

The pastoral Epistles: Timothy & Titus

“And as they passed through the cities, they delivered unto them the decrees for to keep, that were decreed by the apostles and ancients who were at Jerusalem. And the churches were confirmed in faith, and increased in number daily.”¹

1 Introduction

From the first days of the Church, transmission of the Faith went together with transmission of the apostolic authority. Since the beginning the threefold office (*munus triplex*) of the Church was given to her. This threefold office is the combination of the three missions of the Church, given at different levels to its members. It refers to the triple consecration of the Lord as Prophet, King and Priest:

- *Munus docendi*: mission of teaching the people; the Lord is Prophet.
- *Munus regendi*: mission of ruling them; the Lord is King.
- *Munus sanctificandi*: mission of sanctifying them; the Lord is the High Priest.

This triple function is given in full to the bishops, heirs to the Apostles, and shepherds of the people of their diocese. They convey a part of it to the priests of the church, who are caring for a small part of the flock as subdelegates of the bishop's authority.

The Apostles' Faith is the foundation of the Church's hierarchy. And so speaks the Church about the apostolic succession. The Apostles founded the first Christian communities, and their successors worked to maintain them. There is a multitude of gifts, but only one authority: the one coming from Christ. St Paul was already thinking that way, when he wrote his 1st Epistle to the Corinthians.²

As he's moving towards the end, St Paul writes to the priests and bishops he has established. Three of these letters are part of the New Testament and are attracting our attention today: the Epistles to Timothy and Titus. These two bishops had a special place in the heart of the Apostle, as they were amongst his first and faithful disciples.

In these three epistles, he helps them to address their responsibilities, encourages them to preach the true and faithful doctrine, despite any adversities, heretics or lapsed. The letters do not forget or spare anyone, and they came to us as a precious treasure we must now read and study.

¹ Acts, XVI, 4-5.

² I Cor., XII.

2 The pastoral epistles in general

Reading the three epistles, one thing is obviously evident at first: the apostle knows that his battle is coming to an end. He has fought a good fight, he has finished his course, he has kept the faith.³ He is about to receive the crown of justice, which is laid up for him,⁴ but before that, he desires to leave us a spiritual testament, his last will: "Keep the good thing committed to thy trust by the Holy Ghost, who dwelleth in us."⁵ Fidelity to Christ, and to everything He gave us, is the most important thing for the Apostle. We could even dare to compare these epistles to the seven last words of Christ upon the Cross, spiritual testament of our dying Lord offering up his life for the salvation of the world.

2.1 Overview

The old St Paul is advising his young companions Timothy and Titus. But he also tries to strengthen the young communities who are already facing the first heresies, and we know how many unfortunately tore apart the unity of the church for centuries and are still doing it now. We can read between the lines that his main worry is a question to himself: did I explain well everything I received by the grace of God? Would my heirs be true followers of Christ, to whom I dedicated my life?

Therefore, he addresses his beloved sons to remain faithful. The 1st Epistle to Timothy is giving instructions about the organisation and ruling of the Church, for her to continue the mission of teaching the Gospel. The 2nd Epistle presents us with the perfect figure of a true shepherd, who will root himself within the Holy Scriptures and the apostolic tradition. In the Epistle to Titus, St Paul asks from the pastor, but also from all the faithful through the figure of their leader, always to remember the requirement from the Baptism they received: they are newly born men, redeemed by the Blood of Christ and receivers of His forgiveness.

To the difference of the other epistles we studied until now, these, with the short letter to Philemon, are the only ones which are addressed to a particular person, and not to a local church:

- Timothy was born of a pagan father and jewish mother. He received several responsible missions from the Apostle, that were reported to us through the Epistles to the Corinthians.⁶
- Titus was sent by St Paul to bring the Gospel to the island of Crete, and founded there a local church of which he became the pastor, as its first bishop.

St Paul warns the bishops to be true guardians of the Truth of the Gospel, against all kind of errors and heresies. Bishops are safe keepers of the Truth and must show good reputation and purity of life and intention. Therefore, they must be chosen from amongst good men, capable of a good administration, but also strong in their teaching of the Gospel, which must always remain entire, faithful and true.

³ II Tim., IV, 7-8.

⁴ II Tim., IV, 9.

⁵ II Tim., I, 14.

⁶ II Cor., VII, 6-16; VIII, 6; XII, 17-18.

