

NT Survey – Second Timothy
Valley Bible Church Adult Sunday School
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Introduction

Second Timothy is the second of two “Pastoral Epistles”; the others being First Timothy and Titus. See the introduction to First Timothy for the timeline of events including the writing of pastoral epistles. This letter was written during Paul’s second Roman imprisonment in 67/68 AD.

Some would say that this is the only true Prison Epistle. Paul’s first Roman imprisonment was in rented quarters, under house arrest, with freedom to interact with his guards, neighbors, and visitors (Acts 28). This time he was in a real Roman prison: deep, damp, and dark. Paul was alone. He could have visitors, but since this was the period of the most intense persecution that Christians had yet seen, virtually everyone deserted him (1:15; 4:9-12, 16). Paul was cold and needy. Paul was lacking his cloak for protection from the cold, damp cell, and he had been taken prisoner without time to gather his "books" (perhaps papyrus rolls of current correspondence and the Apostles’ teaching) and "parchments" (most likely Paul's personal copies of the OT Scriptures) (4:13).

Second Timothy is Paul’s final letter to his young protégé as he faced execution. This letter contains the most important things that Paul needed to say to Timothy; his “famous last words”. The second letter to Timothy contains the last known words of Paul.

Faced with imminent death, Paul wrote to Timothy, urging him to “make every effort to come” to Rome for one last visit with the apostle (4:9, 21). Historic church documents disagree as to whether Timothy made it to Rome or not, but, most indicate he did. Traditions holds that Paul was beheaded on the Ostian Way west of Rome around AD 67.

Outline

- I. Greeting (1:1-2)
- II. Thanksgiving, Encouragement, Exhortation (1:3-18)
- III. Instructions (2:1-26)
- IV. Warnings (3:1-17)
- V. Paul’s Charge (4:1-5)
- VI. Paul’s Finish (4:6-22)

Summary

Greeting (1:1-2)

Paul begins with his standard style greeting; announcing himself as an apostle of Christ Jesus by God’s doing. This is not Paul’s chosen profession; God has chosen him as an apostle. His address to Timothy is slightly different in this letter. In his first letter to Timothy, he called Timothy “my true child in the faith”. As death looms, here in this second letter, Paul calls him “my beloved son”.

Thanksgiving, Encouragement, Exhortation (1:3-18)

1:3-7 – Timothy’s Faithfulness – This section is a call to loyalty, courage, and perseverance in the midst of increasing persecution. This section is filled with encouragement for Timothy:

- The first words of encouragement was knowing that his spiritual father was praying for him night and day.
- The second was Paul’s longing to see him again as he remembered their last parting.
- The third is a reminder of Timothy’s great heritage of faith passed on by his mother Lois and grandmother Eunice.

❖ **Am I loyal, courageous, and persevering? Have I passed on a heritage of faith?**

After giving Timothy encouraging reminders, Paul challenges him to kindle afresh his spiritual gifts. Do not let the fire go out; fan the flames. We are gifted at salvation, but the use of our spiritual gifts must be empowered by the Spirit which requires our filling of the Spirit. Those filled with the Spirit are not timid, but are powerful, filled with love, and under control (discipline) (v7).

❖ **Am I letting (or have I let) my fire for loving obedience to the Lord go out?**

1:8-14 – Charge to Remain Faithful – Because we are gifted and powerfully indwelt (and filled) with the Spirit, we must not be ashamed of the gospel “for I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day.” Do not hold back in proclaiming the whole counsel of the Word of God. Nor are we to be afraid of suffering for the sake of the gospel.

❖ **Am I ashamed?**

Regarding this salvation, God has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity, but now has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

Paul exhorts Timothy to keep the Word of God pure, do not modify it to make life easy. Guard this message and the temptation to soften it for “acceptance” or to make life easier.

❖ **Do I soften the message of the Word to be palatable by non-Christians?**

1:15-18 – Examples – To drive home the point of faithful versus unfaithful, Paul cites the example of being abandoned by all who were in Asia (where Ephesus was). Phygelus and Hermogenes were well known to Timothy and undoubtedly had been faithful to Paul in the past, but now had abandoned him for fear of persecution. In contrast, Onesiphorus was faithful; faithful to the degree that he searched out Paul in spite of the fear of persecution. He displayed the power, love, and discipline infused with courage through the Holy Spirit that Paul was exhorting Timothy to display.

❖ **Am I faithful?**

Instructions (2:1-26)

2:1-2 – Disciple – “Therefore” relates this section back to Paul’s command to guard the whole counsel of the Word of God (specifically the gospel). Timothy must be strong in Jesus’ grace, otherwise, he will not be able to guard the truth. This truth must be disciplined into other believers. Timothy is exhorted to be involved in disciple making, not convert making.

❖ **Am I involved in making disciples?**

2:3-7 – Suffer Hardship – If Timothy was walking and working as Paul’s example dictated, he would be suffering hardship, externally and internally (2 Cor 11:23-28). Paul uses several illustrations to drive home the focus of discipleship.

Soldier – Timothy (and us) is to be single-minded and focused – not entangling himself in the affairs of everyday life in order to please his Master.

Athlete – Timothy (and us) is to be disciplined and honest – doers of the Word.

Farmer – Timothy (and us) is to be hard working and fruitful.

❖ **What illustration describes me (couch potato, pleasure seeker, toy gatherer, etc.)?**

2:8-13 – Jesus’ Example – Paul goes on to describe the example of Jesus whom all believers are to imitate. He is enduring all things for the sake of the chosen, so that the gospel can come to them. Paul gives an apparently well known “trustworthy statement”.

^{11b}For if we **died** with Him, we will also **live** with Him;

¹²If we **endure**, we will also **reign** with Him;

If we **deny** Him, He also will **deny** us;

¹³If we are **faithless**, He **remains faithful**, for He cannot deny Himself.

❖ **Do I live in the Spirit? Do I endure? Do I deny? Am I faithless?**

2:14-18 – Faithfulness – Paul just addressed faithfulness; Jesus remains faithful even when we are faithless, but let’s be faithful! Faithfulness is:

- Edifying others over winning arguments
- Being diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth
- Avoiding talk that leads to ungodliness (living a life independent of God)
- Being careful what we say to care for the faith of others

❖ **Who is first in my life? Am I living ungodly?**

2:19-23 – Sanctification – The Lord knows His own and if we are His then we are different. Our desire is to be honoring to Him and useful for service and to cleanse ourselves from sin; flee youthful lusts and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.

❖ **What is my pursuit?**

2:24-26 – The Bond-Servant – Our job under the filling of the Spirit: the Lord’s bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition. God’s job: if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth, and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will.

❖ **Am I the Lord’s bond-servant? How do I respond (patience? Gentleness?)?**

Warnings (3:1-17)

3:1-9 – Characteristic of the Last Days – The Spirit through Paul prophesied that in the “last days” difficult times would come. “Last days” is a phrase that apparently refers to the church age between Christ’s first and second comings (Heb 1:1-2; Acts 2:16-17 cf Joel 2:28). Since the time of the apostles, worldliness and heresy have become increasingly a part of those that call themselves the church. In these times, the love of self will become paramount; evil will intensify. Paul lists ~20 different sins that will increasingly characterize people. They describe people who place self as the center of their affections in the place of God.

²For men will be **lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, ³unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good, ⁴treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, ⁵holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power;** Avoid such men as these. ⁶For among them are those who **enter into households and captivate weak women weighed down with sins,** led on by various impulses, ⁷**always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.** ... these *men* also **oppose the truth, men of depraved mind, rejected in regard to the faith.**

We are to avoid such men as these. Men like these “will not make further progress”. They can bring sin into the body, but they cannot take salvation from the redeemed.

❖ **What company do I keep (1 Cor 15:33)?**

3:10-17 – Rescue in the Last Days – All believers will be persecuted since all believers desire to live godly in Christ Jesus. Evil men and imposters of believers will proceed from bad to worse. We overcome in the face of heresy and ungodliness by being doers of the Word. Timothy was to follow Paul’s teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, patience, love, perseverance, persecutions, and sufferings. He was to continue in the Word that is able to give wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

❖ **Am I following apostolic conduct, purpose, faith, patience, love, perseverance, persecutions, and sufferings?**

ALL Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

This word, the Bible, is the inspired, plenary, verbal, infallible, inerrant in the original manuscripts word of God! Inspired translates the Greek *theopneustos* from 2 Tim 3:16 which literally means “breathed out by God” or “God-Breathed”. God is the source of Scripture and as such Scripture takes on His qualities. God superintended the human authors which describes the means by which God wrote His word – God directed (or moved), but did not dictate to the human authors so that, using their own personalities and styles, they composed and recorded without error in the original manuscripts God’s specific revelation to mankind (2 Pet 1:21-22). Infallible means completely incapable of error (i.e. true and trustworthy) (Titus 1:2) and inerrant means completely without error (John 17:17). Plenary means inspired in equal parts, including every word and verbal means extending to the very words (“all” in 2 Tim 3:16 and “no” in 2 Pet 1:21-22). This is shown by the Lord Jesus’ and Apostle Paul’s statements, usage, and arguments (Matt 5:18; 22:31-32; Gal 3:16).

