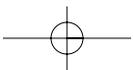
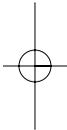
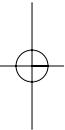


TYNDALE NEW TESTAMENT COMMENTARIES

VOLUME 14

TNTC

THE PASTORAL EPISTLES



TYNDALE NEW TESTAMENT COMMENTARIES

VOLUME 14

GENERAL EDITOR: LEON MORRIS

THE PASTORAL EPISTLES

AN INTRODUCTION AND COMMENTARY

DONALD GUTHRIE



Inter-Varsity Press

The logo for IVP Academic, featuring a stylized graphic of three curved lines above the text 'IVP Academic'.

IVP Academic
Evangelically Rooted. Critically Engaged.

Inter-Varsity Press, England
Norton Street
Nottingham NG7 3HR, England
Website: www.ivpbooks.com
Email: ivp@ivpbooks.com

InterVarsity Press, USA
P.O. Box 1400
Downers Grove, IL 60515-1426, USA
World Wide Web: www.ivpress.com
Email: email@ivpress.com

©Donald Guthrie 1990

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of Inter-Varsity Press.

Inter-Varsity Press, England, is closely linked with the Universities and Colleges Christian Fellowship, a student movement connecting Christian Unions in universities and colleges throughout Great Britain, and a member movement of the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students. Website: www.uccf.org.uk.

InterVarsity Press®, USA, is the book-publishing division of InterVarsity Christian Fellowship/USA® <www.intervarsity.org> and a member movement of the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students.

Unless otherwise stated, Scripture quotations are taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version. Copyright ©1973, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society. Used by permission of Hodder & Stoughton, a division of Hodder Headline Ltd. All rights reserved. 'NIV' is a trademark of International Bible Society. UK trademark number 1448790.

First published 1957
Second edition 1990
Reprinted in this format 2009

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

UK ISBN 978-1-84474-339-1

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Guthrie, Donald, 1916-1992.

The Pastoral Epistles: an introduction and commentary / Donald Guthrie.

p. cm.—(Tyndale New Testament commentaries; v. 14)

Originally published: 1990.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-0-8308-4244-5 (pbk.: alk. paper)

1. Bible. N.T. Pastoral Epistles—Commentaries. I. Title.

BS2735.53.G88 2009

227'.8307—dc22

2009011650

USA ISBN 978-0-8308-4244-5

Set in Garamond 11/13pt

Typeset in Great Britain by Avocet Typeset, Chilton, Aylesbury, Bucks

Printed and bound in the United States of America ∞



InterVarsity Press/USA is committed to protecting the environment and to the responsible use of natural resources. As a member of Green Press Initiative we use recycled paper whenever possible. To learn more about the Green Press Initiative, visit <www.greenpressinitiative.org>.

P	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Y	24	23	22	21	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	09		

CONTENTS

General preface	7
Author's preface to the first edition	9
Author's preface to the second edition	11
Chief abbreviations	13
Select bibliography	15
Introduction	19
The designation and character of the Epistles	19
The Epistles in the ancient church	20
The Epistles in the modern church	23
The problem of the historical allusions	24
The ecclesiastical situation	34
The heresies reflected in the Epistles	41
The doctrinal problem	47
The linguistic problem	55
The problem of authorship	58
The message of the Epistles	64
1 Timothy: Analysis	67
1 Timothy: Commentary	69
2 Timothy: Analysis	135

2 Timothy: Commentary	137
Titus: Analysis	199
Titus: Commentary	201
Appendix	
An examination of the linguistic arguments against the authenticity of the Pastorals	235

GENERAL PREFACE

The original Tyndale Commentaries aimed at providing help for the general reader of the Bible. They concentrated on the meaning of the text without going into scholarly technicalities. They sought to avoid 'the extremes of being unduly technical or unhelpfully brief'. Most who have used the books agree that there has been a fair measure of success in reaching that aim.

Times, however, change. A series that has served so well for so long is perhaps not quite as relevant as when it was first launched. New knowledge has come to light. The discussion of critical questions has moved on. Bible-reading habits have changed. When the original series was commenced it could be presumed that most readers used the Authorized Version and one could make one's comments accordingly, but this situation no longer obtains.

The decision to revise and update the whole series was not reached lightly, but in the end it was thought that this is what is required in the present situation. There are new needs, and they will be better served by new books or by a thorough updating of the old books. The aims of the original series remain. The new commentaries are neither minuscule nor unduly long. They are exegetical rather than homiletic. They do not discuss all the critical questions, but none is written without an awareness of the problems that engage the attention of New Testament scholars. Where it is felt that formal consideration should be given to such questions, they are discussed in the Introduction and sometimes in Additional notes.

But the main thrust of these commentaries is not critical. These

books are written to help the non-technical reader to understand the Bible better. They do not presume a knowledge of Greek, and all Greek words discussed are transliterated; but the authors have the Greek text before them and their comments are made on the basis of the originals. The authors are free to choose their own modern translation, but are asked to bear in mind the variety of translations in current use.

The new series of Tyndale Commentaries goes forth, as the former series did, in the hope that God will graciously use these books to help the general reader to understand as fully and clearly as possible the meaning of the New Testament.

