

In I Timothy the Law is shown to be good--if it is used correctly (1:8-11). The Law was given, not for speculation and rabbinic argumentation, but to forbid and restrain that which is contrary to the gospel. God wants all men to be saved (2:3f); so Jesus came as the only mediator between God and men (2:5 ff), to save sinners (1:15). Paul's extensive lists of requirements for the various church offices (3:1-13) demonstrate his conviction that God gives men to the church for her benefit. God created all things good (4:3-5; cf. Gen 1) and this good purpose is not to be subverted into a pseudo-spirituality by false teachers of the Law.

Paul's interests in II Timothy are even less doctrinal and more personal than in I Timothy. A striking statement is that the grace of God was given before time began, but is only now revealed in our Savior (1:9-10). In the last days, men will be revealed as they truly are--utterly corrupt and immoral (3:1-5), refusing to hear the true gospel (4:3f). Timothy is therefore encouraged all the more to "preach the Word" (4:1f, 5). In light of his impending death, Paul also alludes several times to the judgment and his hope of eternal reward (1:18, 4:1, 8, 14, 18, etc.).

Some Questions:

Who were Jannes and Jambres? Since the names do not occur until late Jewish times, is this reference an endorsement of a legend? Were the poems in 1 Tim. 3:16 and II Tim. 2:11-13 hymns of the early church? Did Paul compose them himself? Was Paul released from prison after Acts 28? Did he go to Spain or was his ministry only in the east (Greece, Crete, Asia)?

Archaeology:

Timothy seems to have been in Ephesus when both of these epistles were written. Ephesus was one of the great centers of the Roman world..a major port important also for its great temple of Diana (Artemis) which served as a banking center for all of the province of Asia (western Asia Minor). Due to the type of sexual worship and the transient nature of much of the population (pilgrims, sailors, traveling merchants) Ephesus was known as a center of vice and corruption. Any pastor there, especially one as young and timid as Timothy seems to have been, would have had to watch his step closely to keep himself "unspotted from the world."

In AD 95 Clement of Rome wrote that Paul had been crucified by Nero (c. 67).

Keys to the study:

Paul's great love for Timothy is obvious in 1 Timothy 1:2.