

# 2 Timothy

# INTRODUCTION

Paul wrote this second letter to Timothy in his more severe second imprisonment—he was under house arrest during his first incarceration; this time he was in chains. Only Luke was with him.

Paul wrote the letter out of concern for Timothy's needs, as well as for his own, for he was now looking forward to his own death (2 Tim. 4:6-8).

Nevertheless, Paul reminded Timothy of his responsibilities and admonished him to give himself wholeheartedly to his task and to be faithful in the face of hardships, desertions and error. In all of 2 Timothy, Jesus Christ is seen as our example.

## 2 Timothy 1:1-2

Paul describes Timothy as his own son. "Timothy, my dear son" (1 Tim. 1:2) and again "Timothy my true son in the faith" (1 Timothy 1:2). He had been converted during Paul's first missionary journey in Asia Minor, and the apostle had adopted him as a spiritual son, and felt toward him an affection and confidence which no other shared. "I have no else like him," he writes to the Philippians,

who takes a genuine interest in your welfare. For everyone looks out for his own interests, not those of Jesus Christ. But you know that Timothy has proved himself, because as a son with his father he has served with me in the work of the gospel. (Philippians 2:20-22)

(The Christ in the Bible Commentary, A. B. Simpson)

This epistle is a handbook for young ministers of the Gospel. Today, especially, the church needs more men of Timothy's spiritual caliber, who are determined to guard the Gospel as a sacred gift given to them, who are faithful to proclaim it, who are ready to suffer for it, and who will pass it on to faithful followers.

## 2 Timothy 1:3-5

"I have been reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also" (2 Timothy 1:5). He was happy in being born of a godly mother and a pious ancestry. His mother Eunice and his grandmother Lois are described as women of unfeigned faith. The reference is probably to their life before their conversion; even as Jewish believers they had genuine faith in God and were His true people, and their little son Timothy was brought up to fear and trust their God. Let us thank God if we have the same great privilege, and let us be careful to transmit to our children the same benediction.

(The Christ in the Bible Commentary, A. B. Simpson)

**In your years of growing up and training, was there someone who guided you in grasping and understanding the message of God? If so, briefly describe if he or she was a relative or friend. In what manner did they make it "live" for you? How important is that to you today?**

## 2 Timothy 1:6-7

Paul next refers to Timothy's call to the ministry and his endowment with the Holy Spirit for His sacred work. "For this reason I remind you 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). He had been set apart by the apostle himself, and had received in connection with his ordination the special gift of the Holy Spirit as the "Spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline [a sound mind, KJV]." This endowment is indispensable to true and effectual ministry in every age, and the blended gifts of wisdom, love and power in Timothy's experience are well worthy of our emulation and ambition. But we see that even this precious gift had been in some measure neglected, and the apostle calls upon his son in the faith to rekindle the fire that was burning low. Let not the message be lost upon any of us, but let us stir up the gift of God that is in us. We have the Holy Spirit, but we may not have the fullness of His gifts and energies, and He is waiting to respond to our faith, our prayer and our earnest waiting upon Him for a great revival in our own hearts.

(The Christ in the Bible Commentary, A. B. Simpson)

This message was not to Timothy only, but to us as well. **If we are lacking in that spirit of power, love and a sound mind, what can we do to come into its fullness?**

Prov. 2:3-9 Jer. 29:12-13 Matt. 7:7-8 Acts 1:6-8 1 Cor. 12:31 Eph. 1:17-18 2 Tim. 1:13-14 2  
Tim. 2:15 James 1:5-6 James 3:17-18

## 2 Timothy 1:8-18

*"Hold Fast the Form of Sound Words."* (2 Tim. 2:13) How striking is Paul's reference to the double committal, as if there had been an agreed exchange between his Master and himself! Paul had handed over to Christ as a sacred deposit all that concerned his well-being in time and eternity, and Christ had handed over to him the interests of His kingdom, which, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, he was required to maintain inviolate. It is a mutual exchange of which

we all ought to know something. Give all to Christ and Christ becomes all to you. The proportion of your self-giving is the measure of your discovery of what Jesus will be to you.

Some of Paul's former friends shrank from identifying themselves with a suspect—the inmate of the condemned cell. It was no light matter to visit the bearer of a name which the world of that day detested, one who belonged to a sect accused of burning Rome. Demas, 4:10, and others forsook him, but the good Ephesian, Onesiphorus, set about seeking him through all the prisons of Rome, and was not ashamed of his chain nor content with a single visit. He “oft refreshed” his friend. Paul sends a grateful message to his family, 4:19. Perhaps there is here a gentle hint to Timothy. Compare vv. 8 and 16. Never shrink from taking your place beside Christ's prisoners!