Leon Morris

AUTHOR'S PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

The Pastoral Epistles have played an important part in the history of the Christian church and have amply justified their inclusion in the New Testament Canon. Their appeal lies in their blend of sound practical advice and theological statement, which has proved invaluable to Christians both personally and collectively. It is not surprising that the injunctions directed to Timothy and Titus regarding their responsibilities have served as a pattern for the Christian ministry, and have been used so widely in services of ordination.

I have been conscious of many difficulties in approaching my task of commenting upon these letters. Over a considerable period serious doubts have been cast upon their authenticity by many scholars and this has tended to decrease their authority. I have felt obliged to make a thorough investigation of these objections, and the results are given as fully as space will permit in the Introduction. A special examination has been made of the linguistic problem. Because of the technical nature of this study, the conclusions reached are given in an Appendix.

It is impossible to acknowledge indebtedness separately to all those writers who have preceded me in this field and who have contributed to my understanding of these Epistles. There are some, however, who must be singled out for special mention. Among those commentators who have maintained Pauline authorship, Bernard, Lock, Spicq and Simpson have been specially helpful, while Newport White, Horton, Parry and Jeremias have furnished

many useful suggestions. On the other hand, Scott and Easton, who do not favour Pauline authorship, have been constantly consulted, and Dibelius has proved valuable for literary parallels. Harrison's book on *The Problem of the Pastorals* has been indispensable in dealing with the linguistic problem and forms the basis of the investigations given in the Appendix.

It is my sincere hope that this short commentary will stimulate greater interest in and understanding of these concluding Epistles of the great apostle.

Donald Guthrie

AUTHOR'S PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

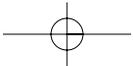
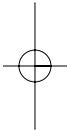
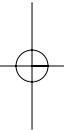
The main reason for the revision of this commentary has been the need to base it on a modern English version of the text of the Pastorals. I have chosen to adjust the text of the commentary to conform to the text of the New International Version, although in several cases reference is made to other modern versions.

The opportunity has also been taken to make minor changes in the commentary itself in the interests of greater clarity. Reference has also been made to more recent commentators and these are reflected at various points in the commentary.

I have seen no reason to depart from my conviction that the view which sees Paul himself as the author of these letters is the most probable, although I am aware that several recent writers on these Epistles have adopted the view that they are fictional and pseudonymous. In my opinion no further evidence has been brought to bear on the issue since my first edition which calls for any change of stance. No doubt the authenticity of these Epistles will continue to be a bone of contention among scholars.

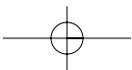
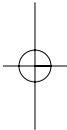
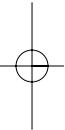
It is my sincere hope that this revised edition will prove a continuing help to those who wish to explore the teaching of the Epistles.

Donald Guthrie



CHIEF ABBREVIATIONS

Abbott-Smith	G. Abbott-Smith, <i>A Manual Greek Lexicon of the New Testament</i> , 3rd ed. (1937).
AV	Authorized (King James) Version, 1611.
<i>CBQ</i>	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i> .
<i>ExpT</i>	<i>Expository Times</i> .
Gk.	Greek.
<i>HDB</i>	J. Hastings (ed.), <i>A Dictionary of the Bible</i> (Edinburgh, 1898–1904).
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i> .
<i>JTS</i>	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i> .
LXX	The Septuagint (pre-Christian Greek version of the Old Testament).
M & M	J. H. Moulton and G. Milligan, <i>The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament</i> (1914–29).
mg.	margin.
Moffatt	J. Moffatt, <i>A New Translation of the Bible</i> , 1913.
MS(s)	manuscript(s).
NCB	New Century Bible.
NIV	New International Version, 1973, 1978, 1984.
<i>NTS</i>	<i>New Testament Studies</i> .
RSV	Revised Standard Version: Old Testament, 1952; New Testament, ² 1971.
RV	Revised Version, 1884.
<i>SJT</i>	<i>Scottish Journal of Theology</i> .
<i>ZNTW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft</i> .



SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

Commentaries

- Barrett, C. K., *The Pastoral Epistles*, New Clarendon Bible (Oxford, 1963).
- Bengel, J. A., *Gnomen of the New Testament*, vol. iv, translated by James Bryce (Edinburgh, 1866).
- Bernard, J. H., *The Pastoral Epistles*, Cambridge Greek Testament (Cambridge, 1899).
- Brox, N., *Die Pastoralbriefe*, Regensburger Neues Testament (Regensburg, 1969).
- Bürki, H., *Der erste Brief des Paulus an Timotheus* (Wuppertal, 1974).
- Dibelius, M., *Die Pastoralbriefe*, Handbuch zum Neuen Testament, 3rd ed. revised by H. Conzelmann (Tübingen, 1955).
- Dornier, P., *Les Épîtres Pastorales*, Sources Bibliques (Paris, 1969).
- Easton, B. S., *The Pastoral Epistles* (London, 1948).
- Falconer, R., *The Pastoral Epistles* (Oxford, 1937).
- Fee, G. D., *1 and 2 Timothy and Titus*, New International Biblical Commentary (Peabody, Mass., 1988).
- Gealy, F. D., *The Pastoral Epistles*, Interpreter's Bible 11 (New York, 1955).
- Hanson, A. T., *The Pastoral Epistles*, Cambridge Bible Commentary (Cambridge, 1966).