2.2 Authenticity

What could be the real value of St Paul's testament, if he didn't write it? Much less, or null. The whole Tradition of the Church agreed on it: these three epistles were written by the apostle himself.

Before any other things, we ought to maintain this authenticity to prevent a grave danger that could happen if they were not. You may hear somewhere today that these epistles were only written at the very end of the first century, after St Paul's death, by a pious Christian who used the name of the apostle to give rules to organize the Church, as if the Apostles didn't think of it, before walking to their glorious martyrdom.

But looking at the care St Paul demonstrates in his epistles to the communities he founded, it appears most uncertain that he didn't give them people in charge of ruling them before he left them.

This question of authenticity got a greater importance with the Lutheran heresy. In 1520, when Luther wrote his theories in three of his books which led to his break with the Church, he affirmed that the sacrament of Holy Orders was an invention of the Pope, and there was nothing in the New Testament about it. But the 1st and 2nd Epistles to Timothy expressly mentions a rite of imposition of the hands to give the elect a permanent charism of sanctification:

“Neglect not the grace that is in thee, which was given thee by prophesy, with imposition of the hands of the priesthood.”⁷

“For which cause I admonish thee, that thou stir up the grace of God which is in thee, by the imposition of my hands.”⁸

Timothy, who received that gift, must also transmit it to others, and that's the purpose of these letters: to give him advice to choose these wisely:

“Let the priests that rule well, be esteemed worthy of double honour: especially they who labour in the word and doctrine: For the scripture saith: Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn: and, The labourer is worthy of his reward. Against a priest receive not an accusation, but under two or three witnesses. Them that sin reprove before all: that the rest also may have fear. I charge thee before God, and Christ Jesus, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without prejudice, doing nothing by declining to either side. Impose not hands lightly upon any man, neither be partaker of other men's sins. Keep thyself chaste.”⁹

St Paul seems to use in the same way the words priest and bishop to name the same function. It appears that only from the beginning of the 2nd century, these words were given the meaning we kept since.

Since Luther, the protestants kept his teaching about the Holy Orders, saying that the ordinations were an invention of the years 80-90, after the Apostles' death, and refused the

⁷ I Tim., IV, 14.

⁸ II Tim., I, 6.

⁹ I Tim., V, 17-22.

authenticity of the pastoral epistles, since they read them as a diversion from the true apostolic teaching.

But we must reply to them with another epistle of St Paul. In the Epistle to the Philippians, he begins his usual greeting with:

“Paul and Timothy, the servants of Jesus Christ; to all the saints in Christ Jesus, who are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons.”¹⁰

Therefore, nothing new is added in the pastoral epistles, when the Apostle speaks about priests and bishops. We even have some excerpt of the Acts of the Apostles which uses such wording:

“And sending from Miletus to Ephesus, he called the ancients of the church.”¹¹

And during St Paul’s speech to them, he said:

“Take heed to yourselves, and to the whole flock, wherein the Holy Ghost hath placed you bishops, to rule the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.”¹²

And so speaks St James:

“Is any man sick among you? Let him bring in the priests of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.”¹³

And also St Peter:

“The ancients therefore that are among you, I beseech, who am myself also an ancient, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ.”¹⁴

St Clement of Rome, the third pope after St Peter, who personally knew St Peter and St Paul, used the pastoral epistles as the other apostolic writings, which gives us another reason, if needed, to convince ourselves about their authenticity. St Clement, St Ignatius of Antioch, St Polycarp, who were born before year 70, before the death of the Apostles, taught about the institution of the Holy Orders being made before their time. They wouldn’t say so, if such a change had happen in 80-90, as the protestants tell.

2.3 Date of their writing

As we can read about the Gospels, the more we delay their date of writing, the easier it is to deny their authenticity. We just said that St Clement of Rome, who became Pope from 89 to 99, already knew the pastoral epistles. Therefore, they were written before that date, but most probably after the Actsof the Apostles. According to the tradition St Paul was beheaded by the year 67. We must say that these three epistles were written between 62 and 67, most probably after his trip to Spain for the Epistle to Titus. The 1st Epistle to Timothy could have been written

¹⁰ Philip., I, 1.

¹¹ Acts, XX, 17.

¹² Acts, XX, 28.

¹³ James, V, 14.

¹⁴ I Pet., V, 1.

straight after his release from jail, and the second around year 64, as his last testament to his beloved son.

