

2 Timothy

I. Setting

2 Timothy is the 16th book of the New Testament and 11th among the Epistles. The Epistles, or letters, are the primary doctrinal portions of the New Testament.

It is not that Gospels and Acts do not contain doctrine, but that the purpose of the Epistles is to explain to churches and individuals how to appropriate the teachings of Jesus.

Jesus' earthly life models ministry. In every area of ministry we must apply the example of Christ. He was filled with the Spirit, sought to honor God, put a high value on people, and lowered Himself as the servant of all.

Once He ascended to heaven, He poured His Spirit out on believers, and the New Testament church was formed. Acts focuses upon the birth, establishment and furtherance of the work of God in the world through the church.

The Epistles are written to the church to further explain doctrine.

A. 2 Timothy is part of a section among the Epistles commonly known as The Pastorals" and includes 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy and Titus. This term first became widespread at the beginning of the 18th Century.

1. The Term is helpful because it reminds us that these letters are written to those in ministry.
2. The term, however, is somewhat limited because the message of the letter is designed for the whole church.
3. Two things make these letters unique among Paul's writings.
 - a. **First**, they are his last writings and contain his "Swan Song" for the church.
 - b. **Second**, they are addressed to individuals rather than churches.

B. Why write 2 Timothy?

Paul already wrote a letter to Timothy that in some ways serves as a "how to manual" for ministry. Why take the time to write another letter?

One person's perspective is:

1. Timothy speaks to the pastor's mind, giving him the wisdom he needs to do the work.

2 Timothy

2. Timothy speaks to the pastor's heart, giving him the courage and motivation he needs to complete the work.

For further details see notes on the Setting of 1 Timothy

II. Situation

A. Paul was in prison when he wrote 2 Timothy.

1. **2 Timothy 1:15–18**; gives us the limited details of Paul's imprisonment in Rome and how Onesiphorus was faithful to him when others had deserted him.
2. It is clear that many had broken their association with Paul once he was arrested; Paul speaks very highly of those who remained his companions through the difficult times.

B. **2 Timothy 2:8-9**; refers to his being in jail for preaching the gospel.

“Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to my gospel, for which I suffer trouble as an evildoer, **even to the point of chains**; but the word of God is not chained.”

C. **2 Timothy 4:6-7**: Paul implies that he has no hope for release.

1. “For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. ⁷ I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.”

D. 2 Timothy is Paul's last will and testament

1. Paul knew that the time of his departure was near, and that his earthly ministry was about to come to an end.
 - a. Early trustworthy tradition reports that Paul was martyred in Rome under Nero.
2. This puts an extra weight upon the doctrines and exhortations found in this letter, for Paul seems to have known they were his last.

2 Timothy 4:9 “Be diligent to come to me quickly...”
3. It is worth noting the things that seem most important to Paul as death knocks on his door.
 - a. **The Church** – he writes this letter to encourage Timothy in the work of pastoring the church in Ephesus.

2 Timothy

- i. The Bible places a very high price tag upon the church, while the average Christian places very little worth on the church.
 - ii. Many see the church only as a place for their needs to be met or for them to have a stage in which to exercise what they see as their gifts.
 - iii. It is important for every Christian to see the church as God's means of reaching the world and to get on board with the direction the church is going.
- **Ephesians 4:16** "From whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love."
 - iv. Your personal growth and the furtherance of the kingdom of God will be enhanced by your commitment to serve in your local church.
 - v. This makes it all the more important for Christians to choose a church that is doctrinally sound.
 - b. **The Word of God** – Timothy is constantly exhorted regarding the doctrines of Scripture and even told of the inspiration and usefulness of the Word of God.
 - i. So important is the Word of God to pulpit ministry Paul wrote,

2 Timothy 2:15 "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."
 - ii. So important is the Word of God to raising Children Paul wrote,

2 Timothy 3:15 ". . .and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."

In fact, it is essential that all Christian parents see their home as a theology school where their children will learn from them who God is and how to live well pleasing to Him.
 - iii. So important is the Word of God to the church that Paul wrote,

2 Timothy

2 Timothy 3:16-17 “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work”.

As the church emphasizes the teaching of the Word, the saints will grow and be equipped to properly serve the Lord.

iv. Paul wrote the same thing to the Ephesian church as a whole,

2 Timothy 4:11-12 “And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, . . .”

v. So important is the Word of God to the world at large that Paul wrote,

2 Timothy 4:2 “Preach the Word!”

vi. So important was the Word of God to Paul and all those who are suffering, on his death bed Paul wrote,

2 Timothy 4:13 - “Bring the books and the parchments...”

c. **The People of God** -Paul mentions no less than 27 people in 2 Timothy, each one he has a personal message for or about. Effective ministry will always involve investing in the lives of people.

i. The church is a body and is only healthy when each member is functioning as they were designed. When you backslide, cower back, become distracted, or high minded, the whole body misses out on what you were designed to bring to the table.