- Hanson, A. T., *The Pastoral Epistles*, New Century Bible (London, 1982).
- Hasler, V., *Die Briefe an Timotheus und Titus* (Zurich, 1978).
- Higgins, A. J. B., 'The Pastoral Epistles' in *Peake's Commentary on the Bible* (London, 1962).
- Holtz, G., *Die Pastoralbriefe*, Theologischer Handkommentar zum Neuen Testament 13, 2nd ed. (Berlin, 1972).
- Horton, R. F., *The Pastoral Epistles*, The Century Bible (1911).
- Houldon, J. L., *The Pastoral Epistles*, Pelican New Testament Commentaries (Penguin, 1976).
- Jeremias, J., *Die Briefe an Timotheus und Titus*, Das Neue Testament Deutsch 9 (Gottingen, 1963).
- Kelly, J. N. D., *The Pastoral Epistles*, Black's New Testament Commentaries (London, 1963).
- Leaney, A. R. C., *The Epistles to Timothy, Titus and Philemon*, Torch Commentary (London, 1960).
- Lock, W., *The Pastoral Epistles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh, 1924).
- Parry, J., *The Pastoral Epistles* (Cambridge, 1920).
- Plummer, A., *The Pastoral Epistles*, Expositor's Bible (London, 1888).
- Scott, E. F., *The Pastoral Epistles*, Moffatt's New Testament Commentary (1936).
- Simpson, E. K., *The Pastoral Epistles*, (London, 1954).
- Spicq, C., *Les Épîtres Pastorales*, Etudes Bibliques, 4th ed. (Paris, 1969).
- Ward, R. A., *Commentary on 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus* (Waco, 1974).
- White, N., *The Pastoral Epistles*, Expositor's Greek Testament (London, 1910).

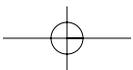
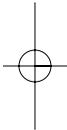
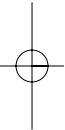
Other works

- Guthrie, D., *New Testament Introduction*, 4th ed. (Leicester, 1990).
- Guthrie, D., *The Pastoral Epistles and the Mind of Paul* (London, 1956).
- Hanson, A. T., *Studies in the Pastoral Epistles* (London, 1968).
- Harrison, P. N., *The Problem of the Pastorals* (Oxford, 1921).

SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

17

- James, J. D., *The Genuineness and Authorship of the Pastoral Epistles* (London, 1906).
- Knight, G. W., *The Faithful Sayings in the Pastoral Epistles* (Kampen, 1968).
- Lestapis, S. de, *L'Enigme des Pastorales de Saint Paul* (Paris, 1976).
- Rigaux, B., *Saint Paul et ses Lettres* (Paris, 1962).
- Trummer, P., *Die Paulustradition der Pastorbrieve* (Frankfurt, 1978).
- Verner, D. C., *The Household of God: The Social World of the Pastoral Epistles* (Scholar's Press, Chico, 1983).
- Wilson, S. G., *Luke and the Pastoral Epistles* (London, 1979).



INTRODUCTION

1. The designation and character of the Epistles

These three Epistles have so much in common in type, doctrine and historical situation that they have always been treated as a single group in the same way as the great ‘evangelical’ and ‘captivity’ Epistles. It was not until 1703 that D. N. Berdot, followed later by Paul Anton in 1726, who popularized it, used the term ‘Pastoral’ to describe them. While this title is not technically quite correct in that the Epistles do not deal with pastoral duties in the sense of the cure of souls, yet it is popularly appropriate as denoting the essentially practical nature of the subject matter as distinguished from the other Epistles attributed to Paul. The Epistles certainly do not contain a manual of pastoral theology, but their usefulness in the ordering of ecclesiastical discipline was recognized at an early date.¹

1. E.g. The Muratorian Canon mentions that one epistle to Titus and two to Timothy are ‘still hallowed in the respect of the Catholic Church, in

In contrast with the other Pauline letters which are addressed to churches, all three Epistles are directed to individuals, and many of the injunctions are clearly personal. Yet much of the material appears to be designed for the communities to which Timothy and Titus were ministering. Thus they are generally thought to be quasi-public Epistles, although their character as true letters must not be overlooked.² The apostle must have written many such letters in the course of his missionary journeys, maintaining in this way not only an interchange of news but an active direction of the many Christian projects he had commenced. That these three Epistles have survived (together with Philemon) to be included in the canon enhances their value as documents throwing light upon the practical problem of early Christianity.

When the literary characteristics of these Epistles are examined, certain features are at once apparent. There is a lack of studied order, some subjects being treated more than once in the same letter without apparent premeditation. The various brief doctrinal statements are intermixed with personal requests or ecclesiastical advice. These letters are, therefore, far removed from literary exercises. They are the natural and human expressions of the apostle's own reflections about the future of the work he is obliged to delegate to others. They reveal, therefore, as much about their author's reactions to the situations he faced as contemporary conditions in the church.

2. The Epistles in the ancient church

There is a modern tendency to play down the significance of the external evidence. But it is only against the background of early Christian views about the Epistles that a fair assessment can be made of modern theories unfavourable to Pauline authorship. Indeed, as

the arrangement of ecclesiastical discipline'. Tertullian and Augustine bear witness to the same fact (see C. Spicq, *Les Épîtres Pastorales*, 1948, p. xxi).

2. Cf. Spicq, *op. cit.*, pp. xxi–xxxi. Cf. also J. D. James, *The Genuineness and Authorship of the Pastoral Epistles* (1906), p. 109, and Sir W. Ramsay, *HDB*, Extra Vol., p. 401.

the following evidence will show, there are no grounds for holding that the early church had any doubts about the authenticity of these Epistles. In fact it was not until the nineteenth century that critical opinions began to be entertained adverse to the Pauline authorship.