2.4 Doctrine of the pastoral epistles

One of the main arguments of these who deny the authenticity is that the three epistles contain many new elements of faith, and usual pauline themes seem to be missing, such as the justification by Faith, which is replaced here with fidelity to the truth of salvation and morals.

Although we can't find the exact wording about justification as we do in the other epistles, there is no doubt about it: the idea is there, with all its meaning and content. Each time the Apostle speaks about Faith, it always implies Faith moved with Charity.

Other critics may say that Charity is no longer at the centre of the spiritual building of the virtues and the bond of perfection, or grace being only some help from outside. Let's never forget what we said earlier about the style of these epistles: they are the advice of an ancient to his young confreres. St Paul is speaking to particular people, not to a whole local church.

We may answer them that many other themes remain present, such as

- awareness of sin,
- necessity of grace, and salvation being offered for free,
- unicity of redemption,
- primacy of faith to obtain salvation,
- absolute need of Baptism, and many others.

All these mixed with real feelings of sensitivity and humility. But the pastoral epistles are also giving us treasures about the Holy Trinity, the angels and devils, the doctrine of salvation and the mission of the Church, the sacrament of Holy Orders, as well as the divine inspiration of the sacred text of the Bible:

“All scripture, inspired of God, is profitable to teach, to reprove, to correct, to instruct in justice, that the man of God may be perfect, furnished to every good work.”¹⁵

We can also mention

- the numerous advice about liturgy and prayer;¹⁶
- the importance of true doctrine;¹⁷
- the preaching of the Gospel;¹⁸
- the true richness;¹⁹
- God's service;²⁰
- Obedience, mutual respect, family,²¹ and much more.

¹⁵ 2Tim., III, 16-17.

¹⁶ 1 Tim., II, 1-15.

¹⁷ 1 Tim., IV.

¹⁸ 1 Tim., I, 3-20.

¹⁹ 1 Tim., VI.

²⁰ 2 Tim., II.

²¹ Titus, III.

Let's have a look at some special teachings before going further in our reading of the text.

2.4.1 About Christ

As the other epistles we already went through, Jesus is called **Κυριος** and **Χριστος**, but we ought to notice that in the pastoral epistles, St Paul more often wrote together **Χριστος Ιησους**, and that he preferred to use **Σωτηρ**, instead of **Κυριος**.

2.4.2 Epiphany / Parousia

The word Parousia is not written in the pastoral epistles, but replaced with Epiphany, as a double meaning of the manifestation of Christ and his last and final coming. Using the word Epiphany allows St Paul to link even more Revelation to the last judgment, and also to bind together the virtues of Hope and Charity. It also helps to link life and light to incorruptibility.

Again, St Paul explains everything through the dogma of the Resurrection.

2.4.3 Truth

The Greek word **αληθεια**, truth, is one of the key words of the pastoral epistles and is often linked to **επιγνωσις**, which means knowledge. These two words are together five times in the New Testament, but four of them are within these epistles. With St Paul, the word truth strengthens the word revelation, and helps us to go deeper into the mystery of God.

2.4.4 Piety

St Paul often uses the Greek word **Ευσεβια**. The only place we can find it in the New Testament is in the 2nd epistle of St Peter. It links also to the Mystery of God. It's about a reverent and pious fear of the Lord, when we are placed in front of the Mystery of God, and of His Son, the Lord Christ.

In the pastoral epistles, this word also means the Christian life all dedicated to God's worship and prayer. The good fight of the faith goes alongside the good fight with piety. St Paul meets here again St John, the **Ευσεβια** joining with the adoration "in spirit and in truth."²²

2.5 The organisation of the Church

The pastoral epistles are giving us a most interesting testimony about the organisation of the Church, from the first century. The main orders are already mentioned: Bishops, Priests and Deacons.

As in his 1st Epistle to the Corinthians, St Paul teaches about the role of women within the church: they cannot and will never receive the Priesthood. Both men and women are equals in front of God, but their roles and functions within the Church are different. However, St Paul explicitly speaks about widows, giving them a special lay role within the community.²³

²² Jn., IV, 24.

²³ 1 Tim., V.

3 The pastoral epistles

3.1 The 1st Epistle to Timothy: the Gospel of the Revelation

In all his other letters, St Paul insists upon the divine origin of the mission he received. So he also does with Timothy, about the origin of the apostolic authority.

We can truly guess through our reading between the lines that St Paul is speaking to his spiritual son, modelling their relationship upon the relations which make the unity of the Holy Trinity.