(Through the Bible Day by Day, F. B. Meyer)

Phygellus and Hermogenes were a disappointment to Paul because he knew that they had the same Spirit of God working in them as he did, but they, for some reason, turned away from him in Asia. Nothing more is mentioned about them in the Bible, and the Bible's word to describe their kind of action is “apostate.” The Oxford American dictionary defines “apostasy” (from, which “apostate” is derived) as: renunciation of one's religion, principles, political party, etc. Nearby in the same dictionary is “apostle” which means: Any of the twelve men sent forth to preach the gospel; a leader or teacher of a new faith. In thinking about these two definitions—one negative and one positive—we readily recognize the very fine line separating the two. **Does this not teach us to carefully guard our stand in Christ and for the gospel? Has the Holy Spirit either affirmed or warned you in this teaching?**

## **2 Timothy 2:1-18**

“*A Good Soldier of Jesus Christ.*” *Soldier*, vv. 1-4: There is grace enough in Jesus for every need but we must avail ourselves of it. We can expect nothing less than hardship, since life is a battlefield. Our one aim should be to please Him who chose us to be soldiers. In order to be all that He would have us be, we must avoid entangling ourselves in the conditions around us. We must resemble a garrison in the town where it is quartered, and from which it may at any hour be summoned away. The less encumbered we are, the more easily shall we be able to execute the least command of our Great Captain. How high an honor it is to be enrolled among His soldiers!

(Through the Bible Day by Day, F. B. Meyer)

Military life differs greatly from civilian life. A soldier is trained to endure great hardship, yet at the same time, to faithfully and fully carry out his mission, applying obedience without the “why's.” **In checking your own life right now, what could be changed to enable you to become a nobler soldier for Jesus Christ, fitting you for His “Well done!”?**

1 Thess. 5:16-18, 22      1 Tim. 2:1-3      Titus 1:9      Heb. 10:35, 36  
Jas. 5:19, 20

## **2 Timothy 2:19-26**

The servant's personal victory, 24-25a, has a twofold strategy: (1) that the Lord might grant his opponents repentance, leading them to a full comprehension of the truth, 25b; (2) that they might “recover themselves,” recover their senses. Those caught in the devil's snare of false doctrine become infatuated and intoxicated. When in such a state they are captured by the devil at his pleasure, 26.

(Unger's Bible Hand Book, Merrill F. Unger)

Paul here warns his young disciple to flee “youthful lusts.” These are more than passions of the flesh—they have to do with youth's immaturity. **Following we are listing a few examples of this kind of immaturity. Please briefly write your own explanation as to what they are or give an example of such.**

**Impatience and/or carelessness—lack of forbearing**

**Self-assertion**

**Love of disputing**

**Inadequate knowledge regarding subject being taught**

**How can a young disciple persevere in overcoming in the above areas and grow in patience, kindness, genuine interest in others, and in faith and righteousness? From Rom. 6:2-7, what needs to die in order for these holy evidences in a life to be evident?**

## **2 Timothy 3:1-15**

In Second Timothy 3, Paul gives another picture of these latter-day apostates. These two pictures have reference to the days in which we are living, and give a very solemn view of the perils that are sweeping around the Church of Christ like a flood.

They are of Satanic origin. The apostle distinctly refers to seductive spirits and doctrines of demons. Again he refers to Jannes and Jambres, who withstood Moses, as types of these latter-day false prophets. In the book of Revelation John tells us of a flood of demons, "evil spirits that looked like frogs" which are "spirits of demons performing miraculous signs" (Revelation 16:13, 14), which are to break loose in the last days and lead their victims on to the battle of Armageddon. We may, therefore, look for supernatural manifestations in our time of the most seductive and misleading character which are not of God, but from the wicked one. There is a true and holy supernaturalism which will always be recognized by its humility, self-control, holiness, love and good fruits. But there is a loud, arrogant, presumptuous and disorderly fanaticism, which scoffs at all restraints and scatters its anathemas against all that oppose it and, if possible, would "deceive even the elect" (Matthew 24:24).

The special apostasy to which Paul refers in Timothy is marked by a flood of human wickedness as well as devilish delusion. Its first feature is selfishness, leading to covetousness, the love of pleasure, pride and arrogance, licentiousness, neglect of home, loss of natural affection, evil speaking, and hardness and cruelty toward others. One of its special features is the multitudes of weak women who are carried away by it. Its leaders "worm their way into homes and gain control over weak-willed women, who are loaded down with sins and are swayed by all kinds of evil desires, always learning but never able to acknowledge the truth" (2 Timothy 3:6-7). These persons are troubled about their sins and burdened with an evil conscience, and they are ready to turn to any teacher who will give them rest. And yet they never find rest and never get anywhere. These are in every age at once dupes and the deceivers of others.

Again it will be noticed that this apostasy is "having a form of godliness but denying its power" (3:5). It claims superior sanctity and is characterized by the strain that marks almost all false teaching. "They forbid people to marry and order them to abstain from certain foods" (1 Timothy 4:3), and as someone has said, standing so straight that it really falls over backward. We are in the beginnings of these things. Let us watch and pray, and keep very humble, very simple, very practical and very near to the Master's feet.