Although there are many parallels to the language of these Epistles in the early Apostolic Fathers, Clement of Rome and Ignatius, these are generally not considered sufficient to amount to proof that these authors were genuinely using the Epistles. Even where these parallels have been admitted the evidence has been interpreted in different ways. It has even been proposed that the author of the Pastorals used the writings of Clement and Ignatius. Some consider that this evidence at least shows that the Pastorals belong to the same period as Clement and Ignatius. But this cannot be maintained in view of the more primitive character of the contents of the Pastorals compared with the Apostolic Fathers. This will become more evident in our further discussion. In view of the insubstantial nature of the parallels little significance can be attached to them, although if on other grounds the early provenance of the Pastorals can be established, parallels of language may have more force than otherwise. What cannot be established with any certainty from this evidence is that the Pastorals were definitely not in existence when Clement or Ignatius wrote.

The evidence from Polycarp is of a different kind, for he shows much closer acquaintance with these Epistles. It is generally agreed that Polycarp knew and used them, although some have disputed this. The view, for instance, that the author of the Pastorals is citing only current popular maxims is an attempt to minimize the value of this evidence. But the similarities are too strong for such a view, and Polycarp must remain the earliest certain user of our Epistles (at least of 1 and 2 Timothy). There are allusions to these letters in Justin Martyr, Heracleon, Hegesippus, Athenagoras, Theophilus and Irenaeus, which show that they were widely known, while Theophilus definitely believed them to be inspired.³

In addition to this second-century evidence, the witness of the Muratorian Canon must be mentioned for in this list these three

3. *Ad Autolyicum*, 3.

Epistles are placed after the church epistles of Paul, together with Philemon. We have noted that the compiler mentions that the two letters to Timothy and the letter to Titus are valuable in matters of ecclesiastical discipline. There is no mention of any doubts about their Pauline origin. Subsequent to the period of the publication of this ancient canon, the Pastorals were widely used by Christian writers.

The preceding attestation is as strong as most of the Pauline Epistles, with the exception of Romans and 1 Corinthians. Yet there are two other lines of evidence which are sometimes claimed to make the external attestation as a whole unfavourable to the authenticity of the Epistles. All of them were rejected by Marcion, and are lacking from the Chester Beatty Papyrus (P⁴⁶). It is Tertullian⁴ who tells us that Marcion cut them out of his collection of Paul's letters, which shows that he considered Marcion to have known them but not accepted them. Some scholars, however, think that Marcion was not even acquainted with them and therefore do not take Tertullian at his face value. But there are good grounds for maintaining that some parts of the Pastorals would not have been conducive to Marcion's viewpoint and for this reason he is likely to have rejected them. Their anti-heretical stance and their use of the Old Testament would have run counter to Marcion's opinions. In view of this it is precarious to maintain that by Marcion's time the Pastorals were not included in the Pauline Canon. It might on the contrary be argued that the orthodox church began more specifically to regard the Pastorals as canonical as a counter-blast to Marcion's restricted Pauline Canon. It has been asserted that if Marcion had known them he could have deleted passages unconducive to him, as he did with other books, but it is more satisfactory to take Tertullian's word for it and to accept his deliberate rejection of these Epistles.

The second line of evidence, the Chester Beatty papyri, is considered by many scholars to be of more significance in discussions of authenticity. The fact is that P⁴⁶ is not complete, with both its beginning and ending missing. But because it was in codex form it is possible to calculate that the missing ending would not have contained

4. *Adversus Marcionem*, v. 21.

enough sheets to contain the Pastoral Epistles. It is not, however, self-evident from such a calculation that the Epistles must have been missing, for there is evidence that the scribe has crowded more lines into the latter part than the former. Moreover, it was not unknown for scribes, when short of space, to add additional sheets at the end of a codex, but there is no means of knowing whether this happened in this case. Another possibility is that the Pastorals were included in another codex, but we have no knowledge whether this was so. There is no reason to suppose that the lack of any evidence of the inclusion of the Epistles in P⁴⁶ means that at the time of its production (mid-third-century) these Epistles were unknown in Egypt.

Our conclusion must be that the external evidence raises no serious doubts about the acceptance and canonical status of these letters. When credence is given to the strength of the external evidence, the onus of proof in discussions of authenticity must rest with those who regard these Epistles as non-Pauline.

3. The Epistles in the modern church

The unbroken tradition of the church until the nineteenth century was to regard the Pastorals as the work of Paul and therefore authentic. The first determined attack against apostolic authorship was made when Schleiermacher (1807) disputed the Pauline authorship of 1 Timothy on stylistic and linguistic grounds, thus becoming the father of that school of modern criticism which decides questions of authenticity on philological evidence. The main advocates of the non-apostolic authorship of all the Epistles have been Eichhorn (1812), Baur (1835), de Wette (1844), Holtzmann (1880), Moffatt (1901), Bultmann (1930), Dibelius (1931, revised by Conzelmann in 1955), Gealy (1955), Higgins (1962), Brox (1969), Houlden (1976), Hasler (1978) and A. T. Hanson (1982). Many have denied the Pauline authorship, but have sought to retain a few genuine fragments. Among these the leading exponents have been Von Soden (1893), Harrison (1921), Scott (1936), Falconer (1937), Easton (1948), Barrett (1963), Strobel (1969) and Dornier (1961). Hanson in his first commentary (1966) adopted this view, but later abandoned it.

