

The Book of 2 Timothy

Prescription for a Healthy Church

Introduction

We have no details of Paul's travels after his release from his first Roman imprisonment. Titus 3:12 indicates that he visited Nicopolis. He must have departed from there and gone to Troas, where, in a "quick exit," he had left his cloak, books, and parchments with his host, Carpus. How or where he was arrested again, we do not know. We do know that Nero had unleashed a terrible persecution against the Christians, and that Paul's second imprisonment was far different from his first. He was now a hated prisoner in a Roman prison. As we read this final letter from Paul's heart, we can sense his loneliness and heartache as he faced his trial and certain persecution. "*Only Luke is with me,*" he writes, as he begs his son in the faith, Timothy, to come to him as quickly as possible.

Timothy was no longer the leader at Ephesus; Tychicus had been sent to take his place. Apparently Timothy was doing work as a traveling minister and evangelist in the area around Ephesus. Paul expected Timothy to come to Rome because he knew that Timothy would be in Troas and Ephesus. These cities were on the road to Rome.

This letter is very personal. Paul is alone at Rome, awaiting trial and certain death. He longs to see his son Timothy and to encourage him to take his place in the ministry of the Gospel. The churches were turning from the faith, and Paul urged young Timothy to be true to his calling and fulfill his ministry.

If we follow the chapter divisions in the Bible, we see four appeals from Paul to Timothy to encourage him to be a faithful minister in spite of discouraging conditions. Chapter 1 is the pastoral appeal, in which Paul reminds Timothy of his calling to the ministry and of the responsibilities and privileges that go with it. Chapter 2 is the practical appeal, in which Paul seeks to solve some of the young minister's problems: his persecution for the sake of the Gospel, false teachers, and church difficulties. In chapter 3, Paul uses the prophetic appeal, explaining the course of events and the importance of holding fast to the Word. Finally, chapter 4 gives the personal appeal from the heart of the aged apostle, urging Timothy to remain true because he (Paul) would soon be executed. He did not want Timothy to become another Demas who loved the world, and deserted Paul. (2 Tim. 4:10)

Key Verses in 2 Timothy

“For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.” 2 Timothy 1:7

*“You therefore my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.”
2 Timothy 2:1*

“And the things you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.” 2 Timothy 2:2

“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 2:15

“Flee also youthful lusts, but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord with a pure heart.” 2 Timothy 2:22

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.” 2 Timothy 3:16

“Preach the word! Be ready in and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. 2 Timothy 4:2

People Mentioned in 2 Timothy

LOIS, (1:5). Grandmother of Timothy and a Jewish Christian.

EUNICE, (1:5). Timothy’s mother and also a Jewish Christian.

PHYGELUS AND HERMOGENES, (1:15). Two friends who accompanied Paul but deserted him in his hour of need. Nothing further is known about them.

ONESIPHORUS, (1:16). A friend who remained steadfast and visited Paul in prison.

HYMENAËUS AND PHILETUS, (2:17). Two leaders of the heretical movement in the church at Ephesus.

JANNES AND JAMBRES, (3:8). Neither is mentioned in the Old Testament but according to Jewish tradition they were the magicians who opposed Moses (Exodus 7:11).

DEMAS, (4:9). Once a fellow-worker with Paul and mentioned in Colossians 4:14 and Philemon 24. But he was seduced by a spirit of worldliness and deserted Paul.

CRESCENS, (4:10). A fellow-worker but mentioned only here in the New Testament.

TITUS, (4:10). One of Paul's young converts and a very capable leader who worked with the apostle in Ephesus, Corinth and Crete. Mentioned frequently in the epistles, one of which was written to him by Paul.

LUKE, (4:11). Author of the gospel named after him and also of Acts. He was a doctor (Col. 4:14) and a faithful friend and fellow-worker with Paul.

MARK, (4:11). Full name John Mark and author of the Gospel named after him. He had let Paul down on his first missionary journey (Acts 13:13), but later proved himself to Paul as a faithful worker.

TYCHICUS, (4:12). Described by Paul as a 'dear brother and faithful servant in the Lord' (Eph. 6:21). Almost certain that he carried Paul's letters to both Ephesus and Colosse.

CARPUS, (4:13). Not mentioned elsewhere but must have been a close friend of Paul and had given him hospitality since the apostle had left both his cloak and parchments at his house in Troas.

ALEXANDER THE METALWORKER, (4:14–15). Possibly the same Alexander mentioned in 1 Timothy as a heretic alongside Hymenaeus. He strongly opposed Paul's message and did him a great deal of harm.

PRISCILLA AND AQUILA, (4:19). A godly husband and wife who were tent-makers like Paul, and gave him hospitality at Corinth (Acts 18:1–3). They also helped the preacher, Apollos, to a clearer understanding of the gospel (Acts 18:24–26).

ERASTUS AND TROPHIMUS (4:20) were both co-workers with Paul and are mentioned respectively in Acts 19:22 and Acts 20:4.

EUBULUS, PUDENS, LINUS, AND CLAUDIA, (4:21). Nothing is known of these individuals and we must simply regard them as Christian believers in the church at Rome.