

2 Timothy Inductive Study

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Introductory Articles

Author, Date and Setting

After Paul's release from prison in Rome in A.D. 62/63 (Ac 28) and after his fourth missionary journey, during which he wrote 1 Timothy and Titus, Paul was again imprisoned under Emperor Nero c. 66-67. It was during this time that he wrote 2 Timothy. In contrast to his first imprisonment, when he lived in a rented house (Ac 28:30), he now languished in a cold dungeon (4:13), chained like a common criminal (1:16; 2:9). His friends even had a hard time finding out where he was being kept (1:17). Paul knew that his work was done and his life was nearly at an end (4:6-8).

Reasons for Writing

Paul had three reasons for writing to Timothy at this time:

1. He was lonely. Phygelus and Hermogenes, "everyone in the province of Asia" (1:15), and Demas (4:10) had deserted him. Crescens, Titus and Tychicus were away (4:10-12), and only Luke was with him (4:11). Paul wanted very much for Timothy to join him also. Timothy was his "fellow worker" (Ro 16:21), who "as a son with his father" had served closely with Paul (Php 2:22; see 1Co 4:17). Of him Paul could say, "I have no one else like him" (Php 2:20). Paul longed for Timothy (1:4) and twice asked him to come soon (4:9, 21). For more information on Timothy see Introduction to 1 Timothy: Recipient.

2. Paul was concerned about the welfare of the churches during this time of persecution under Nero, and he admonishes Timothy to guard the gospel (1:14), to persevere in it (3:14), to keep on preaching it (4:2) and, if necessary, to suffer for it (1:8; 2:3).

3. He wanted to write to the Ephesian church through Timothy (see note on 4:22).

Outline

- I. Introduction (1:1-4)
- II. Paul's Concern for Timothy (1:5-14)
- III. Paul's Situation (1:15-18)
- IV. Special Instructions to Timothy (ch. 2)
 - A. Call for Endurance (2:1-13)
 - B. Warning about Foolish Controversies (2:14-26)
- V. Warning about the Last Days (ch. 3)
 - A. Terrible Times (3:1-9)
 - B. Means of Combating Them (3:10-17)
- VI. Paul's Departing Remarks (4:1-8)
 - A. Charge to Preach the Word (4:1-5)
 - B. Paul's Victorious Prospect (4:6-8)
- VII. Final Requests and Greetings (4:9-22)

Taken from NIV Study Bible Notes

PLACE OF WRITING.—Paul, in the interval between his first and second imprisonment, after having written First Timothy from Macedonia or Corinth [BIRKS] (if we are to adopt the opinion that First Timothy was written after his first imprisonment), returned to Ephesus, as he intended, by way of *Troas*, where he left the books, &c. (mentioned in 2Ti 4:13), with Carpus. From Ephesus he went to Crete for a short visit and returned, and then wrote to Titus. Next he went by Miletus to Corinth (2Ti 4:20), and thence to Nicopolis (Tit 3:12), whence he proceeded to Rome. From his prison there he wrote the Second Epistle to Timothy, shortly before his martyrdom. It is not certain where Timothy was at this time. Some of the internal evidences favor the view of his having been then at Ephesus; thus the salutation of Priscilla and Aquila, who generally resided there (2Ti 4:19); also that of the household of Onesiphorus, who is stated in 2Ti 1:16–18 to have ministered to Paul *at Ephesus*, a circumstance implying his residence there. Also, the Hymenaeus of 2Ti 2:17 seems to be the same as the Hymenaeus at Ephesus (1Ti 1:20); and probably “Alexander the coppersmith” (2Ti 4:14) is the same as the Alexander joined with Hymenaeus (1Ti 1:20), and possibly the same as the Alexander put forward by the Jews to clear themselves, not to befriend Paul, at the riot in *Ephesus* (Ac 19:33, 34). The difficulty is, on this supposition, how to account for 2Ti 4:12, 20 : if Timothy was at Ephesus, why did he need to be told that *Paul had sent Tychicus to Ephesus?* or that *Paul had left Trophimus, himself an Ephesian* (Ac 21:29), *sick at Miletus*, which was only thirty miles from Ephesus? However, see on 2Ti 4:12 ; 2Ti 4:20 . Troas lay on the road to Rome from either Ephesus or Pontus, so that 2Ti 4:13 will accord with the theory of either Ephesus or any other place in the northwest of Asia Minor, being Timothy’s place of sojourn at the time. Probably, he had the general superintendence of the Pauline churches in Asia Minor, in accordance with his mission combining the office of *evangelist*, or *itinerant missionary*, with that of *presiding overseer*. Ephesus was probably his headquarters.