On the other hand, throughout this period of criticism, many careful scholars have maintained the authenticity of these Epistles, among whom the most notable have been Ellicott (1864), Bertrand (1887), Plummer (1888), Godet (1893), Hort (1894), Bernard (1902), B. Weiss (1902), Zahn (1906), James (1906), Ramsay (1909–11), White (1910), Bartlet (1913), Parry (1920), Wohlenberg (1923), Lock (1924), Meinertz (1931), Schlatter (1936), Spicq (1947), Jeremias (1953), Simpson (1954), Kelly (1963), Knight (1968), de Lestapis (1976) and Fee (1984). The fact that so impressive a list of scholars can be cited in favour of Pauline authorship serves as a warning against the tacit assumption of some scholars that no grounds remain for the traditional position, and that all who maintain it are obliged to resort to special pleading.⁵

It should be noted that there is general agreement on the existence of differences between the Pastorals and the other Pauline Epistles. These differences concern the ecclesiastical situation, the doctrinal point of view and the linguistic evidence. There are also problems relating to the historical allusions. Scholarly opinion diverges widely, however, over how these differences may be explained. We shall begin by noting the historical difficulties, followed by an examination of the ecclesiastical, doctrinal and linguistic difficulties.

4. The problem of the historical allusions

Since there are many allusions to historical events in these Epistles it is important to enquire where these can be placed within the framework of the life of Paul as we know it. This means in effect a comparison of these Pastoral allusions with the events in Paul's life recorded in the book of Acts, in conjunction with the remaining Pauline Epistles. Many scholars rule out the possibility of any reconciliation between these two lines of evidence and therefore conclude that the Pastorals' allusions cannot be authentic. In order to assess the objection to Pauline authorship based on evidence of this kind, we must bear in mind that our knowledge of the

5. Cf. A. M. Hunter's comment in *Interpreting the New Testament* (1951), p. 64.

events in the life of Paul is necessarily fragmentary and this must temper our judgment concerning the evidence. Our first task must be to set out the historical allusions as they occur in the separate Epistles.

a. A statement of the evidence

1. 1 Timothy 1:3 states, 'As I urged you when I went into Macedonia, stay there in Ephesus', which specifically mentions a visit of Paul to Macedonia, but does not necessarily mean that he had himself just been to Ephesus. If Paul is now in Macedonia, he is writing to instruct Timothy, whom he has left in charge of the Ephesian church, concerning certain ecclesiastical procedures. No other historical allusion occurs in 1 Timothy.

2. In the opening section of the Epistle to Titus, the apostle states, 'The reason I left you in Crete was that you might straighten out what was left unfinished' (1:5). These words appear at first sight to require that Paul has himself paid a personal visit to Crete. There would be no necessity to suppose that the visit was lengthy for there is no implication that Paul himself established the churches in the island. Nevertheless he is clearly well acquainted with the situation with which Titus has to deal. On the other hand, it has been cogently argued that the verb (*I left*) need not imply a recent visit. It may simply mean that Paul left Titus in Crete while he went elsewhere.⁶

In closing this Epistle the apostle mentions his determination to spend the winter in Nicopolis where he hopes Titus will be able to join him (Titus 3:12). While it is not certain where this Nicopolis was situated, it is generally assumed to have been the city of that name in Epirus. If this is correct it is the only evidence that Paul ever went into this district.

3. It is 2 Timothy that supplies the greatest number of historical details. From the reference to Onesiphorus in 1:17, 'when he

6. Cf. S. de Lestapis, *L'Enigme des Pastorales de Saint Paul* (1976), pp. 52–54. Cf. also J. van Bruggen, *Die geschichtliche Einordnung der Pastoralbriefe* (1981), and J. A. T. Robinson, *Redating the New Testament* (1976), pp. 67–85.

was in Rome, he searched hard for me until he found me', it is a reasonable deduction that Paul is at the time of writing in Rome. It is at least certain that he has already been in Rome and equally certain that he is now a prisoner. He mentions that Onesiphorus 'was not ashamed of my chains' (1:16), and he calls himself a 'prisoner' (1:8), while chapter 4 contains a clear reference to his trial (4:16).

There is a curious request for a cloak left at the house of Carpus at Troas (4:13), which would seem to demand a relatively recent visit to make such a request intelligible. The apostle also gives the news, 'Erastus stayed at Corinth, and I left Trophimus sick in Miletus' (4:20), which is again only intelligible as a piece of information unknown to Timothy, suggesting that the events related occurred in the recent past.