It must be noted that many of the relationships Paul poured into resulted in wounds for the Apostle. The only way to have success in ministry is to be vulnerable and take chances.

-Paul speaks of:

1:15 - those in Asia turning from him

4:10 – Demas forsaking him

4:14 – Alexander doing him great harm

4:16 – No one standing with him

2 Timothy

-But he also speaks of

1:15-18- Onesiphorus refreshing him

4:11 – Luke being with him

4:11 - Mark being useful to him

4:12 – Tychicus being sent into ministry

As well as a host of others of whom he gives very little detail.

Paul's investment in others was costly, but the return on those investments included great men and women of faith including Timothy himself.

4. Paul wrote to Timothy his apprentice

Timothy was stationed in Ephesus where he was pastoring the church. Paul and Timothy planted the church in Ephesus during the 3rd missionary journey. Acts 19 records the details.

Acts 19:7 the church began when twelve believers were baptized with the Holy Spirit and began to daily study the Word with Paul.

The work spread so that: **Acts 19:10** "All in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks."

No less than 7 churches were birthed out of the work in Ephesus, including Colossae, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philly, and Laodicea.

Acts 20 sums up the ministry in Ephesus from Paul's perspective

It was evangelistic in nature

20:21 – ". . . testifying to the Jews and Greeks repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ"

It contained a heavy emphasis on discipleship

21-: 20 – "I taught you from house to house"

It contained a high emphasis upon the Word of God

21:27 – "I have not shunned to declare unto you the whole counsel of God"

2 Timothy

It was a Spirit led ministry

20:22 – “And see now I go bound in the Spirit...”

It was not without warfare and opposition

20:32 – “Remember that for 3 years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears”.

This warfare continued after his departure

20:29 – “Savage wolves will come...”

Paul and Timothy returned to Ephesus after the narrative of the book of Acts came to a close.

From his letters to Timothy and Titus it seems that Paul was released from Prison in Rome and continued his missionary travels. He seems to have worked his way through Ephesus where he left Timothy, through Greece, leaving Titus in Crete and perhaps fulfilled His desires to take the Word of God deeper into Europe including Spain.

At some point Paul was arrested again, shipped off to Rome, imprisoned and finally executed sometime between 64-67AD

5. The letter is written to encourage, exhort and instruct Timothy. The message of the book becomes all the more important as we realize that Paul sensed it was his last.

Timothy was Paul’s apprentice and this letter is where the mantle is being passed from Paul to Timothy.

It is necessary for us to follow the example set by Moses with Joshua, Elijah with Elisha, Jesus with the Twelve and Paul with Timothy. The only way for Christianity to continue is to pass leadership on to the next generation.

They must be saved, disciplined, trained and given ample opportunities to grow and serve.

From the details within the letter we can conclude that Timothy was facing both internal and external opposition to the ministry JS Baxter writes:

“This letter is a challenge to fortitude and faithfulness in the face of present testing and the testing which are to come”

2 Timothy

6. Timothy's internal and external opposition

Internally he seems to be struggling with fear that may have been hindering him in ministry.

- i. **2 Timothy 1:6-7** – “Stir up the gift... for God has not given us a Spirit of fear...”
- ii. Timothy, like all of us, needed to be reminded to continue to step out in faith and the power of the Spirit, not limiting God to what he may have done with us in the past.
- iii. The secret to overcoming fear is to trust in the power of the Holy Spirit.
- iv. These fears were warranted because of the rising persecution under Nero.

2 Timothy 1:8 – “Do not be ashamed of the Testimony of the Lord or of me his prisoner...”

- v. Timothy was not afraid of his shadow or what goes bump in the night. Instead, He watched as his friend, mentor and pastor was arrested and sentenced to death.
- vi. He knew full well that continuing to be faithful to the Lord and the ministry may in fact cost him his life.

Externally Timothy was facing the rising tide of persecution and false teaching.

Nero's persecution of the church marked the first “State persecution.” Prior to this time believers were persecuted by the Jews who considered their teaching to be contrary to the Law, and by individuals who had rejected the message of Christ for a variety of reasons.

Nero turned his attention on Christians, blaming them for what was collapsing within the nation. He started a fire, which burned the city of Rome resulting in the loss of many lives and great expense. He claimed the fire was started by Christians and began to intensify persecution against the church and its leaders.

2 Timothy

The Roman historian Tacitus wrote that Nero attempted to place the guilt for burning the city on “a class hated for their abominations, called Christians by the populace.”

John Foxx records the following:

“In particular, he had some sewed up in skins of wild beasts, and then worried by dogs until they expired; and others dressed in shirts made stiff with wax, fixed to axletrees, and set on fire in his gardens, in order to illuminate them. This persecution was general throughout the whole Roman Empire; but it rather increased than diminished the spirit of Christianity. In the course of it, St. Paul and St. Peter were martyred.”