Timothy is St Paul's spiritual son, as the apostle brought him to the life of the Faith. In real confidence, St Paul speaks to his son, kindly urging him to continue the mission he received from God. As St Paul was, Timothy is chosen by God to carry on the burden of the Apostle. This is a new element in St Paul: the teaching to the church is founded upon the rectitude of the doctrine, and upon the mandate, the mission received from God, through the ministry of the Church.

After this greeting, St Paul speaks again about the message of the Gospel Timothy will need to know and preach at all times. The bishop must be a man of doctrine, fighting heresies, and battling for the triumph of the Gospel, which is the completion of the theological virtues. Faith guides us to salvation, and Charity is only given to pure hearts who desire to be faithful.

The good fight of the bishop is to establish peace within hearts. Because of that, he needs to remove the false doctors, as they are poisoning the hearts of men, creating division within the flock.

But any apostle who receives that mission must be aware that his own works are nothing if God's grace is not with him, working through him: the bishop, the priest, is an instrument that God uses according to His divine Will. Grace will strengthen and not diminish the work of the man who acts in such ways. St Paul speaks these things to Timothy to reassure him, as he fears being too shy, or not abandoned enough to God.

Timothy must face his responsibilities, and St Paul gives him a few tips to help him:

- Divine worship;²⁴
- Different aspects of the ministry;²⁵
- Special mission of the Church;²⁶
- Pastoral care itself, with a special warning against false doctors;²⁷
- Personal life of holiness.

Then he focuses his thoughts on how they should be taught:

- Firstly, the clergy members: bishops, priest and deacons;²⁸

²⁴ 1 Tim., II, 1-15.

²⁵ 1 Tim., III, 1-13.

²⁶ 1 Tim., III, 14-16.

²⁷ 1 Tim., IV, 1-5.

²⁸ 1 Tim., III.

- All the others, according to their condition, always with charity and truth.²⁹

With a total of three times, St Paul warns his disciple about the false doctors, giving a particular accent in that letter about the rectitude of the doctrine a good bishop must always have, linked with a constant care for the people entrusted to him.³⁰ St Paul warns about their greed, which always betrays them, and leads them to the loss of the Faith. To be protected against that, St Paul urges his disciple to piety and disinterest within the exercise of the mission: nothing for himself, everything for the Church.

3.2 The Epistle to Titus: the Gospel of the Incarnation

As he did for Timothy, St Paul gives to his other beloved disciple instructions toward the good ruling of the community, and warns against the danger of false doctors and false shepherds. He gives advice about the choice of formation of future priests and bishops.

The formation of the future clerics was, and is still, a matter of first importance, even in these times of foundation.

After this guidance to help him prepare the future, St Paul gives Titus the same kind of advice we read in the 1st epistle to Timothy. The bishop must provide care for all his flock, whoever they are, for them to live in a peaceful charity, expecting heaven with blessed hope.³¹ God wished to save all of them, being old men,³² women or widows,³³ young people³⁴ or slaves.³⁵ We are all purified by the Blood of Christ.

This Blood was poured upon us with the water of Baptism, and since that moment, we ought to live according to the divine promise which is made to us as reward for our good and virtuous behaviour.³⁶

3.3 The 2nd Epistle to Timothy: St Paul's Testament or the Faith deposit.

It's most probably the last letter the Apostle wrote, around year 64-65, and we could summarize its content with one word: it is his last testament. St Paul is writing his last advice to his disciple, urging him to persevere with the good fight, as he himself did all his life. The master word is Fidelity to what Timothy received from St Paul, whatever could happen. To guide him, St Paul reminds him of six events about his life:

- The religious education he received within his family. He just has to carry on from their example.³⁷

²⁹ 1 Tim., V.

³⁰ 1 Tim., I, 30; IV, 1-8; VI, 20-21.

³¹ Titus, II, 11-15.

³² Titus, II, 2.

³³ Titus, II, 3-4.

³⁴ Titus, II, 7-8.

³⁵ Titus, II, 9-10.

³⁶ Titus, III.

³⁷ 2 Tim., I, 5.