TIME OF WRITING.—(1) Paul’s first imprisonment, described in Ac 28:17–31, was much milder than that in which he was when writing Second Timothy. In the former, he had liberty to lodge in his own hired house, and to receive all comers, guarded only by a single soldier; in the latter, he was so closely confined that Onesiphorus with difficulty found him; he was chained, his friends had forsaken him, and he had narrowly escaped sentence of execution from the Roman emperor. Medieval legends represent the Mamertine prison, or Tullianum, as the scene of his incarceration with Peter. But this is irreconcilable with the fact of Onesiphorus, Linus, Pudens, &c., having access to him. He was probably under military custody, as in his former imprisonment, though of a severer kind (2Ti 1:16–18 ; 2:9). (2) The visit to Troas (2Ti 4:13) can hardly have been that mentioned in Ac 20:5–7, the last before his first imprisonment; for, if it were, the interval between that visit and the first imprisonment would be seven or eight years, a period most unlikely for him to have allowed to pass without sending for his cloak and parchments, when they might have been of service to him in the interim. (3) Paul’s leaving Trophimus sick at Miletus (2Ti 4:20), could not have been on the occasion mentioned in Ac 20:15 ; for, subsequent to that, Trophimus was with Paul in Jerusalem (Ac 21:29). (4) The words (2Ti 4:20), “Erastus abode at Corinth,” imply that Paul had shortly before been at Corinth, where he left Erastus. But before his first imprisonment, Paul had not been at Corinth for several years; and in the interval Timothy had been with him, so that Timothy did not need at a later period to be told about that visit (Ac 20:2, 4). For all these reasons the imprisonment, during which he wrote Second Timothy, is shown to be his second imprisonment. Moreover, Heb 13:23, 24, represents the writer (who was probably Paul) as *in Italy*, and *at liberty*. So CLEMENT OF ROME [*First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 1.5], the disciple of Paul, explicitly states, “In the east and west, Paul as a preacher instructed *the whole world* (that is, the Roman empire) in righteousness, and having gone to *the extremity of the west*, and having borne witness before the rulers (of Rome), he so was removed from the world.” This plainly implies that he fulfilled his design (Ro 15:24–28) of a missionary journey *into Spain*. The canon of the New Testament, compiled about A.D. 170 (called MURATORI’S *Canon*), also mentions “the journey of Paul from Rome to Spain.” See ROUTH [*Sacred Fragments*, vol. 4, p. 1–12].

His martyrdom is universally said to have occurred in Nero’s reign [EUSEBIUS, *Ecclesiastical History*, 2.22; JEROME, *On Illustrious Men*]. Five years thus seem to have elapsed between the first imprisonment, A.D. 63 (Ac 28:17–31), and his martyrdom, June A.D. 68, the last year of Nero’s reign. He was probably arrested by the magistrates in Nicopolis (Tit 3:12) in Epirus, in the winter, on a double charge, first, of being one of the Christians who had conspired, it was alleged by Nero’s partisans, to set fire to Rome, A.D. 64; secondly, of introducing a novel and unlawful religion. His friends all left him, except Luke: Demas from “love of this present world”: the others from various causes (2Ti 4:10, 11). On the first charge he

seems to have been acquitted. His liberation from his first imprisonment took place in A.D. 63, the year before the great fire at Rome, which Nero made the pretext for his persecution of the Christians. Every cruelty was heaped on them; some were crucified; some were arrayed in the skins of wild beasts and hunted to death by dogs; some were wrapped in pitch-ropes and set on fire by night to illuminate the circus of the Vatican and gardens of Nero, while that monster mixed among the spectators in the garb of a charioteer. But now (A.D. 67 or 68) some years had elapsed since the first excitement which followed the fire. Hence, Paul, being a Roman citizen, was treated in his trial with a greater respect for the forms of the law, and hence was acquitted (2Ti 4:17) on the first charge of having instigated the Christians to their supposed acts of incendiarism before his last departure from Rome. Alexander the coppersmith seems to have been a witness against him (2Ti 4:14). Had he been condemned on the first charge, he would probably have been burnt alive, as the preceding martyrs were, for *arson*. His judge was the city Praefect. CLEMENT OF ROME specifies that his trial was (not before the emperor, but) “before the rulers.” No advocate ventured to plead his cause, no patron appeared for him, such as under ordinary circumstances might have aided him; for instance, one of the powerful AEmilian house, under which his family possibly enjoyed clientship (2Ti 4:16 , 17), whence he may have taken his name Paul. The place of trial was, probably, one of the great basilicas in the Forum, two of which were called the Pauline Basilicas, from L. AEmilius Paulus, who had built one and restored the other. He was remanded for the second stage of his trial. He did not expect this to come on until the following “winter” (2Ti 4:21), whereas it took place about midsummer; if in Nero’s reign, not later than June. In the interim Luke was his only constant companion; but one friend from Asia, Onesiphorus, had diligently sought him and visited him in prison, undeterred by the danger. