2 TIMOTHY

2 Thimothy
Key Verse:

INTRODUCTION TO 2 TIMOTHY

This second letter to Timothy is probably Paul's last letter. He wrote in 4:7, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith." He was looking forward to the crown of righteousness which the Lord himself would give him. Paul was living on death row in a Roman dungeon. Most likely, Paul was in prison in Rome two times. The first time is recorded in Acts 28. At that time, he was under house arrest and he could teach the Bible one-to-one freely. After his release from prison, he evidently made a missionary journey which is not recorded in Acts. He may have gone to Spain (Ro 15), visited Crete (Tit 1:5), visited Philemon in Colosse (Phm 22), and spent some time in Philippi (Php 2:23-24; 1Ti 1:3). He returned to Rome. He was evidently alone when he was arrested and arraigned (4:16). As always, he found his trial an opportunity to preach the timeless Gospel of Jesus Christ. Now he was chained like a common criminal (2:9;1:16) in a cold dungeon. Tradition says that he was martyred under Emperor Nero in A.D. 66 or 67.

Paul addresses Timothy as "my dear son." He longs to see him and asks him to come "before winter." Timothy is the pastor of the church in Ephesus. Paul wrote this letter to warn him of the dangers and temptations that would assail him, and to encourage him to be faithful to Jesus and to his ministry, no matter what. Paul's own life backed up his words.

A SPIRIT OF POWER, LOVE AND SELF-DISCIPLINE

2 Timothy 1:1-7 (Tue.) January 23

Key Verse: 1:7

1. I remember and thank God (1-5)

Paul was in prison. He would soon be killed– martyred for his faith. He knew God’s grace. He was assured of God’s mercy and he had God’s peace in his heart. He had no regrets, for he served God with a clear conscience. He was where God wanted him to be, and he had the promise of life in Christ Jesus in his heart. He thanked God for Timothy, whom he loved like a son. He remembered the faith of Timothy's mother and grandmother, as well as Timothy's own sincere faith, and he continued to pray for him.

2. Fan into flame the gift of God (6-7)

Timothy had been entrusted with the task of caring for God's flock in Ephesus. Paul laid hands on him to commission and equip him. The Holy Spirit whom God gives to all who repent, believe and accept his mission does not make us timid and fearful; he gives us the spirit of power, love and self-discipline.

Prayer: Lord, fan into flame the gift you have given me so that I may not be fearful, but have a spirit of power, love and self-discipline.

One Word: Fan God's gift into flame

I KNOW WHOM I HAVE BELIEVED

2 Timothy 1:8-12 (Wed.) January 24

Key Verse: 1:12b

1. Do not be ashamed to testify (8-10)

Paul invited Timothy to join him in suffering for the gospel. He challenged him to testify about Jesus boldly, for Jesus saved us and called us to live a holy life. A holy life is a forgiven life; it is a life of mission. What a privilege it is to live a holy and meaningful life in times full of confusion and sinsickness. This is God's grace. God's grace and purpose were revealed when he sent Jesus as he had planned before the beginning of time. Jesus destroyed death and brought life and immortality to light.

2. I am not ashamed of this gospel (11-12)

It looked as if Paul's life was a failure. He had worked hard for the gospel, but now he was in chains in a Roman jail. All of his co-workers had deserted him. But he was not ashamed of his life or of his situation because he had a personal love relationship with Jesus. He had entrusted his heart and life to God.

Prayer: Lord, I know you and I believe you. I have entrusted my heart and life to you. Guard my heart and help me to be faithful to the end.

One Word: I know whom I have believed

GUARD THE GOOD DEPOSIT

2 Timothy 1:13-18 (Thur.) January 25

Key Verse: 1:14

1. What you heard from me (13-14)

Paul taught Timothy to pattern his life according to sound teaching, with faith and love in Christ. He admonished him to keep in his heart this gospel faith that was entrusted to him, and live by it, with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in us. The pattern of sound teaching entrusted to us is the Bible. Our Bible study should strengthen our faith in Jesus and our love for him. In a world full of Satan's lies, we must guard the good deposit entrusted to us.

2. Onesiphorus, a faithful man (15-18)

Onesiphorus had helped Paul in many ways when he was in Ephesus. When he heard that Paul was in prison in Rome, he went and searched for him until he found him, and ministered to him. He was not ashamed of being the friend of a prisoner. He was very different from many other Asians who deserted Paul when he got in trouble. God wants us to be faithful. God's Spirit helps us be faithful.

Prayer: Lord, help me to guard the gospel faith entrusted to me and be faithful to Jesus and to Jesus' people.

One Word: Be faithful

A GOOD SOLDIER OF CHRIST JESUS

2 Timothy 2:1-7 (Fri.) January 26

Key Verse: 2:3

1. Entrust the gospel to faithful men (1-2)

Jesus commanded us to make disciples of all nations. Entrusting God's word to reliable men who will live by it and will also teach others is the best way to do this. One-to-one Bible study is the best way. We need to be strong in the grace of Jesus in order to make disciples for Jesus.

2. Endure hardship like a good soldier (3-7)

There were those who advised Timothy to avoid the cross and not to be a fanatic--to do God's work in an easier way. But Jesus commands us to take our cross and follow him. We are engaged in a war. Good soldiers endure hardship; they don't get entangled in their personal affairs, or try to please themselves; they strive to please the commanding officer. Our commanding officer is Jesus. An athlete cannot win unless he follows the rules. We must do God's work in God's way. A farmer can't have a good harvest unless he works hard. Think about it.

Prayer: Lord, help me to be a good soldier in this spiritual warfare with the devil. Help me to be a disciple-maker.

One Word: Be a good soldier of Jesus

REMEMBER JESUS CHRIST

2 Timothy 2:8-13 (Sat.) January 27

Key Verse: 2:8

1. This is my gospel (8-10)

The gospel is the good news about what God has done. He kept his promise to David. He sent Jesus to die for our sins and he raised him from the dead. When we accept this gospel, we are saved. Paul preached it; he lived by it; he was ready to die for it, for it is the only way of salvation God has provided for his elect. Paul was chained in prison, but the gospel is not chained. God's gospel changes lives. God gives salvation from sin and death, and eternal glory to his elect through this gospel.

2. This is a trustworthy saying (11-13)

Paul expressed gospel truth in a poem. If we repent and accept Jesus' death for our sins, God will raise us to new life by his resurrection power. If we share in Jesus' suffering for a world dying in sin, then we will also share his glory. If we yield to the pressures of the world and disown Jesus, he will disown us. We have no strength to be faithful, but Jesus is faithful; he holds on to us even when we are too weak to hold on to him.

Prayer: Lord, let your gospel take root in my heart. Give me grace to share your suffering.

One Word: Jesus saves; he is faithful

CORRECTLY HANDLE THE WORD OF TRUTH

2 Timothy 2:14-19 (Sun.) January 28

Key Verse: 2:15

1. A workman who is not ashamed (14-15)

"These things" (14) refers to the gospel stated in 11-13. Christians should not quarrel about peripheral things or argue about words. We must study God's word prayerfully and diligently. The Bible is about Jesus, and our Bible study must lead us to him. We must do our best to be workmen who correctly handle the word of truth. We must pay attention to what the Bible says, think about what it means, and apply it to our own lives. Scripture is interpreted by other Scripture. We must serve God's word, hold it in our hearts and seek to plant it in others.

2. God's solid foundation of truth (16-19)

Some people enjoy sarcastic humor; others like lewd speech. Some show off their knowledge by pointless theological arguments. All godless chatter tears down faith; it does not build up. God's solid foundation is his elect people who obey and teach his word of truth. God knows his own; his own confess Jesus' name and turn from wickedness. They do not need to argue with ungodly people.

Prayer: Lord, help me to hold your word in my heart so that my conversation builds up others.

One Word: Handle the word of truth correctly

CALL ON THE LORD OUT OF A PURE HEART

2 Timothy 2:20-26 (Mon.) January 29

Key Verse: 2:22

1. An instrument for a noble purpose (20-21)

A utensil or a tool is good or evil depending on the purpose of the user. We can be used by God for his noble purposes if we repent and are cleansed by Jesus' blood. He makes us holy and prepares us to be useful to the Master, ready to do any good work.

2. Pursue righteousness (22-26)

We cannot please God or be used by him if we live "naturally." We must flee the evil desires of youth and set our direction to pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace. We do this by calling on the Lord for his help, not by engaging in stupid arguments. We don't seek to win arguments. We must teach the Bible with gentleness, praying that God will grant repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth to those who oppose gospel work. They are captives of the devil who uses them to do his work. We want to escape the snare of the devil and help others to do so too.

Prayer: Lord, help me to call on you with a pure heart. Change my desires so that I may seek holiness, not worldly things.

One Word: Call on the Lord

TERRIBLE TIMES

2 Timothy 3:1-9 (Tue.) January 30

Key Verse: 3:1

1. Godlessness in the last days (1-5)

These are the last days. A godless world becomes a loveless world. Times are terrible when people love the wrong things. When people love themselves, love money and love pleasure, they become proud, ungrateful and disobedient. When one loves the wrong things, it means that one is without any real love (3). In such times, God's people must love the good. But most of all, we must love God. When we love God, we have spiritual power.