III. Outline

- A. 2 Timothy is made up of 4 chapters consisting of 83 verses and begins with a brief salutation. The Tyndale Bible Dictionary States: (emphasis mine)
1. Salutation (1:1–2) as was customary in ancient letters, the writer puts his name first. Then he gives a fuller identification of himself as an apostle, one belonging to Jesus Christ, and one commissioned to tell the whole world about the eternal life that God has made available through faith in Jesus Christ. Paul hereby indicates his authority and also gives a brief summary of the essence of the true Christian faith.

The person to whom the letter is written is “Timothy, my beloved child.” Then follows a triple blessing, “Grace, mercy, and peace” from God the Father and his Son, Jesus Christ.

As in all his letters, Paul changes the rather colorless Greek salutation, “greetings,” to one of the greatest theological concepts, “grace,” and adds the Greek translation of the regular Hebrew salutation, “peace.” Then he adds here the great word, “mercy,” as he did in 1 Timothy.

2. After this salutation, the letter is filled with exhortations for Timothy as a Christian and a Pastor; there are no less than 33 commands found in the four short chapters of 2 Timothy.

The first command is found in **2 Timothy 1: 6** “Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands, . . .”

2 Timothy

This is followed by many commands that directly relate to the ministry.

- **2 Timothy 1:8** “Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner, but share with me in the sufferings for the gospel according to the power of God.”
- **2 Timothy 1:13** “Hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.”
- **2 Timothy 1:14** “That good thing which was committed to you, keep by the Holy Spirit who dwells in us.”
- **2 Timothy 2:1** “You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.”
- **2 Timothy 2:2** “And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.”
- **2 Timothy 2:3** “You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.”
- **2 Timothy 2:7** “Consider what I say, and May the Lord give you understanding in all things.”
- **2 Timothy 2:8** “Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to my gospel,”
- **2 Timothy 2:14** “Remind them of these things, charging them before the Lord not to strive about words to no profit, to the ruin of the hearers.”
- **2 Timothy 2:15** “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”
- **2 Timothy 2:16** “But shun profane and idle babblings, for they will increase to more ungodliness.”
- **2 Timothy 2:22** “Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.”
- **2 Timothy 3:1** “But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come. . .”
- **2 Timothy 3:14** “But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them,”

2 Timothy

- **2 Timothy 4:2** “Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching”
- **2 Timothy 4:5** “But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.”

The final commands have to do with Timothy making a trip to see Paul before his death. They reveal the things that were most important to him, the Word of God and the people of God.

- **2 Timothy 4:9** “Be diligent to come to me quickly;”
- **2 Timothy 4:11** “Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for ministry.”
- **2 Timothy 4:13** “Bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas when you come—and the books, especially the parchments.”
- **2 Timothy 4:19** “Greet Prisca and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus.”

IV. Doctrine in 2 Timothy

Christology – Christ is mentioned 14 times in 2 Timothy

1. **2 Timothy 1:1** Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life, which is in Christ Jesus, . . .”

- a. Life is found in Christ alone.

John 1:4 “In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. . .”

The Greek text reads, “In Him life was and the life was to light men.

1 John 5:12 “He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.”

- b. It is clear from Scripture that eternal life is found in Christ alone.

- i. The only doorway to heaven is the cross. We come through the cross to the throne of Grace where we meet God face to face Within all of us is a desire to know God. It is common for me to hear from people who are not church goers, and may or may not profess to believe in God, yet they refer to themselves as “a very spiritual person.”

2 Timothy

The reason: God made us that way. He made us not only to be spiritual, but to be led by the Spirit. This will happen for you when you trust Christ for salvation

c. **2 Timothy 1:2** "...Christ Jesus our Lord"

Paul will emphasize the Lordship of Jesus in his final letter to Timothy

- **2 Timothy 1:9** calls us according to His purposes
- **2 Timothy 1:10** Paul refers to Christ as Savior, explaining how He abolished death and brought life to men through the Cross
- **2 Timothy 2:10** "Therefore I endure all things for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory."
- **2 Timothy 1:13** Faith and love are in Christ
- **2 Timothy 2:1** Grace is in Christ
- **2 Timothy 2:8** Christ rose from the dead
- **2 Timothy 3:1** Christ will be the one before whom all mankind will stand for judgment
- **2 Timothy 4:22** Even after Paul's departure Christ will remain with those who are His

B. Pneumatology – The Holy Spirit

1. The number one solution to the difficulties that Timothy faced in Ministry was the Holy Spirit

2 Timothy 1:6-7 "Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind."

The gifts that have been given to us through the Holy Spirit can be stirred up. This stirring is possible through prayer and action. We will not see spiritual gifts stirred up until we step into a place where they

2 Timothy

are necessary. Phillip received a gift of evangelism as he traveled to Samaria with the Gospel.