Various attempts have been made to fit events into the life of Paul in the book of Acts. The method adopted depends on whether the three Epistles can be slotted in independently and at different periods, or whether they must be regarded as having been written within a short time of each other. Since Paul is a prisoner, there are only two practical possibilities. He must have been either at Caesarea or at Rome, unless of course the hypothesis of an Ephesian imprisonment is regarded as a possibility.

i. The view that Paul was at Caesarea when he wrote the Pastorals

It is clearly impossible to assign 2 Timothy to any other imprisonment than Rome if the text of 2 Timothy 1:17 is authentic. Those who have treated the reference to Rome as an emendation have done so without any textual support, and this must be regarded as unsatisfactory. The attempt to link the Pastorals as a whole to Caesarea must be abandoned. Quite apart from the reference to Rome, the allusion to Trophimus' illness at Miletus (2 Tim. 4:20) seems impossible from a Caesarean location, since Trophimus was with Paul in Jerusalem and was the indirect cause of his arrest (Acts 21:29). Furthermore, Timothy also accompanied Paul to Jerusalem (Acts 20:4) and was not, therefore, left behind at Ephesus.

ii. The view that Paul was at Ephesus when he wrote the Pastorals

The proposal to assign the Pastorals to an Ephesian imprisonment

is beset with many difficulties.⁷ (a) While there may be good grounds for postulating an Ephesian imprisonment, the evidence can never be conclusive and the suggestion must therefore remain speculative. (b) The theory depends on treating the reference to Rome in 2 Timothy 1:17 as a textual emendation, and this must raise suspicions against it. (c) If the Pastorals are treated as a whole the ecclesiastical directions affecting Ephesus would not readily fit into the period immediately following Paul's own ministry there, while room would presumably need to be found for a mission to Crete which appears to be excluded by Acts 20:31,⁸ unless of course someone other than Paul had instigated this. Timothy would hardly have needed such specific instructions had he been working with the apostle so shortly before. (d) Paul's mention of a journey from Ephesus to Macedonia (1 Tim. 1:3) could conceivably relate to Acts 20:1; but if so it must have taken place after the suggested Ephesian imprisonment. Moreover, according to 1 Timothy 1:3, Timothy was left at Ephesus, although Acts 20 makes it clear that he soon afterwards accompanied Paul to Jerusalem to deliver the collection for the poverty-stricken Christians there. It is a fair conclusion that, as far as the Pastorals are concerned, the Ephesian hypothesis raises more problems than it solves.

7. For support for an Ephesian imprisonment, cf. G. Duncan, *St. Paul's Ephesian Ministry* (1929), pp. 184–216. Earlier T. C. Laughlin had attempted to assign the defence mentioned in 2 Tim. 4:16–17 to an Ephesian trial.

8. These difficulties would, of course, vanish if part only of the Pastorals are accepted as genuine notes. Duncan admitted his approach to these Epistles is 'wholly tentative' ('St Paul's ministry in Asia – the Last Phase', *NTS*, 1957, pp. 217–218).

Harrison criticized Duncan's proposals mainly on the grounds of the 'inherent contradictions' of 2 Tim. 4. But even if these 'contradictions' are not admitted, the evidence of 2 Tim. 4:6–8 and 16–18 certainly appears to support a Roman rather than Ephesian imprisonment, as Harrison observed (cf. 'The Pastoral Epistles and Duncan's Ephesian Theory', *NTS*, 1956, pp. 250–261).

iii. The Roman imprisonment

Some have attempted to fit 2 Timothy into the imprisonment mentioned at the end of Acts and the other two Epistles into earlier periods in the Acts history. Such theories go against the widely held view that the three Epistles belong together. It is certainly clear that all three Epistles cannot belong to the Roman confinement of Acts 28. But are there grounds for dating 1 Timothy and Titus earlier than the Roman imprisonment? One recent theory is that 1 Timothy belongs to the same period as the Corinthian correspondence and Titus to the same period as Philippians, assuming a Caesarean origin for this letter.⁹ It would then be possible to place 2 Timothy within the period of the Roman imprisonment and this would dispense with the necessity to postulate a release.

Another theory which has been proposed is that 1 Timothy and Titus should be placed within the Ephesian ministry of Paul, assuming a journey which is not mentioned in Acts.¹⁰ This would necessitate a longer interval between these two Epistles and 2 Timothy which would be placed at the end of the Roman imprisonment. Such references as those to the cloak left with Carpus and to Trophimus being left ill at Miletus become more difficult if these events relate to an earlier period. But there is nothing intrinsically against the idea of some unrecorded journey from Ephesus, although the statement of Acts 20:31 is difficult to reconcile with it. At least it cannot be said quite as confidently as used to be the case that there is no possibility of fitting the historical allusions into the Acts story. The matter must remain open.

b. Various alternative explanations

In addition to the attempt to fit the historical allusions into the Acts record, there have been three other solutions proposed.

i. The second Roman imprisonment theory

Acts 28:30, 31 states that Paul spent two whole years in his own rented house, but since nothing is said beyond this, there is at least

9. Cf. J. A. T. Robinson, *Redating the New Testament* (1976), pp. 67ff.

10. Cf. J. van Bruggen, *Die geschichtliche Einordnung der Pastoralbriefe* (1981).

the possibility that he was released. Those who dispute the Pauline authorship of the Pastorals make much of the fact that the Acts narrative is silent about such a release. If of course the Acts contains a complete history of Paul it would be more reasonable to suppose that Paul met his death at the end of this imprisonment than to posit a release theory. But in no way can Acts be considered a complete history since there are historical allusions in the other Pauline Epistles which are not mentioned in Acts. Arguments from silence in this case are bound to be open to question. It cannot be supposed that the imprisonment mentioned in Acts 28 must have ended in martyrdom, for some explanation would be needed for the writer's omission to mention it. Indeed, the leniency of the detention, which seems to have allowed Paul unrestricted visiting, is more suggestive of release than martyrdom.