2. Those who oppose the truth (6-9)

When people yield to their physical passions they become depraved in their minds. They always seem to learn, but never make a commitment to truth, so they become opponents of truth. Such people will never get very far. The magicians of Egypt (Jannes and Jambres) were skillful, and at

first they were successful in opposing Moses and in imitating God's truth. But they soon reached their limits.

Prayer: Lord, teach me to love you and acknowledge your truth in my heart so that I may not conform to the terrible times.

One Word: Love God; have his power

THOROUGHLY EQUIPPED FOR EVERY GOOD WORK

2 Timothy 3:10-17 (Wed.) January 31

Key Verse: 3:16,17

1. Continue in what you have learned (10-15)

Everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ will be persecuted. Paul lived a godly life. A godly life is a life with direction and purpose--a life of mission. Just as the Lord rescued Paul from every kind of persecution (Acts 14), so he will rescue us. Evil men oppose God's work by deception and lies. They go from bad to worse. But God's people must live according to truth. God's word is truth. We must continue to study and live by the word of God. It makes us wise for salvation. We must acknowledge God's work in our lives, so that we may continue to grow. We can grow through suffering.

2. All Scripture is God-breathed (16-17)

The purpose of Bible study is to make us wise for salvation through faith in Christ. God gave us the Bible to teach, rebuke, correct and train us in righteousness. The Bible equips the man of God for every good work.

Prayer: Lord, thank you for giving us the Bible. Help me to study it faithfully, memorize it and live by it.

One Word: Trained in righteousness; equipped for every good work

PREACH THE WORD

2 Timothy 4:1-5 (Thur.) February 1

Key Verse: 4:2

1. I give you this charge (1-2)

Paul gave Timothy a solemn charge: "Preach the Word." He gave him this charge in the presence of God and Christ, who will judge the living and the dead; he will come again in glory and usher in his kingdom. In light of this sure fact, God's servants must preach the Word--whether we feel

like it or not. We must teach the Bible with careful instruction and great patience, so that God's word may correct, rebuke and encourage both ourselves and others.

2. Keep your head (3-5)

Paul sees that a time will come when men do not want to hear the truth from the word of God. They will have itching ears to hear something different, something that does not interfere with the way they live. So they will listen to myths instead of to the truth. They will listen to what they want to hear--nothing else. What must we do? The man of God must keep his head in all situations. He must endure hardship, preach the gospel and serve God's flock as a shepherd.

Prayer: Lord, help me to be prepared to witness to Jesus' saving grace and power to anyone, anytime.

One Word: Preach the Word

I HAVE FOUGHT THE GOOD FIGHT

2 Timothy 4:6-8 (Fri.) February 2

Key Verse: 4:7

1. I have kept the faith (6-7)

Paul knew that the end of his life is near. According to tradition, he was martyred in Rome. Paul referred to his ministry as a priestly duty. He preached the gospel so that the Gentiles might be an offering acceptable to God, sanctified by the Holy Spirit (Ro 15:16). His own life was the drink offering, poured out on the altar with the sacrifice. He was a soldier of Christ who could say, “ I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.”

2. A crown of righteousness (8)

The crown of righteousness is a symbol of victory. He did not receive it because of his merit, but because of his faith and God's faithfulness. He believed the promise of God. He believed that God had forgiven him and made him righteous through faith in Jesus. He looked forward eagerly to the second coming of Jesus because he was spiritually ready to meet Jesus.

Prayer: Lord, enable me to say, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith."

One Word: I have fought a good fight

THE LORD STOOD AT MY SIDE

2 Timothy 4:9-22 (Sat.) February 3

Key Verse: 4:17

1. The encouragers and discouragers (9-15)

Paul trained a few faithful men who could be Bible teachers and shepherds of God's flock. He was disappointed in men many times. Now he was in prison and most had deserted him. Some loved the world; others had gone to serve God in other places. Some, because of greed, had become enemies of God. But Mark, whom Paul had given up as a weak and useless man (Ac 15:36-40), had become a useful man. Dr. Luke, a Gentile physician, was with him. He asked Timothy to come to him quickly.

2. The Lord stood by me (16-22)

When he stood trial, he was alone. But he was not alone, for the Lord stood at his side. The Lord gave him strength so that through him the gospel might be fully proclaimed to all the Gentiles. And the Lord saved him from the mouth of the lion. He was not sentenced to die in the arena. But Paul was not afraid to die a martyr's death--as indeed he would later. The Lord would bring him safely to his heavenly kingdom.

Prayer: Lord, in difficult times, help me not to despair but to see you standing by my side.

One Word: The Lord stands by me