

## **2 TIMOTHY**

**Main Theme:** Paul's Pastoral Instruction to Timothy

**Primary Reference Source:** The McArthur Study Bible

**Background:** Paul wrote the pastoral epistles of 1 Timothy and Titus between his first Roman imprisonment and his second Roman imprisonment. This interlude for ministry between the first and second imprisonment was approximately five years. 2 Timothy was written during Paul's second Roman imprisonment. Paul was probably rearrested as a part of Nero's persecution of Christians. "In his first imprisonment in Rome (A.D. 60-62), before Nero had begun the persecution of Christians (A.D. 64), he was only; under house arrest and had opportunity for much interaction with people and ministry (Acts 28:16-31)." In his second imprisonment (A.D. 66-67), he was in a cold cell (2 Timothy 4:13), in chains (2 Timothy 2:9), and with no hope of deliverance (2 Timothy 4:6). Knowing that his life would soon end with his execution, Paul wrote to Timothy urging him to come quickly to Rome for one last visit. It is not known whether Timothy made it to Rome before Paul's execution. Tradition has it that this second imprisonment led to his martyrdom.

**Overview of the Text:** Paul's second letter to Timothy calls for him to be strong (2 Timothy 2:11) and continue to preach the word of God (2 Timothy 4:2). Through this letter Paul alludes to several important doctrines including salvation by God's sovereign grace (2 Timothy 1:9-10; 2:10), the person of Christ (2 Timothy 2:8; 4:1; 4:8), and perseverance (2 Timothy 2:11-13).

## **SCRIPTURE VERSES AND SCRIPTURE TEXT FROM THE NEW KING JAMES VERSION BIBLE IN BOLD**

### **2 Timothy Chapter 1**

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

**Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.**

2 Timothy 1:1-2 Paul addresses Timothy by identifying himself as an apostle of Jesus Christ, who is the source of eternal life. “Paul reminded Timothy that, despite their intimate spiritual relationship, the apostle wrote to him with spiritual authority given him by God. This established the necessity that not only Timothy, but also all others comply with the inspired mandates of the epistle.”

- 3. I thank God, whom I serve with a pure conscience, as my forefathers did, as without ceasing I remember you in my prayers night and day,**
- 4. greatly desiring to see you, being mindful of your tears, that I may be filled with joy,**

2 Timothy 1:3-4 Paul greatly desired to see Timothy, not only because of his affection for him, but because of his imminent execution. Paul served God from a pure conscience which means from a spirit of love. Paul’s prayer for Timothy was for him to serve God the same way, as evidenced through his instruction in the epistle he wrote.

- 5. when I call to remembrance the genuine faith that is in you, which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am persuaded is in you also.**
- 6. Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands.**
- 7. For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.**

2 Timothy 1:5-7 Paul reminds Timothy of his spiritual upbringing which he received from his mother Eunice and his grandmother Lois. Paul encourages Timothy to stir up the gift which is in him, because of the opposition inside the church (assaults of false teachers) and outside the church (Roman persecution which escalated under Nero). Timothy was apparently fearful, but Paul reminded him that God does not give us a spirit of fear, but of love and a sound mind. A sound mind “refers to a disciplined, self-controlled, and properly prioritized mind. This is the opposite of fear and cowardice that causes disorder and confusion.” “Focusing on the sovereign nature and perfect purposes of our eternal God allows believers to control their lives with godly wisdom and confidence in every situation.”

- 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,**

- 9. who 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 given to us in Christ Jesus before time began,**
- 10. but has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel,**
- 11. to which I was appointed a preacher, an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.**

2 Timothy 1:8-11 Paul goes on to emphasize what a spirit of fear can produce; that of being ashamed of the gospel message and those who proclaim it. It is possible that believers could even be ashamed of the apostle Paul himself. Paul instructs Timothy to remember that he was saved to eternal life with a holy calling to not only receive God's grace but to manifest God's grace to others. This effectual call was given to all believers before time began. This effectual call was revealed by the appearing of Jesus Christ, who came that we might live through Him. This is the purpose of Paul's preaching, teaching, and apostleship.

- 12. For this reason I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day.**

2 Timothy 1:12 Paul's commitment to the ministry is the cause of his suffering, but he is not ashamed because he knows that the Lord is faithful. Paul had given his life and time to the Lord and he knew that his true life (eternal life with all its eternal rewards) was hidden with Christ, and would be revealed when all believers stand before the judgment seat of Christ (Day of Christ).

- 13. Hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.**
- 14. That good thing which was committed to you, keep by the Holy Spirit who dwells in us.**

2 Timothy 1:13-14 Paul commands Timothy to hold fast the teaching that he received from him. Paul knew Timothy could do this because he knew the Holy Spirit dwelt in him.