Another consideration pointing to the probability of release is the terms of Agrippa's declaration, with which the proconsul Festus apparently concurred (Acts 26:32). In his report to the imperial authorities the proconsul could not, in view of this, have been unfavourable to Paul, and this would, in the normal course of Roman justice, have disposed towards a successful trial in the period before Christianity became illicit. The captivity Epistles bear witness to Paul's expectation of release (Phil. 1:25; 2:23–24; Phlm. 22).¹¹

Certain external evidence may be cited in support of a period of further activity, although opinions differ regarding the value of this evidence. Clement of Rome's vague reference to Paul having reached the boundary (*to terma*) of the West can either mean that he had reached his western goal when in Rome, or that he had reached the western boundary of the Empire (i.e. Spain). Some scholars go to great lengths to disprove the Spanish visit, maintaining that later

11. Cf. Schlatter's admirably balanced examination of the probability of Paul's release, *The Church in the New Testament Period* (1926, Eng. trans. 1955), pp. 232–239. Cf. also Spitta, *Zur Geschichte und Litteratur des Urchristentum* (1893), i, pp. 106f. If Philippians and Philemon were written from Ephesus, as Duncan suggested, they would of course furnish no data for the Roman imprisonment.

patristic citations quoted in support of it are explicable as deductions from Romans 15:24, 28.¹² But the second imprisonment theory is independent of the Spanish mission, and indeed is almost exclusive of it for it involves considerable further activity in the East. It is reasonable to suppose that Paul had already abandoned his proposed Spanish mission by the time he wrote the captivity Epistles.¹³

Eusebius records a report that Paul was sent on a further ministry of preaching after his first defence before ending his life in martyrdom in Rome.¹⁴ But this report could easily be a piece of popular exegesis based on the pastoralia of 2 Timothy, and is unlikely to have much value as an independent witness. It is nevertheless a valuable indication of fourth-century interpretation of the historical allusions in the Pastorals. Subsequent to Eusebius' time the release theory became the accepted explanation, and although many modern scholars dispose of this evidence on the grounds that later writers have perpetrated an early error,¹⁵ traditional opinion may preserve more truth than is often allowed. The absence of any specific early attestation cannot of itself render the hypothesis untenable, while the absence of any contrary evidence leaves the possibility of a release. These historical allusions cannot, therefore, weigh against the authenticity while such a possibility remains.

ii. The fiction hypothesis

All the more radical critics of Pauline authorship have adopted the view that the pseudonymous author of the Pastorals has made up the historical allusions to give the Epistles some semblance of authenticity. According to this theory any discrepancies of detail would then be attributed to the author's lack of historical perspective. But there are grave difficulties about this view. It does not adequately account for the realism of some of these allusions. The request for the cloak left with Carpus requires some explanation. It is not satisfactory to suggest that it was a fictional element after

12. Cf. Harrison, *The Problem of the Pastorals* (1921), pp. 102ff.

13. Cf. Schlatter, *op. cit.*, p. 236.

14. *Ecclesiastical History*, ii. 22.

15. So, for instance, Harrison, *op. cit.*, p. 104.

the analogy of the cloak passed from Elijah to Elisha as some have maintained.¹⁶ This together with other sections of a similar realistic character give the impression of being genuine pieces of Pauline information. Even some who maintain the fictional composition of the Pastorals cannot avoid this sense of reality and accordingly suggest that the author did not confine himself to fictional materials,¹⁷ but this still does not avoid the problem of distinguishing the fictional from the genuine.

iii. The fragment theory

Because of the unsatisfactory treatment of the historical allusions by the fiction theory, some scholars have suggested that although the Epistles as they stand are the work of a non-Pauline author, that author has included in his compositions certain genuine fragments. This type of theory was popularized by Harrison, who criticized the traditional view on the grounds that history would have repeated itself. Paul would again visit Troas with Timothy and Trophimus, again go to Miletus, be troubled once more by Asiatic Jews, be pursued by the same Alexander even as far as Rome, and have the same recent prison-companions, Luke, Mark, Timothy, Demas and Tychicus, the latter on both occasions being sent to Ephesus.

But it is not surprising, if Paul made a second visit to the East after his release, that he again visited Troas and Miletus and was again in touch with many of his former associates. It would be more surprising if it were otherwise. And as for Alexander, there are no grounds for identifying the Alexander of 2 Timothy 4 with the would-be spokesman for the Jews in the Ephesian riot, nor is there any suggestion in 2 Timothy 4 that the coppersmith's subversive activities were taking place at that time in Rome. These data therefore form a precarious basis for claiming a repetition of history.

Yet it is mainly on the basis of the unlikelihood of such

16. Cf. V. Hasler, *ad loc.* Trummer also regards all the historical allusions as fictional.

17. Cf. A. T. Hanson, NCB, p. 23, He speaks of the fictional elements as a series of anachronisms rather than a carefully constructed piece of deliberate forgery.

historical repetition that Harrison justifies his fragment theory, together with the alleged internal contradictions in the personalia of 2 Timothy 4. We shall briefly outline Harrison's theory and then note other suggestions of a similar kind, although we shall note that no two theories agree in detail. Harrison asks whether it is probable that Paul would have given Timothy careful instructions for the preservation of apostolic teaching and then urged him to come as soon as possible because of the imminence of the apostle's departure. He suggests it is impossible to reconcile the noble farewell with the detailed commissions because of the lack of sufficient time for the latter to be fulfilled and for Timothy to reach Paul before it would be too late. But this misunderstands the purpose of 2 Timothy. As compared with 1 Timothy and Titus there is surprisingly little ecclesiastical instruction. The Epistle mostly comprises personal advice and encouragement to Timothy, and any references to ecclesiastical discipline are so general that it is not at all inconceivable that Paul would touch upon them, aware as he seems to be that this might well be his last communication to Timothy. If there was a considerable delay between the initial examination and the legal trial Paul might well have hoped that Timothy would be able to reach him in time. But if not, Timothy would have in his possession this last precious document from his beloved master. Even if such a solution were to rob the farewell of some of its pathos, is the case to be judged on a preconceived notion of impressiveness? Might not that notion itself be misconceived?