The Scriptures are authoritative and constitute the believer’s only source of faith and practice (Matt 5:18; 2 Tim 3:15-17; Heb 4:12; 2 Pet 1:20-21). Only Scripture is perfectly adequate for all matters of faith and conduct – for salvation and sanctification. Only Scripture is able to meet all the spiritual needs of God’s people. Scripture is all-sufficient in regards to the soul of man, in our relationship to God, and in our relationship to others. It is the supreme and final authority in all matters on which it speaks (2 Pet 1:3; Matt 4:4; Heb 4:12; 2 Tim 3:15-17; 1 Pet 2:2; Psa 19:7-13; 119:9, 11; 119:24).

❖ **What do I really think/believe about the Bible?**

Paul’s Charge (4:1-5)

4:1-8 – Paul’s Final Charge – Paul solemnly charges (a forceful order or directive) Timothy in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom to preach the Word. He is to preach the Word faithfully, “in season and out of season”. Preach the Word is reprove, rebuke, and exhort with great patience and instruction.

❖ **Am I always ready to use the Word to reprove, rebuke, and exhort with great patience?**

Timothy is to preach faithfully even though some will not want to listen to sound doctrine, but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths. He is to be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill his ministry.

❖ **Do I like my ears tickled? Do I accumulate for myself my own feel-good teachings?**

Paul’s Finish (4:9-22)

4:6-7 – Finishing Well – Paul knew that his end was near. The drink offering was the last act in the offering worship (Num 15:1–10). Paul fought the good fight; he finished the course; he kept the faith. He served his Lord as a bond-servant. There were no regrets at the end of his life.

❖ **Do I have regrets? Am I running the course that God’s Word lays out for me?**

4:8 – The Reward – Paul and all those that loved the Lord’s appearing will be rewarded with the crown of righteousness. There are several crowns described in the NT that are rewarded to believers who are faithful in this life. These crowns are victor’s crowns, which is symbolic of honor and reward.

Title	Description	Reference
An Imperishable Crown	For leading a disciplined life	1 Cor 9:25
A Crown of Rejoicing	For evangelism and discipleship	1 Thess 2:19
A Crown of Righteousness	For loving the Lord's appearing	2 Tim 4:8
A Crown of Life	For enduring trials	James 1:12; Rev 2:10
A Crown of Glory	For shepherding God's flock faithfully	1 Pet 5:4

²⁵Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then *do it* to receive a perishable wreath, but we an **imperishable**. 1 Cor 9:25

¹⁹For who is our hope or joy or **crown of exultation**? Is it not even you, in the presence of our Lord Jesus at His coming? 1 Thess 2:19

⁸in the future there is laid up for me the **crown of righteousness**, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing. 2 Tim 4:8

¹²Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the **crown of life** which *the Lord* has promised to those who love Him. James 1:12

¹⁰Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, so that you will be tested, and you will have tribulation for ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the **crown of life**. Rev 2:10

⁴And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading **crown of glory**. 1 Peter 5:4

In heaven, believers will be standing before God offering up worship, proclaiming His majesty, bowing before Him on His throne, and casting our reward at His feet (Rev 4:9-11).

⁹And when the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, to Him who lives forever and ever, ¹⁰the twenty-four elders will fall down before Him who sits on the throne, and will worship Him who lives forever and ever, and will cast their crowns before the throne, saying, ¹¹“Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and because of Your will they existed, and were created.” Rev 4:9-11

❖ Do I cast everything before Jesus?

4:9-21 – Friends – True friends become obvious in times of crisis. Some deserted Paul (Demas), some went out to minister according to his assignment (Crescens to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia, Tychicus to Ephesus, Erastus in Corinth, Trophimus was left sick at Miletus), some opposed him (Alexander the coppersmith), and some like Eubulus, Pudens, Linus, Claudia, Luke, Timothy, and Mark were faithful in Rome to the end.

❖ Do I desert people who need me?

In the Roman court system, an accused person had two hearings: one to clearly establish the charge (like an arraignment) and the second to determine guilt or innocence. It appears that during Paul’s arraignment, no one stood with him; no one testified on his behalf. Yet, God was with him and strengthened him so that the gospel would be proclaimed. Regardless of the outcome, Paul knew that the Lord would bring him safely to His heavenly kingdom; all to God’s glory.

❖ Is my hope of glory an anchor for my soul (Heb 6:19)?

Homework

Read Titus.