- 15. This you know, that all those in Asia have turned away from me, among whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes.**
- 16. The Lord grant mercy to the household of Onesiphorus, for he often refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain;**
- 17. but when he arrived in Rome, he sought me out very zealously and found me.**
- 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.**

2 Timothy 1:15-18 Paul uses Onesiphorus as an illustration. This man provided for Paul in his real need during his second Roman imprisonment, and demonstrated that he was not governed by a spirit of fear, but of power, of love, and of a sound mind. Onesiphorus showed that he believed and lived out scriptural teaching.

## 2 Timothy Chapter 2

- 1. You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.**
- 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.**
- 3. You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.**

2 Timothy 2:1-3 All of us including Timothy are naturally weak, but the grace of God through the word of God makes us strong. Paul is admonishing Timothy to be strong in the word of God, which means to spend time in scripture study. This promotes not only receiving God's grace, but living a life that manifests God's grace. Timothy and every other person who desires to live a life of godliness need to be built up in Christ so as to endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. Timothy, himself, was well taught and Paul instructed him to teach the divine revelation to other faithful men.

- 4. No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier.**
- 5. And also if anyone competes in athletics, he is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules.**
- 6. The hardworking farmer must be first to partake of the crops.**
- 7. Consider what I say, and may the Lord give you understanding in all things.**

2 Timothy 1:4-7 Paul continues to instruct Timothy that he is engaged in spiritual warfare. Just as a soldier in the midst of battle must give his absolute attention to his mission, so also must Timothy give his absolute attention to the ministry. Other illustrations include the focus of an athlete running a race according to the rules, and the hardworking farmer whose single focus is the harvest.

- 8. Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to my gospel,**
- 9. for which I suffer trouble as an evildoer, even to the point of chains; but the word of God is not chained.**
- 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 2:8-10 Paul reminds Timothy of the central truth of the Christian gospel, that Jesus Christ was raised from the dead. Paul suffered for this central gospel truth even to the point of being thrown in prison, which Paul willingly endured so that the saving power of the gospel may reach the elect (those having been chosen for salvation from before the world began). The gospel teaches that salvation is in Jesus Christ alone.

- 11. This is a faithful saying:  
For if we died with Him,  
We shall also live with Him.**
- 12. If we endure,  
We shall also reign with Him.**

**If we deny Him,  
He also will deny us.**  
**13. if we are faithless,  
He remains faithful;  
He cannot deny Himself.**

2 Timothy 2:11-13 Those who believe in Jesus Christ alone for salvation, have spiritually died to sin with Christ. Such people will endure tribulation in this world. Dying to sin and living a life by faith results in eternal life and reigning with Christ in glory. Denying Christ and living a life of sin will result in Him denying those who deny him. Also, if anyone has a lack of saving faith, He remains faithful and will judge unbelievers as surely as He will reward believers.

**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.**  
**15. Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.**  
**16. But shun profane and idle babblings, for they will increase to more ungodliness.**

2 Timothy 2:14-16 The main objective of a pastor is to rightly divide the word of truth. This means to cut it straight. This is a reference to the exactness demanded by such trades as carpentry, masonry, leather working, and tent making. "Precision and accuracy are required in biblical interpretation beyond all other enterprises because the interpreter is handling God's Word." Disputes, arguments, and idle talk must be avoided.

**17. And their message will spread like cancer. Hymenaeus and Philetus are of this sort,  
18. who have strayed concerning the truth, saying that the resurrection is already past; and they overthrow the faith of some.**

2 Timothy 2:17-18 An illustration of profane and idle talk was that of Hymenaeus and Philetus. They denied the reality of the believer's bodily resurrection. "They probably taught that the believer's spiritual identification with Christ's death and resurrection was the only resurrection they would experience and that had already happened."

**19. Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: "The Lord knows those who are His," and, "Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity."**

2 Timothy 2:19 In spite of the claims of the false teachers like Hymenaeus and Philetus, the gospel, which includes bodily resurrection, stands, having its foundation set by God. God knows who are His since He chose them before time began.

**20. But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay, some for honor and some for dishonor.**  
**21. Therefore if anyone cleanses himself from the latter, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work.**

**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 2:20-22 Our objective as believers is to be a vessel of honor to the Lord. God can make use of anyone, no matter how dishonorable, but our goal as believers is to be the most useful possible, therefore, we pursue what is honorable. This is done by fleeing youthful lusts, and pursuing righteousness, faith, love, and peace in order to serve God with a pure heart.