(The Christ in the Bible Commentary, A. B. Simpson)

You would think that those living at the end of the age should have a better grasp of the truth because they have an enormous amount of philosophical and religious history available to learn from. **Why then, in the last days will people become "ever learning, and never be able to come to the knowledge of truth?" (2 Tim. 3:7)**

2 Thess. 2:1-12 1 Tim. 6:3-10

**Why will evil men and imposters "become worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived" (2 Tim. 3:13)?**

2 Tim. 3:14-17 Rom. 1:18

Paul exhorts Timothy to continue in the gospel in the face of a great increase of evil. In the last days, the time of the first appearing of Christ until His Second Coming (1 Tim. 4:1; Heb. 1:1, 2; 1 Pet. 1:20; 1 John 2:18), people will be characterized by all kinds of self-centered and unnatural perversions. Some will maintain an outward pretense, speaking the vocabulary of Christianity, but refusing the reality that Christian faith expresses. The power they deny is the heart of Christianity—the fact of a risen Redeemer, the truth of the inspired Word, and the indwelling and overflowing of the Holy Spirit, working within believers and transforming their lives.

(New Spirit-Filled Life Bible, footnote 2 Tim 3:1-9 -James Lee Beall)

## **2 Timothy 3:16-17**

The sound rendering of this pivotal passage is: "All scripture is God-breathed and profitable. . . ." This declares: (1) The full inspiration of the entire OT and by implication all canonical Scripture. (2) All Scripture is a product of God—God-Breathed. God actually produced it, "breathed it *out*." It remains so whether man believes it or not. It has this unchanging quality *objectively* inherent in it. (3) As God-breathed it is inerrant and fully authoritative, since God produced it and actual error is inconsistent with God. (4) The whole of Scripture is useful: (a) for doctrine (teaching); (b)

for reproof or censure of wrong and sin; (c) for correction, setting aright or reformation; (d) for instruction (disciplinary education) in righteousness, both God's inherent righteousness and the righteous conduct He requires of His own; (e) that "the man of God may be perfect" in the sense of complete with nothing lacking, completely equipped and furnished "for all good works." This view of the full inspiration of the Bible is the citadel against error and apostasy, both in life and in doctrine.

(Unger's Bible Hand Book, Merrill F. Unger)

### **What problem arises when you don't believe the Bible is God-breathed?**

#### **2 Timothy 4:1-4**

The apostle gives a very solemn picture in both epistles of the teachers that are to develop in the Church of Christ before the end. The first passage is First Timothy 4:1-3.

The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron. They forbid people to marry and order them to abstain from certain foods, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and who know the truth.

These errors arise from seducing spirits and doctrines of demons. It was clearly intimated by the Lord that the enemy would sow tares among the wheat, and these are some of the tares. They were to look very much like wheat; indeed, the error was in the guise of truth and an overstraining of the good, until it became all bad.

(The Christ in the Bible Commentary, A. B. Simpson)

### **What are some of the false doctrines and philosophies being taught today which some people accept, believing that therein they can find relief?**

Isa. 30:9-11 Jer. 5:30-31 Luke 11:17, 18 1 Cor. 2:14 2 Tim. 3:6  
Titus 1:10-16

#### **2 Timothy 4:5-8**

This is the grandest utterance of the grandest mortal who ever lived. Where can we match Paul's words that he wrote from his dungeon to Timothy, his own true son in the faith? Let us picture the old battle-scarred hero of the Cross, standing in the gloomy dungeon, bound with chains and looking up through the one opening in the roof of his cell through which only a tiny shaft of light could enter, but which reveals his countenance with the expression of perfect peace. His lips are moving, and we hear him say, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing" (2 Timothy 4:7, 8).

Ever since Jesus had laid His hand upon him, Paul seemed to have been contending in the arena and running in the stadium. There had been scarcely a moment of rest. It was an intense training and a strenuous wrestling all the way through. But within, peace reigned. His questions were answered. His sins were forgiven. His wants were supplied. Peace within but the athlete's contest without. This is the true Christian life.

(What the Bible Is All About, Henrietta C. Mears)

### **If your life were to end today, could you wholeheartedly state that which Paul said about his life, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith"?**

#### **2 Timothy 4:9-22**

Finally we have a group of false teachers and enemies of the truth as typical of the future history of the Church as these brighter examples of fidelity that have just been named. There are Alexander, Hymenaeus, Philetus, Hermogenes, Phygellus, whose heresies and oppositions were but typical of the story of the Church to the end. The apostle looks upon them with sorrow, not with vindictiveness. Second Timothy 4:14 should be translated, "The Lord will reward him according to his works." It is not a prayer for the punishment of this man, but a prophecy. The true spirit of Paul toward his enemies comes out in the 16<sup>th</sup> verse, "May it not be held against them."

(The Christ in the Bible Commentary, A. B. Simpson)

Not only were many of the religious leaders and rulers of the day ranged in opposition against Paul, but at times fellow believers also abandoned him. However, no matter what the opposition, he trusted God to “deliver him out of the mouth of the lion.” (2 Tim 4:17) This 17<sup>th</sup> verse is understood to be a metaphor, but Paul’s trust in God could not be expressed in a more splendid way. **What is the full interpretive meaning behind his words?**

1 Sam. 17:37 Luke 22:31 1 Pet. 5:8

A personal verse of protection and encouragement is given in 1 Corinthians 15:57, 58:

“But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.”

**Please write out a special verse of protection you may use in time of trouble.**