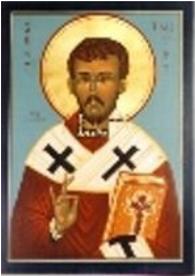


## Saints Timothy and Titus – 14<sup>th</sup> January

Timothy and Titus are the saints for you if you've been a Christian for some time, and now realise that God wants you to move into some form of leadership. A daunting prospect! The letters to Timothy and Titus are known as the three pastoral letters, where Paul writes to ministers in charge of important churches rather than the churches themselves. Paul gives both Timothy and Titus explicit instructions for how to shepherd the sheep in their care. Timothy had been given the responsibility of the church at Ephesus, and Titus the care of the church at Crete. Both Timothy and Titus were young men, and both felt quite daunted at the task ahead of them.



Paul came to Lystra to preach when **Timothy** was still a child, living with his mother Eunice. Timothy accompanied Paul on his second missionary journey – a great training experience. But experience is given to us so that we may in turn become productive – and in due course Paul entrusted the vastly important church of Ephesus into Timothy's care. This church was so vibrant in its faith that within fifty years so many Ephesians became Christians that the city's pagan temples were almost forsaken.

**Titus** was a gentile, almost certainly another convert of Paul's. Paul had used Titus as a trouble-shooter with the Corinthians, and when Titus was successful in that, Paul gave him a real bit of trouble: the church at Crete. Again, Titus served his Lord faithfully, even in this most difficult of situations.

So if you are going to attempt any leadership for God, why not make time to read the three pastoral epistles first? They have been an invaluable handbook for Christian leaders for 20 centuries, and are full of spiritual wisdom and good common sense.

**Timothy** became the first bishop of Ephesus, and in the end was martyred when he opposed pagan festivals (probably in honour of Dionysius). He was killed by stones and clubs, ready to hand during the pagan festival of Katagogia. His supposed relics were translated to Constantinople in 356.

**Titus** went on to become the first Bishop of Crete, and is believed to have died there, though history does not tell us how. His relics are supposed to be buried in Crete, except for his head, which was allegedly taken to Venice in 823.

Both Timothy and Titus were good and faithful servants, and could look back on lives well spent. Imagine – perhaps one day you too will stand before the Lord and say: "This is what I did with the leadership role you entrusted to me. Was I a good and faithful servant, too?"