**23. But avoid foolish and ignorant disputes knowing that they generate strife.**

**24. And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient,**

**25. in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth,**

**26. and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will.**

2 Timothy 2:23-26 An effective servant of the Lord must:

1. Not quarrel
2. Be gentle to all
3. Be able to teach
4. Be patient
5. Correct those who are in opposition in humility

Through effective witness and teaching, God works through honorable vessels (mature believers) to bring people to repentance so that they may know the truth (salvation). This provides for escape from Satan's deception. Satan is a habitual, scheming, clever, and subtle purveyor of lies.

## **2 Timothy Chapter 3**

**1. But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come:**

2 Timothy 3:1 The last days refers to the time period between the first and second coming of the Lord Jesus. During these days there will be dangerous eras or epochs.

**2. For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,**

**3. unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good,**

**4. traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God,**

**5. having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!**

2 Timothy 3:2-5 The dangerous eras will be characterized by dangerous men. These men are unloving, brutal, without self-control, and haughty. These negative attributes are hidden by an external or outward piety, but it is not their true character. They deny the power of God and do not conduct themselves in a truly godly manner.

**6. For of this sort are those who creep into households and make captives of gullible women loaded down with sins, led away by various lusts,**

2 Timothy 3:6 One of the characteristics of ungodly men, who parade themselves as being religious is taking advantage of weak willed women. These women are controlled by their feelings, emotions, and passions. They are loaded down with sins because they are led astray by their lusts.

**7. always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.**

2 Timothy 3:7 The weak willed women go from one false teacher to another (men who are ungodly but parade an external religious appearance) without ever coming to an understanding of God's saving truth in Jesus Christ.

**8. Now Jannes and Jambres resisted Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, disapproved concerning the faith;**

**9. but they will progress no further, for their folly will be manifest to all, as theirs also was.**

2 Timothy 3:8-9 Paul uses Jannes and Jambres as examples of ungodly men who parade an external religious appearance and lead people astray when they get a following. Although they are not mentioned in the Old Testament, these men were Egyptian magicians who opposed Moses. Jewish tradition further states that they pretended to become Jewish proselytes, and instigated the worship of the golden calf. Men such as these reject the faith.

**10. But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance,**

**11. persecutions, afflictions, which happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra – what persecutions I endured. And out of them all the Lord delivered me.**

**12. Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.**

2 Timothy 3:10-12 Paul's manner of life demonstrated that he was in the faith. Through his faith, longsuffering, and love, Paul endured afflictions and persecutions. Like Paul, all true believers will suffer persecution.

**13. But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.**

**14. But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them,**

**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.**

2 Timothy 3:13-15 As the unbelieving world strays further from the truth through the deception of false teaching, Paul instructs Timothy to study the Scriptures and become more grounded in the truth. Paul reminds Timothy of this heritage that he received from his mother and grandmother.

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

2 Timothy 3:16-17 Paul instructs Timothy on the benefits of studying Scripture. Paul identifies who the ultimate author of Scripture is, and some of the spiritual benefits that result from Scriptural study, as follows:

1. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God – This means that all Scripture is God-breathed. God either told the scripture writers exactly what to say, or He used their minds and understanding to produce His own perfect, infallible, inerrant Word.
2. Scripture is profitable for:
  - a. Doctrine – Scripture provides the comprehensive and complete body of divine truth necessary for life and godliness.
  - b. Reproof – Scripture exposes sin so that it can be dealt with through confession and repentance.
  - c. Correction – Scripture points the way back to godly living.
  - d. Instruction in righteousness – Scripture teaches right behavior.
  - e. Complete – Scripture alone provides the enablement for godly living.
  - f. Thoroughly equipped – Instruction in every good work comes through Scripture.

#### **2 Timothy Chapter 4**

- 1. I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom:**
- 2. Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.**
- 3. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers;**
- 4. and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.**
- 5. But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.**

2 Timothy 4:1-5 After instructing Timothy to study scripture because it is God's revelation, Paul instructs Timothy to teach scripture to others. Teaching the word of God (Scripture) is to be done when it is popular or unpopular. Scripture is to be taught expositively so that it convinces, rebukes, and exhorts. Paul also instructs Timothy that as time goes by the world in general will get progressively worse. The people of this world love their sin and have no interest in God's revelation; instead, they want whatever is entertaining to them. Paul instructs Timothy to be watchful, endure affliction, preach the gospel, and keep the gospel ministry as his primary purpose and focus.

**6 For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand.**

2 Timothy 4:6 In the Old Testament sacrificial system, the drink offering was the final offering that followed the burnt and grain offerings. Paul's life had been characterized by many sacrifices, and Paul states that his coming execution symbolized his life being poured out like a drink offering.

**7. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.**

**8. 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 4:7-8 Paul had accomplished through the Lord's power all that God commanded him to do. Paul looked forward to entering eternal life, when he would receive Christ's righteousness perfected in Him (glorification). While believers receive Christ's imputed righteousness at salvation, believers do not live out the Christian life perfectly due to indwelling sin. At death, sin is condemned in the flesh, and the believer experiences the fullness of salvation.

**9. Be diligent to come to me quickly;**

**10. for Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world, and has departed for Thessalonica – Crescens for Galatia, Titus for Dalmatia.**

2 Timothy 4:9-10 Paul calls for Timothy to come quickly, since no one else is with him. Paul sent Crescens and Titus to Galatia and Illyricum (Dalmatia), respectively. Demas abandoned Paul and sought sanctuary in Thessalonica. Paul's statement that he loved this present world indicates that he not only fled physically for fear of his life, but he also left spiritually. (1 John 2:15-17, James 4:4)

**11. Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for ministry.**

**12. And Tychicus I have sent to Ephesus.**

**13. Bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas when you come – and the books, especially the parchments.**

1 Timothy 3:11-13 Luke is the author of the Gospel of Luke and the book of Acts. He is Paul's devoted friend and personal physician, who could not carry the burden of ministry in Rome by himself. Luke wrote both the Gospel of Luke and the book of Acts from Rome while Paul was imprisoned there. The cloak that Paul asked for is a large heavy wool garment that doubled as a coat and blanket in cold weather, which Paul would soon face. "Books" refers to papyrus scrolls, possibly Old Testament books. 'Parchments were vellum sheets made of treated animal hides, thus they were extremely expensive. They may have been copies of letters he had written of blank sheets for writing other letters. That Paul did not have these already in his possession leads to the possible conclusion that he was arrested in Troas and had no opportunity to retrieve them."

**14. Alexander the coppersmith did me much harm. May the Lord repay him according to his works.**

**15. You also must beware of him, for he has greatly resisted our words.**

2 Timothy 4:14-15 Alexander the coppersmith may have been an idol maker, and Paul's teaching was a threat to his business. This could have motivated him to be instrumental in Paul's arrest.

**16. At my first defense no one stood with me, but all forsook me. May it not be charged against them.**

2 Timothy 4:16 Paul's statement that no one stood with him in his first defense is a reference to the Roman legal system. In this system the accused person received two hearings, the prima actio and secunda actio. The first defense (prima actio) was much like a contemporary arraignment where the charge was established and the need for the trial assessed. The trial itself (secunda actio) established the accused's guilt or innocence.

**17. But the Lord stood with me and strengthened me, so that the message might be preached fully through me, and that all the Gentiles might hear. Also I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.**

2 Timothy 4:17 Paul experienced the Lord's presence at his arraignment (first defense), and he proclaimed the gospel to the Roman court. In doing this, the Lord delivered Paul from all mortal danger (the mouth of the lion) at his arraignment. By proclaiming the gospel to this pagan audience, a representative sample of the population from the Roman Empire which at the time dominated the world, Paul could say that he had reached all Gentiles with the gospel.

**18. And the Lord will deliver me from every evil work and preserve me for His heavenly kingdom. To Him be glory forever and ever. Amen!**

2 Timothy 4:18 Paul knew that the Lord would deliver him from every future threat of mortal danger, and preserve him for the heavenly kingdom. The Lord would be his deliverance in his upcoming trial, his incarceration, his execution, and physical death.

**19. Greet Prisca and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus.**

2 Timothy 4:19 Paul extends greetings to Prisca and Aquila through Timothy. Paul first met Prisca and Aquila in Corinth. This couple also ministered in Ephesus, in Rome, and again in Ephesus.

**20. Erastus stayed in Corinth, but Trophimus I have left in Miletus sick.**

2 Timothy 4:20 Erastus was probably the city treasurer of Corinth, who sent greetings to the church at Rome through Paul's epistle to the Romans (Romans 16:23). Trophimus, an Ephesian, accompanied Paul from Greece to Troas.

**21. Do your utmost to come before winter. Eubulus greets you, as well as Pudens, Linus, Claudia, and all the brethren.**

2 Timothy 4:21 Paul extends greetings to Timothy through those whom he has had contact. Eubulus, Pudens, and Linus are Latin names indicating that they were probably from the church in Rome. Paul was, therefore, in a position to have contact with them, since he was imprisoned in Rome.

**22. The Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Grace be with you. Amen.**

2 Timothy 4:22 Paul expresses his closing benediction. The pronoun “your” is plural, which means that this epistle was intended to be read to the church at Ephesus.