Harrison suggested that all the 'genuine' personalia in the Pastorals can be fitted into the Acts record at different times and places. Originally he proposed five fragments, but later reduced these to three: (i) Titus 3:12-15, written from Macedonia to Titus, who is at Corinth, just after Paul's severe letter to the church there. Titus is told to proceed to Epirus. (ii) 2 Timothy 4:9-15, 20-21a and 22b, written when Paul was at Nicopolis. (iii) 2 Timothy 1:16-18; 3:10-11; 4:1, 2a, 5b-8, 16-19, 21b-22a, written from Rome at the close of the imprisonment mentioned in Acts 28. There is no general agreement between this scheme and others which have been proposed, for instance by McGiffert, Falconer, Easton, Holtz and Dornier. A. T. Hanson wrote one commentary based on a fragment theory, but abandoned this position in his second commentary.

All fragment theories are improbable for the following reasons.

1. The disintegrated character of the so-called fragments belies them, especially the theory of Harrison detailed above. It is difficult to see what process of composition the editor of 2 Timothy used in preserving these genuine fragments for posterity. He could hardly have mixed them up more than he apparently did in chapter 4 had he been completely indiscriminate and lacking not only in historical discernment but also in common sense. Yet the fact remains that chapter 4 does not read like a haphazard hotch-potch, and it would be necessary to assume, therefore, on this theory that the editor must have done his work superhumanly well to have belied all suspicion of disjointedness until nineteenth- and twentieth-century criticism tracked down the muddle.¹⁸

2. The preservation of these disjointed fragments constitutes another problem, for they are not, for the most part, the type of fragments which would normally have had much appeal. Even if an early Christian with antiquarian interests had accidentally discovered and highly prized these genuine Pauline relics, there would still be need to give an adequate motive for their incorporation so unevenly in Titus and 2 Timothy. No satisfactory explanation of this procedure has so far been given. It is not enough to state that the Pauline editor composed the Epistles as a means of preserving the fragments or else added the fragments to existing drafts of the Epistles to enhance their authority and to ensure their reception, unless adequate contemporary parallels can be cited as supporting evidence that such a process was normal in early Christian literary practice. But no such parallels are forthcoming.

3. As a process of historical investigation fragment theories are open to criticism on the grounds that they suppose that the Acts history contains the complete history of Paul. To propose fragments to fit into the existing Acts structure effectively changes the nature of the historical data, but this cannot be said to be sound historical method.

18. Cf. Harrison's unconvincing explanation of the editor's procedure of intercalating the various notes in 'The Pastoral Epistles and Duncan's Ephesian Theory', *NZS* (1956), p. 251. For further discussion of the difficulties of the fragment theory, cf. my *New Testament Introduction* (1990), pp. 636ff.

There can be little doubt that the traditional explanation is least open to objection on historical grounds. Both the fiction and fragment theories raise as many problems as they claim to solve.

5. The ecclesiastical situation

It has usually been maintained by disputants of the Pauline authorship that the ecclesiastical situation reflected in the Pastorals is akin to that of the early second century, and therefore is much too developed to belong to the age of Paul. If the evidence supports this claim, it would, of course, be impossible to maintain the authenticity of the letters, but an examination of the data shows an entirely different position. Before dealing with the Pastorals' data it should be noted that it is quite erroneous to regard these Epistles as manuals of church order in the sense in which later manuals were used, for there is an almost complete absence of instruction on administration, civil relationships or conduct of worship. The entire ecclesiastical teaching (1 Tim. 3:1–13; 5:3–22 and Titus 1:5–9) comprises no more than about a tenth of the subject matter of the Pastorals, and even this is much more concerned with personnel than office. The position may be conveniently summarized as follows:

1. The offices mentioned are those of overseer (*episkopos*), elder (*presbyteros*) and deacon. In both 1 Timothy and Titus certain qualities of a wholly personal character are demanded of overseers, but it is noteworthy that these qualities are generally unexceptional. In fact it is surprising that some of the requirements needed to be specified at all. It is significant that in both Epistles the bishops are required to have the ability to teach, but this is no more than would be expected from the more responsible members of the church. 1 Timothy alone contains instructions for the choice of deacons, but nothing is said about their duties.

2. In both Epistles the terms 'elder' and 'overseer' appear to be used interchangeably. Titus 1:5–7 is conclusive for the view that these two terms could describe the same people, and this fact is now generally accepted among New Testament scholars. In this case the term 'overseer' or 'bishop' could not have been used in the Pastorals in the later sense of a monarchical episcopate. There is nothing in these letters, in fact, to suggest that a bishop was in sole charge of any one