

2 Timothy

Original Historical Setting

Author: Paul

Written: ~66-67 A.D.

Audience: Timothy, who was in Ephesus

Occasion: Ever since Rome had burned in July of A.D. 64 and Nero had blamed the Christians, it had become dangerous to be a Christian. It was also dangerous to have contact with leaders of the church such as Paul. Consequently many believers, including some of Paul's coworkers, had chosen to seek a much lower profile and become less aggressive in their ministries. Timothy faced temptation to do the same. Paul wrote this epistle to urge him to remain faithful to his calling.

Timeline:

~35 AD – Paul's conversion

~50-53 AD – Paul second missionary journey

~60-62 AD – Paul imprisoned in Rome

~62-66 AD – Paul released and writes 1 Timothy

~67-68 AD – Paul arrested/writes 2 Timothy prior to death

World Events that occur simultaneously

~50 AD – China and Rome conduct trade via 4,000-mile-long Silk Road

~54 AD – Claudius poisoned and is succeeded by Nero

~64 AD – Rome burns; Nero blames Christians

~68 AD – Nero commits suicide

Key text(s)

2:15 – Rightly divide the Word of God

3:16-17 – All Scripture is inspired by God

4:6 – I am already being poured out as a drink offering

4:7 – I have fought the good fight

Memory Verse: 2 Timothy 4:7-8

Genre/Literary style

An epistle (letter) written in (Koine) Greek

Features and Structure:

The first half of the book (**1-2**) deals with a pastor's reaction to present testings. The second half (**3-4**) deals with a pastor's response to the coming last days.

- I. – Thanksgiving for faithful fellow workers (**1**)
- II. – Exhortations to persevere (**2**)
- III. – Directions concerning the last days (**3-4**)

What to look for

- Notice the intimate tone of the letter. Even though Paul no doubt intends the church at Ephesus (and others) to hear these words, the letter is quite personal at times.
- This letter may well be the last surviving words of Paul before his is killed. Read it with this in mind.
- Notice how Paul does not mince words regarding the persecution that Timothy (and other believers) would most definitely be facing. But also notice the comforting telling him that Christ will provide the strength (**2:1**) and that their goal should be to be approved by God (**2:15**).

Interesting facts

- One of the oldest structures in Rome is Mamertine Prison, a dungeon carved out of solid rock 600 years before Christ. Early Christians say Paul was kept there before his execution.
- The books of Acts and 2 Timothy (along with the statements of church history) imply that Paul was released from prison, preached in Spain and the Aegean Sea area, wrote 1 Timothy and Titus, was rearrested and wrote 2 Timothy, and was finally martyred by Nero.
- Egyptian magicians withstood Moses (Exodus 7:11 - 9:11). Their names are never mentioned in the book of Exodus. Nor are their names mentioned anywhere in the entire Old Testament books. Their names are revealed in 2 Timothy 3:8 as Jannes and Jambres.

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