

~2 Timothy~

Lesson 1 – Introduction

Today we begin a new book of the Bible- The Epistle of 2nd Timothy

- I want to take this lesson to get introduced to our brother Timothy.
 - I am going to take you through Timothy’s life, bringing you up to the challenges he was facing and ultimately showing you why Paul wrote this encouraging letter to his faithful son in Christ

Let’s read the first two verses of 2 Timothy to get introduced to this letter

2 Timothy 1:1-2

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.

This letter was written around 65AD from a prison of Rome by Paul to his son in the faith who we know as Timothy

- This letter is so relevant to what we are facing in America today as Christians
 - It is a letter of encouragement, hope, and exhortation to persevere and endure to proclaim the Truth of Jesus Christ.
 - I believe this is why the Holy Spirit chose this book to be our next study
 - This book is filled with the hope of our salvation which gives us the strength and courage to persevere and preach the Word!
- This was Paul’s final letter before he was beheaded in 66AD by Nero
 - When Paul was writing this letter from prison, tradition tells us it is the Mamertine prison, he knew he was going to die very soon and he knew this would be the last letter he wrote.
 - Out of all the hundreds of people Paul had met through his life and of all the churches he planted, he chose to write to and exhort his son Timothy in the faith.
 - Timothy had spent 15 years with Paul in his travels and work for the gospel.
 - Paul had developed many relationships in his life in establishing a network of the gospel, but only two men were faithfully by his side the majority of his ministry
 - Timothy and Luke
 - In this last letter, Paul desires to have three men with him, Luke, Timothy, and Mark, 2 Tim 4:9, 11- ⁹ *Be diligent to come to me quickly;* ¹¹ *Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for ministry.*
 - If you remember Mark, there is a wonderful story of reconciliation there, but we will get to that in a couple of months...
 - I believe Paul was raising up Timothy as his successor. He was passing the baton or bestowing his “mantle” (so to speak) to Timothy to continue the work of the gospel.
 - The words we see Paul speak to Timothy are full of compassion and encouragement to stay strong in the faith

Just as in every book of the Bible, it is so important that we know the historical context and the events leading up to this letter.

- This gives us a much better grasp of the meaning and intent of the letter so we can then know how to apply it to our lives.

As an introduction to Timothy, we are going to go on a quick journey through the Bible tracking the life of Timothy

- This, I believe, is a necessary understanding we must have to truly know why Paul is writing the things he does to Timothy in his final days

- Timothy was born in Lystra probably around 20AD and raised in the faith by his grandmother Lois, and his mother Eunice, 2 Tim 1:5
- Paul first came to Iconium and Lystra in 45AD on his first missionary journey with Barnabas, Acts 14
 - It was in Iconium that they stayed “a long time”, Acts 14:3, and met Lois, Eunice, and Timothy. (although Timothy isn’t named until Acts 16:1)
 - It was on this visit that Timothy became a Christian through Paul’s witness, 1 Tim 1:2.
 - Acts 16:1 refers to Timothy as already being a disciple, so it is presumed that Timothy was born again on Paul’s first visit in 45AD
 - Timothy would have been about 25 years old
 - However, this was not the first time he heard the Scriptures. Timothy had been raised in the Holy Scriptures since childhood through his mother and grandmother, 2 Tim 3:14-15. Therefore, he was prepared for the message of Christianity.
 - In this second letter to Timothy, Paul mentions the persecutions at Antioch (Pisidia), Iconium and Lystra because it was on the first journey to Lystra, Timothy’s home town, that Paul was stoned to death and Timothy was brought to the faith, Acts 14:19-20; 2 Tim 3:11
 - I am sure Timothy remembers this event
- 6 years later, 51AD, on his second missionary journey, Paul returns to (1) Lystra and Derbe with Silas and calls Timothy to come with him, Acts 16:1-5
 - It is here that Paul lays hands on him and ordains him into the ministry.
 - Paul also has Timothy circumcised so as to be accepted by the Jews they would be ministering to, Acts 16:3; (become all things to all people, 1 Cor 9:22)
- 51-52AD, Paul, Silas and Timothy travel through Galatia and Phrygia to (2) Troas on into Macedonia, Acts 16:3-40
- 52AD, Paul, Silas and Timothy are persecuted in Thessalonica and flee to (3) Berea, Acts 17:5-10; 1 Thess 2:17
 - Paul travels to Athens alone and leaves Silas and Timothy in Berea, Acts 17:14-15
 - Silas and Timothy meet Paul in (4) Athens, Acts 17:15; 1 Thess 3:1
 - Paul can no longer endure leaving the Thessalonians alone, so they send Timothy back to (5) Thessalonica, 1 Thess 3:1
 - But then Paul can’t endure having his son Timothy in Thessalonica alone, so he sends Silas back up to check on him, 1 Thess 3:5
 - Paul travels down to (6) Corinth where Silas and Timothy meet him returning from Thessalonica (Macedonia), Acts 18:5; 1 Thess 3:6.
 - Silas and Timothy also brought supplies from Macedonia to Paul in Corinth, 2 Cor 11:9
- 52AD, Paul, Silas, and Timothy write the first epistle to the Thessalonians while in Corinth, 1 Thess 1
- 52-54AD, Paul, Silas and Timothy stay in Corinth for 1-1/2 years, Acts 18:6-18
- 53AD, Paul, Silas and Timothy write the second epistle to the Thessalonians, 2 Thess 1
- 54AD, Paul, Silas, Timothy, Priscilla and Aquilla leave Corinth and travel to (7) Ephesus, Acts 18:19-21
 - Paul leaves Aquilla and Priscilla in Ephesus while Paul, Silas and Timothy return to (8) Jerusalem, Acts 18:19-22
 - Paul and Timothy return to (9) Antioch and leave Silas in Jerusalem, Acts 18:22
- 54AD, Paul and Timothy depart Antioch on the third missionary journey, Acts 18:23
 - They return to Galatia, visiting Timothy’s home town of (10) Lystra

- 55AD, Paul and Timothy arrive at (11) Ephesus, Acts 19:1
 - Paul writes the epistle to the Galatians. Timothy is with him, but is not mentioned in the letter to the Galatians
 - Paul writes a “previous letter” to the Corinthians, 1 Cor 5:9, in which Timothy and Erastus deliver to (12) Corinth, 1 Cor 4:17
 - From Corinth, Timothy and Erastus go to (13) Macedonia, Acts 19:22
- 55-57AD, Timothy stays in Macedonia for two years until Paul, coming up from Ephesus after spending three years with the Ephesians, meets Timothy in Macedonia, Acts 20:1-4
- 57AD, Paul, Timothy and company travel to (14) Greece and stay there for 3 months, Acts 20:3
- 58AD, Paul and Timothy write the second epistle to the Corinthians while in Greece, 2 Cor 1:1
 - Paul writes the epistle to the Romans while in Greece as well, but Timothy is not named as a writer with Paul, only in the final greetings, Rom 16:21
 - Paul and Timothy and company travel back through (15) Macedonia, Acts 20:3-4
 - Timothy and company sail on ahead to (16) Troas while Paul picks up Luke in Philippi and collects the contribution for the Jerusalem church, Acts 20:5; Rom 15:25-26; 1Cor 16:1-4
 - Paul and Luke meet Timothy and company at Troas and stay there for seven days, Acts 20:6
 - Paul, Luke, Timothy and company all travel back to (17) Jerusalem stopping at several places along the way, Acts 20:7- 21:17
 - Persecution is prophesied, Acts 21:1-14
- 58AD, Paul and Timothy and company arrive at Jerusalem and Paul is arrested and put in prison in Caesarea for two years
- 58-60AD, for two years we don’t see Timothy mentioned
 - Possibly because Timothy might have been in prison as well, Heb 13:23
- 60AD, Paul is transported to Rome and placed under house arrest, Acts 28:30-31, (Timothy is still in prison)
 - Paul writes the epistle to the Hebrews as his first prison epistle
 - Paul requests that Timothy be sent to him in Rome because Paul learns of Timothy’s release from prison, Heb 13:23
- 61-62AD, Timothy arrives in (18) Rome and helps Paul write the last three prison epistles, Colossians, Philemon, Philippians, Col 1:1; Philem 1; Phil 1:1
 - It is possible that Timothy personally delivers the letter to the Philippians, and then comes back to Paul in Rome, Phil 2:19-24
 - Paul names Timothy in six of his letters in his salutations