- The bishop's ordination he received.³⁸
- The Gospel of Christ, which was entrusted to him on the day of his ordination.³⁹
- St Paul's teaching itself.⁴⁰
- The example of Onesiphorus, who wasn't ashamed about St Paul's chains.⁴¹
- More than ever, a confident Hope in the eternal salvation, brought to us by Jesus Christ.⁴²

Timothy must not be ashamed of preaching the Gospel, which means he shouldn't discourage himself before the hard task, or the numerous difficulties he will certainly encounter. The strength of the grace, received from the Holy Ghost will be comforting him. Between these lines⁴³, some authors read an implicit affirmation about the effects of the sacrament of Confirmation, which is quite obvious. Moreover, we can even say that St Paul affirms the divine assistance of the Holy Ghost toward the governance of the Church, and especially the spiritual guidance and help the Clergy would receive.

What does Timothy need to add to this example received from St Paul, to keep up this dedication, to remain strong and faithful? A supernatural energy must be spent on everything in touch with the Gospel. Chapter 4 of the epistle is a summary of that idea, and the Church, in her wisdom, chose that excerpt to be read at the mass of a doctor:

“I charge thee, before God and Jesus Christ, who shall judge the living and the dead, by his coming, and his kingdom: preach the word: be instant in season, out of season: reprove, entreat, rebuke in all patience and doctrine. For there shall be a time, when they will not endure sound doctrine; but, according to their own desires, they will heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears: And will indeed turn away their hearing from the truth, but will be turned unto fables. But be thou vigilant, labour in all things, do the work of an evangelist, fulfil thy ministry.”⁴⁴

Keep away from heresies and heretics! Be watchful about the fidelity to the right doctrine of Faith! Here is the last advice of the Apostle, consumed at length with the Love of His Saviour, delivered to his young disciple, before heading back to the heavenly homeland he waited for so long, since his meeting with Jesus upon Damascus' way.

3.4 Conclusion

The Church is the new Israel, redeemed by the Blood of Christ. Elected by the Father, saved by the Son, sanctified by the Holy Ghost, the Church has been set apart from a world of sin. In the Pastoral Epistles, we read again the teaching of the Apostle to the Romans, but written in a more pastoral way, explaining the same doctrine, with practical advice to rule the people of God.

³⁸ 2 Tim., I, 6.

³⁹ 2 Tim., I, 8-11.

⁴⁰ 2 Tim., I, 13.

⁴¹ 2 Tim., I, 16.

⁴² 2 Tim., II, 10.

⁴³ 2 Tim., I, 6-14.

⁴⁴ 2 Tim., IV, 1-5; Epistle for the common of the mass of a Doctor.

The second point we could draw from this reading, is that religion is not only about morals and dogma. Christ is not a wise man who teaches a philosophy for life. He is the Messiah, who came down on Earth to fulfil the Will of his Father, to redeem mankind from its sins, to restore the friendship between God and men.

Following this call of God, mankind ought to answer with Love. Here is the mission of the Church, to always preach the Gospel, inviting humanity to give joyfully this answer to God who loved and loves her so much. When men accept Faith, they receive this Gospel, which is kept and transmitted by the apostles and their lawful successors.

These successors are the guardians of Tradition. They deliver the teaching of the Faith. From this dogma is taken the moral law, which guide us in our personal relationship with God. Christian freedom is linked to the Truth.

4 St Paul's testament

St Paul is still to be read today. All throughout our reading of the epistles, we received the immemorial heritage of the teaching of the apostle, who wrote it 2000 years ago, and it still speaks directly to us today.

We briefly spoke about St Paul's testament in the 2nd Epistle to Timothy, but we went quite quickly on that part, to place it in parallel with the testament he gave us in the Acts of the Apostles, during his third trip, before heading back to Jerusalem where he was placed under arrest. In Chapter XX, he spoke in a similar way he did to Timothy in his 2nd letter.

“For to me, to live is Christ; and to die is gain.”⁴⁵

St Paul stands before us, being the fervent Jew who suddenly met Christ, and since then, only lives through and with Him, offering himself as a victim of burning charity for his brothers.

4.1 Acts XX, 17-35

Feeling that he would probably die soon, or be imprisoned, St Paul convoked the ancient of Ephesus in the city of Miletus, to deliver them his last teaching before leaving Asia. Three bullet points can be seen in the text reported in the Acts:

- As he did in the 2nd Epistle to the Corinthians, and in the epistle to the Galatians, St Paul justifies himself, repeating that he has been only serving the Lord through his preaching, example and actions. He announced Christ crucified, saving the world from sin, calling universal mankind to salvation. As St Peter and St John, he always said that Christ was the only way of salvation, whose blood reconciled us with the Father.
- Then he urges them to take care of the flock which the Holy Ghost entrusted to their care, being watchful about false prophets and wolves who would try to come in under disguise, to rip apart and take away the unity.

