

July 16 2nd Timothy (80% disputed)

## Intro

2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy reads like a last will and testament of a dying father. This letter is more personal than administrative, the author clearly wants to make sure that the legacy of his life's work (the church) lives on. This is likely the last written pastoral letter.

## Chapter 1

The author opens by addressing Timothy personally, recalling their close relationship, and giving thanks for Timothy's faith, which was passed down to him from his mother and grandmother. The author urges Timothy to fully use his spiritual gifts (the gifts he received through the laying on of hands at Baptism). Through baptism, God gives us a spirit of power and love and self-discipline, everything we need for a spiritually healthy life. God's calling is not because of our works, but because of God's own grace and purpose for us. The author has no regrets about how he has lived out his calling to be a preacher, teacher, and apostle. And now urges Timothy to live in such a way that he'll have no regrets. Living boldly in the faith is dangerous, it can land you in chains or lead to death, but better to live boldly than to live the faith half-heartedly. God is the one in whom we put our trust for today and for the life to come. The "good treasure entrusted to you" is the truth of the gospel. Guard the truth by teaching with orthodoxy. The author seems to have been rejected and abandoned by some from within the church in Asia (Turkey), but Onesiphorus has remained faithful.

## Chapter 2

The author uses the image of a soldier for Christ to speak about the Christian life. Soldiers suffer and make sacrifices on behalf of a greater cause, this is what the author is urging for Timothy. Christ is the enlisting officer, and our sole aim as Christians must be to serve and please Christ. The image of soldier and athlete are images that would have been familiar from Roman life. Rome was proud of its military and athletic heritage, both are pursuits that require right practice, endurance, and goal-oriented behavior. Even though the author is chained, the word of God can never be chained (it is a living word). The word is set free through our faithful proclamation. The salvation of everyone (neighbors) is worth the chains the author endures.

Beginning in vs. 14, the author urges Timothy to warn the church not to get "caught in the weeds" arguing over small, insignificant details. The focus should always be the major themes of the gospel (Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again). Constant arguing over petty issues damages people's faith. The author urges Timothy to avoid profane chatter, lest it "spread like gangrene" through the church. Hymenaeus and Philetus are two who have not held to the truth, claiming that Jesus has already returned and damaging the faith of some. Timothy (and everyone else who wants to be

a special utensil) must pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, correcting opponents with kindness and gentleness in hopes that they will repent. The author urges Christian leaders to steer clear of toxic people and petty controversies. Utensils are judged not by their material, but by their cleanliness which makes them useful to the owner.

### Chapter 3

The author lists the vices that will be present among false teachers in the last days. “Silly Women” refers to those who are susceptible to false teachings because of their passions. Obviously both genders can be susceptible to false teachers. Jannes and Jambres were Pharaoh’s magicians who opposed Moses. Integrity as a leader of the church is one way to oppose false teachers, but also will lead to persecutions. False teachers are not persecuted because they tell people what they want to hear. The foundation of scripture is what helps keep us grounded in the true faith and what helps us oppose false teaching, because we measure it by the yardstick of scripture. Teachings not rooted in scripture are not to be believed. Bible study equips us for every good work, and for teaching and reproving false teachings. Of course at the time of this writing the new testament canon had not yet been developed, so the author is speaking of Israel’s sacred scriptures.

### Chapter 4

The author urges Timothy to be a man of integrity with regards to his teaching of the truth. Timothy is forewarned that people will turn away from the truth and seek out teachers who will tell them what they want to hear, he is urged to endure. The author seems to believe that he has reached the end of his life (he has finished the race, he has kept the faith). The crown of righteousness is an allusion to the laurel crown that winners of athletic tournaments would receive in ancient Rome. The author is basically saying that in spite of the persecutions he has endured, God has seen his faithfulness and awarded him the gold medal of righteousness. God will lay that gold medal around the author’s shoulders when he dies in the faith, along with all who have longed for Christ to come again.

The warmth and intimacy with which the author addresses the real people who share in ministry with him in chapter 4 lead some to believe that this letter is authentically written by Paul (though 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy isn’t). Paul makes personal notes such as “don’t forget to bring me the coat I lent to Carpus” and “bring me my books, especially my books!” and “beware of that crook Alexander the coppersmith.” There are some of Paul’s best known associates named in the closing of this letter (Titus, Mark, Luke, Tychicus, Prisca -Priscilla- and Aquila.)