

2 Timothy

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Author	Paul.
Written to	Timothy.
Date	About 67 AD (just before Paul's death).
Place	Written while in prison in Rome.
Type	Personal letter from Paul to Timothy.
Theme	Faithful endurance.
Purpose	2 Timothy is a letter written to encourage Timothy in his difficult task and to ask him to come to Rome. Timothy was one of Paul's best friends and already knew his theology, so the letter is very personal and not a theological treatise (unlike 1 Timothy which was written to a Church that knew Paul's theology but was choosing to ignore it).



Paul and Timothy

Key verses

Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others. Join with me in suffering, like a good soldier of Christ Jesus. 2:1-3

Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth. 2:15

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that all God's people may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. 3:16,17

Outline

1.1-1.2 Greeting

Paul greets Timothy, his *dear son*.

1.3-2:13 Encouragement to endure

Paul thanks God for Timothy and longs to see him. He remembers Timothy's sincere faith and encourages him to *fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline. 1:6,7*

Timothy is encouraged to:

- not be ashamed to testify about the Lord.
- accept suffering for the Gospel.
- keep to the pattern of sound teaching he received from Paul ie. faith and love in Christ Jesus.
- guard what he has received with the help of the Holy Spirit.
- be strong in God's grace.
- entrust the message to others who will, in turn, pass it on to others.
- endure hardship like a good soldier for Jesus Christ.
- keep focused on Jesus and not get sidetracked into things which don't please Him.

The Gospel: Good News!

God has saved us and called us to a holy life - not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time, but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light. 1:9,10

For if we died with Him we will also live with Him; if we endure we will also reign with Him. If we disown Him He will also disown us; if we are faithless, He will remain faithful, for He cannot disown Himself. 2:12,13

2:14-26 God's approval

Timothy is encouraged to seek God's approval:

Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth. 2:15

This means he is to:

- Avoid godless chatter which tends to spread like gangrene.
- Stand firm in the truth.
- Cleanse himself so he will be an *instrument for noble purposes, made holy, useful to the Master and prepared to do any good work. 2:21*
- Flee youthful desires.
- Pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace.
- Keep away from arguments and quarrels.
- Gently instruct those who oppose him so they can repent, escape the devil's trap and come to a knowledge of the truth.

3:1-11 Godlessness in the last days

There will be terrible times in the last days.

- *People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God - having a form of godliness but denying its power. Sounds familiar!! The folly of such people will be clear to everyone.*
- Timothy is to have nothing to do with these people.

3:10-4:8 Paul's charge to Timothy

Timothy knows Paul's example, including his teaching, way of life, purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, persecutions and sufferings. He endured and the Lord rescued him from all of them. *In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. 3:12.*

Evildoers and impostors will go from bad to worse but Timothy is to:

- Continue in what he has learned.
- Hold true to the Scriptures. *All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that all God's people may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. 3:16,17.*
- Preach the Word.
- Be prepared to correct, rebuke, instruct and encourage others with patience and integrity.
- Be calm in all situations.
- Endure hardship.
- Fulfill his calling as an evangelist (just as Paul did).

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store 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 longed for his appearing. 4:7,8

4:9-18 Personal remarks

Paul encourages Timothy to come to him quickly and gives instructions regarding situations in the Church. From his prison cell Paul is able to say *The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and will bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom. To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen. 4:18*

4:19-22 Final greetings

Paul greets a number of the Christians and completes his letter with a blessing:
The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you all. 4:22

Lessons from 2 Timothy

For a lasting and effective ministry.....

Focus all you do on accomplishing God's sovereign will, and recognise that you can only do it in God's power and by God's grace. 1:1, 8-12

- Be strong in God's grace. 2:1
- Train and empower others who can continue the ministry. 2:2, Ephesians 4:12
- Endure in times of hardship. 2:3, 10-13
- Be single-minded and disciplined in carrying out your ministry. 2:4-7
- Keep Jesus as the focus. 2:8,9,14
- Set and maintain high standards. 2:15
- Have the Word of God as your foundation. 2:15, 3:16,17
- Avoid time-wasting and useless activities. 2:16-23
- Stay holy, and pure in heart. 2:21, 22
- Be wise in the way you deal with people. Don't be argumentative or resentful; rather be gentle, kind and teachable; trusting God's and not your own strength. 2:23-26
- Don't force your ministry on others. Rather let God do His sovereign work through you. 2:25,26
- Minister in the power of the Holy Spirit, not your own power. 1:6,7,14
- Be well prepared, energetic, sensitive and wise. 4:2,5

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Discussion questions

In 2 Timothy the experienced leader, Paul, is mentoring the developing leader, Timothy. What can we learn about mentoring from Paul and Timothy's relationship? What lessons does Paul pass on to Timothy about being an effective leader? How are these lessons relevant for you and for your Church?

Important issues addressed by Paul in are endurance; focus; use of power; godliness; being an example, wisdom. Comment on each of these as they relate to leaders of Churches today. What are some of the pitfalls leaders face in these areas? How is Paul's letter to Timothy relevant in these areas?

List the qualities required for being a leader of a Church, as described in 2 Timothy. Should someone be a leader if they don't demonstrate all of these qualities? How can Churches allow for growth and development in these qualities of their young leaders (as Paul did for Timothy)? Are the same qualities needed by all who seek to have a lasting and effective ministry?

Paul obviously cared for Timothy and spent a lot of time investing in his development. What did that do for Paul? What did it do for Timothy? How can you invest in future generations?

What have you learned from your study of 2 Timothy? How will you apply this in your life?