⁴⁵ Phil., I, 21.

- He concludes with a farewell, announcing what's next for them: being good shepherds, knowing that "it is a more blessed thing to give, rather than to receive."⁴⁶

All along his speech, we can clearly see the deep humility of the Apostle, who introduce himself as an instrument of God's hand. St Paul didn't choose the large way of loss, but the narrow path of humility and truth. Any kinds of tribulations, or, better, to use the exact word of St Paul we only read in the Acts, "conspiracies,"⁴⁷ are trials allowed by the Lord for his own sanctification and the growing of the church through the expansion of the Gospel.

He says all this to demonstrate the immense role the Holy Ghost had in the mission to which he was entrusted: nothing belongs to Him, but to God.

This testament is a call to vigilance, and St Paul warns against those who breach the unity from the inside, who are far more dangerous than any exterior persecutions. As they break the unity of Charity with schism, we understand why St Paul cried over them, as Jesus wept over the sins of Jerusalem.

4.2 The Pastoral Epistles

Being at the end of his life, he remembers the mistakes of his youth, and in an immortal testament he writes to his disciples, for them faithfully to continue his mission. He never ceases to repeat: Keep the Faith! As an old man always saying the same thing, as St John, at the end of his life on Patmos island, was constantly repeating the last command of the Lord, "let us love one another, for charity is of God"⁴⁸, St Paul stresses this most important point: the Gospel of the Lord mustn't be distorted.

4.2.1 Theology of the pastoral epistles

They are his last writings, his doctrine is at the summit of its expression. It's the last time he will write them. It has a way of definite teaching. It is truly his Testament, his last will,

"so that all the faithful and those who lived at that time and those who will live in the future until the end of the centuries, may see in it a faithful and sincere declaration of his sentiments and his will."⁴⁹

4.2.2 Solemn warning to Timothy

This 2nd epistle to Timothy concludes the writings of the Apostle. He begs his disciple to keep the true doctrine. This solemn speech is done before the Holy Trinity, with the background of the last judgment. At the end, he will have to give account for his office, before receiving the eternal reward. The shepherd received his example from the Lord, who preached the Truth, even if He knew this would cost His life.⁵⁰

⁴⁶ Acts, XX, 35.

⁴⁷ Acts, XX, 19.

⁴⁸ 1 Jn., IV, 7.

⁴⁹ Fr Ceslas Spicq, op., *Les épîtres pastorales*, 1969, T1, p148. (translated with <https://www.deepl.com/>)

⁵⁰ Mt., XXVI, 63.

At the hour of the judgment, nobody can lie. St Paul knows that this hour is near to him, and so he speaks to his son, with the fulness of truth. Timothy will need to remain as faithful as his master.

4.2.3 Fidelity to Tradition, Holy Scriptures, and Church

Within his testament, we find out all data of the Revelation, sourced in Tradition and Holy Scriptures. This prevents any criticisms against St Paul. The false doctors never keep the teaching they received, but prefer their own thought, being blind in their pride.

Being strong in Faith requires fidelity to the teaching, and to its transmission. “I delivered unto you first of all, which I also received.”⁵¹ Nothing else can be found elsewhere out of Holy Scriptures and apostolic Tradition. Only them, enlightened by the constant teaching of the Church, can preserve the good doctrine, and lead us to the discovery of the mystery of Christ.

5 Conclusion

The two testaments we just read are the same. They both testify to the fidelity of St Paul to what he received on Damascus’ way. Because of that, he urges us to do the same. He delivers us his testament,

“For I am even now ready to be sacrificed: and the time of my dissolution is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. As to the rest, there is laid up for me a crown of justice, which the Lord the just judge will render to me in that day: and not only to me, but to them also that love his coming. Make haste to come to me quickly.”⁵²

Strengthened by the grace, and the assurance that he faithfully kept the deposit, he’s peacefully walking toward his martyrdom, supreme reward of his life dedicated to Christ. Now, it’s Timothy and Titus, and through them all bishops since them, to keep the doctrine, as they received it.

This testament is not madness or weakness, but wisdom and truth, leading to the resurrection and life everlasting. This is why the teaching of St Paul will never fade away, or pass, as it is the eternal message of Christ, *Heri et Hodie*, Yesterday and Today. He is the ONE.

⁵¹ 1 Cor., XV, 3.

⁵² 2 Tim., IV, 6-8.