ κατ’ ἐπιταγὴν τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν θεοῦ πατρὸς καὶ Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν.

Qualifications for Leaders

Presbyters

⁵Τούτου χάριν ἀπέλιπόν σε ἐν Κρήτῃ, ἵνα τὰ λείποντα ἐπιδιορθώσῃ καὶ καταστήσῃ κατὰ πόλιν πρεσβυτέρους, ὡς ἐγὼ σοι διαταξάμην, ἕϊ τίς ἐστὶν ἀνέγκλητος, μιᾶς γυναικὸς ἀνὴρ, τέκνα ἔχων πιστά, μὴ ἐν κατηγορίᾳ ἀσωτίας ἢ ἀνυπότακτα.

Bishops

⁷δεῖ γὰρ τὸν ἐπίσκοπον ἀνέγκλητον εἶναι ὡς θεοῦ οἰκονόμον, μὴ αὐθάδη, μὴ ὀργίλον, μὴ πάροινον, μὴ πλήκτην, μὴ αἰσχροκερδῆ, ἄλλὰ φιλόξενον φιλάγαθον σώφρονα δίκαιον ὅσιον ἐγκρατῆ, ἄντεχόμενον τοῦ κατὰ τὴν διδαχὴν πιστοῦ λόγου, ἵνα δυνατὸς ᾖ καὶ παρακαλεῖν ἐν τῇ διδασκαλίᾳ τῇ ὑγιαίνουσῃ καὶ τοὺς ἀντιλέγοντας

1:4 “Compassion” is added to the greeting by a number of witnesses to achieve conformity with 1 Tim 1:2 and 2 Tim 1:2.

1:9 In place of *so that . . . pastoral teaching*, codex Alexandrinus, a whole fifth-century Bible, reads “so that he can comfort those in every sort of stress.”

At the close the Greek-Latin-Arabic ms 460 (thirteenth century) appends: “Do not ordain [as priests] those twice married or make them deacons, or let them take re-married wives. Let not such people approach the altar to serve God. As God’s servant reproach secular leaders who judge unfairly or are robbers or liars or lack compassion.” The editor updates Titus in terms of contemporary canon law. The addition also reflects a situation in which Christian clergy could criticize public officials.

- **1:1–4** This, the most elaborate opening of the three PE, is suitable for the beginning of the collection. Rom 1:1–5 may be its model. Titus, alone among the PE, has no Thanksgiving passage. See “The Pauline Letter,” p. 5.
- **1:3** Note a “theology of the word/message.”
- **1:4** *Valid*, or “genuine” in the sense of legitimate over against, by implication, false followers.
- **1:5–9** The qualifications are simpler than those in 1 Timothy 3. On an historical model—the PE deal with actual situations not only in Ephesus, but also in Crete—the latter community was younger and smaller. A literary model would posit progression from simpler to more complex.
- **1:6–11** See “Catalogues of Virtues and Vices,” p. 19. The positive qualities listed here are those expected of any good citizen in a civic organization. Christians are conventional rather than disruptive of the social order.

Epistolary Opening

1 Paul, slave of God and agent for Jesus Christ for the belief of God's chosen and the genuine knowledge crafted by piety ²and grounded in hope of unbounded existence, which the utterly reliable God pledged from time immemorial. ³He has revealed at the appropriate moment his message in the proclamation entrusted to me per the directive of our deliverer God.

⁴To Titus, valid child in the conviction we share, favor and well-being from our fatherly God and the Anointed Jesus, our deliverer.

Qualifications for Leaders

⁵I left you in Crete to straighten up unfinished business and install *presbyters* in every city, as I directed. ⁶They should be irreproachable, not remarried, with believing children, unlikely to be accused of raucous behavior or insubordination.

Presbyters

⁷Now a *bishop*, as God's manager, is required to be irreproachable, free from insolence, irritability, excessive drinking, violence, or greed. ⁸He must rather be hospitable, zealous for the good, judicious, fair, devout, and self-disciplined, ⁹maintaining a firm grasp of the trustworthy message we have been taught, so that he can both engage in wholesome pastoral teaching and also refute opponents,

Bishops

-
- **1:6** *Re-married*. The restriction applies definitely to those divorced and, less likely, to widowers.
 - **1:7** *Manager*. Managers have responsibility but not authority. Because many ancient estate managers were formally slaves, the term was apt for Christian leaders, slaves of God: 1 Cor 4:1; Luke 12:42–48; 16:1–8; 1 Pet 4:10.
 - **1:8** Beyond its general merits, hospitality was fundamental to the early (and subsequent) Christian mission.

Catalogues of Vices and Virtues

“Catalogues of Vices and Virtues,” such as Gal 5:19–21; 22–23, are a common feature of moral exhortation literature. These lists are more general than particular in application. One should not conclude, on the basis of Gal 5:20, for example, that sorcery was a serious problem for the young Christian communities there. The catalogues reflect aspirations and are in that sense exhortations. The Pastor has transformed the category by applying the lists of virtues to prospective leaders while attributing the vices to theological rivals. They have become means for enforcing specific boundaries. Otherwise stated, the catalogues have been integrated into the form of a Church Order, guidelines for the Household of God.

End of Sample

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