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 1 Thessalonians ○ 2 Thessalonians ○ 2 Corinthians 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Colossians ○ Philemon ○ Philippians
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- 63AD, Paul is released from prison and Paul, Timothy, and Titus pass thru (19) Crete, Tit 1:5
 - Titus stays in Crete while Paul and Timothy travel to (20) Colosse, Philemon 1:22, Col 4:17, Philemon 1:9-19, Col 4:9
- 63AD, Paul and Timothy travel to (21) Ephesus, 1 Tim 1:3
 - Timothy remains in Ephesus as Paul travels to Miletus, Troas, Macedonia, and Nicopolis, 2 Tim 4:13, 20; Titus 3:12 and possibly Spain (Christian tradition)
- 63AD, From Macedonia, Paul writes his first epistle to Timothy in Ephesus, 1 Tim 1:3

- This letter instructs Timothy in governing the church at Ephesus, 1 Tim 3:15
- 64AD, Persecution is elevated. Nero burns down Rome and blames it on the Christians
 - Mass persecution arises against the Christians
- 65AD, Paul is arrested as the leader of the Christians and brought to Rome
 - Timothy is still in Ephesus, 2 Tim 4:19. Paul writes his final letter, the epistle of second Timothy, to his son, encouraging him in the faith, and requests that he come see him before he departs this life, 2 Tim 4:6-9
- 66AD, Paul is martyred by beheading at the hand of Nero.
- 63-97AD, Timothy is the Bishop of Ephesus for the remainder of his life
 - Chrysostom, a 4th century church father, records that Paul committed the whole of Asia to Timothy and is called the Apostle to the Asians
 - An interesting note is that between 66-68AD, the Apostle John fled Jerusalem and came to Ephesus as well, until Domitian had him exiled to the isle of Patmos from 81-96AD
 - This means Timothy and the Apostle John were in Ephesus at the same time as elders and pillars in Asia
 - Church tradition tells us that Timothy was martyred in 97AD in Ephesus being clubbed to death after he rebuked some pagans for their excessive idolatry at one of their feasts.

As you can see from the timeline, Timothy was a faithful companion to Paul for 15 years.

- Paul loved Timothy as a dear son in Christ. Below are some examples of how Paul spoke concerning Timothy which gives us an amazing insight to Timothy's character and walk with God

1 Corinthians 4:17- *For this reason I have sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful son in the Lord...*

1 Corinthians 16:10- *...he does the work of the Lord, as I also do.*

Philippians 2:20, 22-²⁰ *For I have no one like-minded, who will sincerely care for your state.*
²² *But you know his proven character, dokime, δοκιμή, that as a son with his father he served with me in the gospel.*

1 Timothy 1:2- *To Timothy, a true son in the faith:*

2 Timothy 1:2- *To Timothy, a beloved son:*

2 Timothy 3:10- *But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance,*

As Paul and Timothy traveled together for 15 years, there was immense pressure and persecution in proclaiming the gospel and planting churches

- The list of hardships in 2 Cor 11 that Paul endured tell us what these men went through to launch Christianity to the world,
 - Whipped, in prisons, beaten with rods, stoned, shipwrecked, perils of robbers, and the sea and the wilderness, and false brethren, in weariness and toil, sleeplessness, and hunger and thirst, and cold and nakedness, and besides everything else, my deep concern for all the churches, 2 Cor 11:23-28
 - We know Timothy was in prison during Paul's first imprisonment, Heb 13:23
 - It is not unreasonable to think that Timothy experienced some of these same persecutions
 - And then, starting in 64AD, demonic pressure increased on the Christians and Nero blamed them for

the burning of Rome. This started an incessant persecution against Christianity.