2 Timothy 1:14 “That good thing which was committed to you, keep by the Holy Spirit who dwells in us.”

The Spirit of God dwells within the believer and is what makes us a child of God. Jesus referred to this as being “born again.” Paul wrote to the Romans:

“He who does not have the Spirit is not His...” Romans 8:9

C. Bibliology–The Bible

1. **2 Timothy 1:11** Paul explains that his calling was to preach and teach the Word of God
2. **2 Timothy 2:16** Timothy is reminded to avoid false teaching, because false teaching is to the church what cancer is to the body.
3. Since we already discussed the high value Paul placed upon the Word, we will now focus on:
 - The source of the Bible
 - The purpose of the Bible
 - How to handle the Bible
 - a. The Source of the Bible:
 - i. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God,

Inspiration – theos pneuma - God breathed

The claim of the Bible is that it comes directly to man from God.
 - b. The Purpose of the Bible

2 Timothy 3:16-17 “. . .and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

2 Timothy

The Word of God is designed by God to reveal who He is, instruct us in our walk with Him, cause us to grow into maturity and equip us for Christian service.

Like food to the body, the Word of God will give the necessary nutrients for Christian growth

c. How to handle the Bible

2 Timothy 2:15 “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. ‘

Each Christian must invest in the necessary training to rightly divide the Word of truth. In other words, we need to learn to study the Bible in a way that does not have us projecting our own thoughts into the Bible, but allows the Bible to speak for itself.

In one sense, we need to read the Bible like we read anything else. When we read the paper we don't try to determine what the article means to us, but rather what the author is trying to say. For some odd reason we approach the Bible as though it does not mean what it says; that we must use a secret code to uncover the meaning of its message. Nothing could be farther from the truth.

d. The Doctrine of Disciple Making

When we think of the responsibility of the church it might help to envision the two beams that make up the cross.

i. The vertical beam reminds us that the church has a ministry to God

Acts 13:2 “. . .they ministered to the Lord...”

This is a picture of worship. The church's first duty is to be glorifying to the Lord in all things.

All ministries must be done in a way that is consistent with Scripture and is thus glorifying to the Lord.

The church must provide an atmosphere that is inviting for people to enter into worship.

This does not necessarily speak of lighting, music style or décor, although those things can be beneficial, but rather of an atmosphere

2 Timothy

that is conducive to allowing the Spirit of God to work in the lives of His people

- ii. The horizontal beam of the cross should remind us that the church has ministry toward mankind. This can be divided into 3 parts based upon 3 commissions given to the church.

Part 1 Mark 16:15 “GO in to all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature.”

The church should be about the work of evangelism, seeking to take the Gospel outside its doors to where the people are. It is a mistake to think that the people will come to the church. The church must go to the people. This was effectively modeled by Jesus and the Apostles.

Part 2 Matthew 28:19-20 “Go therefore and make disciples of every nation...teaching them...”

Making disciples out of saints should be the target of every local church. This is done by emphasizing the elements found in Acts 2:42

Part 3 2 Timothy 2:2 “The things you have heard from me... commit these to faithful men who will teach others also.”

Training disciples for leadership must also be the target of the church. The leaders will serve as deacons, elders or missionaries. (The modern missionary seems to capsulize the ministry of apostle, evangelist and church planter.)

As a church leader, what are you currently doing to train up the next generation of Christian leaders?

- e. The Doctrine of Eternal Reward

2 Timothy 4:6-8 “For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.”

2 Timothy

- i. Paul writes of a time of reckoning when he will stand before the Lord to be rewarded for his life spent on earth. He referred to that same judgment for Onesiphorus

Timothy 1:18 The Lord grant to him that he may find mercy from the Lord in that Day—and you know very well how many ways he ministered to me at Ephesus.”

- ii. Paul will be rewarded for a life spent in the service of the Lord.

Onesiphorus specifically rewarded for ministering to Paul during a difficult trial.

- iii. Demas lost sight of the reward

2 Timothy 4:9-10 “Be diligent to come to me quickly; for Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world, and has departed for Thessalonica . . .”

One of the keys to Paul’s success was that he was eternally minded. When things got difficult in life, he always evaluated them in light of eternity. He saw this life as both transient and temporary. This enabled him to endure great difficulty knowing his ultimate reward would be in glory.

This is an essential component in walking with the Lord. Demas lost sight of eternity, becoming fixated with the here and now. As a result, he forsook the ministry and became consumed with the things of earth.

When facing difficulty we need to keep eternity in mind. Often a bad marriage, or a difficult season in marriage, is combatted with divorce rather than seeing it as God’s means of perfecting holiness in the saint.