- Nero was lighting the streets with bodies of Christians being burned alive like torches
- He opened the arena and entertained the pagan spectators in his circus where Christians were eaten alive by lions and other wild animals
- And if not this, then Christians were tortured and thrown into prisons and made to work the mines, starving to death while nursing their broken bodies.

This is an account from the Foxes Book of Martyrs of Nero's persecution toward the Christians

The first of these persecutions was stirred up by Nero. The tyrannous rage of which this Emperor was so fierce against the Christians that a man might see cities lie full of men's bodies.

It is said that Nero was the first which Rome did raise up persecution against the Christians, and not only in Rome, but also throughout all the providences thereof; thinking to abolish and destroy the whole name of Christians in all places.

That is, some slain with the sword, some burnt with fire, some with whips scourged, some stabbed in with forks of iron, some fastened to the cross or gibbet, some drowned in the sea, some their skins plucked off, some their tongues cut off, some stoned to death, some killed with cold, some starved with hunger, some their hands cut off or otherwise dismembered having been left naked to the open shame of the world.

- This is the world in which Timothy was now facing. Rome is killing Christians, the Jews are still hostile to them, and the Gnostics are on the rise to deceive as many as they can in the church, 2 Tim 1:15; 2:16-18, 23-26; 1 Tim 6:20-21
 - Timothy is scared. He is the shepherd of Ephesus with compassion on his flock. He doesn't know how to protect them and finds himself wavering in his strength to battle this evil.
 - Paul hears of this and writes his letter of encouragement and exhortation to stay strong, focus on the Word of God, and endure.
 - We Christians are starting to see this persecution arise in America. I think we all see the signs.
 - You don't have to look too far to see the comparisons between what is happening in our government and what Nero did with Rome.
 - In the 1st century, the enemy, working through Nero, set out to destroy Christians through his political agendas
 - Nero burned down Rome because he had a political agenda to rebuild it the way he wanted, and the Christians were an easy scapegoat to blame everything on
 - This was the plan of the enemy. The world hates us for shining the Truth on their dark deeds, so the world easily went along with Nero's schemes.
 - We see the same thing shaping up in America today. They are setting the stage to make us the bad guys, the extremists, the radicals, and they are trying to expel us from the nation. (New York Times article)
 - So how do we respond to this?
 - That is why I love this epistle. If we can grasp what Paul is telling Timothy, we can use this right now in our lives preparing for what is to come.
 - Listen to what Paul says to Timothy:

2 Timothy 1:4–5-⁴ *greatly desiring to see you, being mindful of your tears, that I may be filled with joy, ⁵ when I call to remembrance the genuine faith that is in you...*

2 Timothy 1:6- *Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you...*

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

2 Timothy 1:8- *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 2:1- *You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.*

2 Timothy 2:3–4-³ *You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. 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.*

2 Timothy 2:12- *If we endure, We shall also reign with Him. ...*

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 2:22- *Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace...*

2 Timothy 3:12–14-¹² *Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus 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,*

2 Timothy 4:1–2-¹ *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.*

2 Timothy 4:5- *But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.*

Among these unthinkable persecutions and haters of God and apostates, Paul admonishes Timothy to stay focused on Jesus; know the Word and preach the Truth.

-This is how we respond-

Not with war against flesh and blood, but we respond by proclaiming Truth

John 18:36- Jesus answered, “My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, ...”

Our Kingdom is a future, eternal Kingdom not of this world. That is what we are looking toward and we are ambassadors of the Kingdom called to proclaim the Truth

I believe this book of 2 Timothy is so relevant and it is going to equip us for what lies ahead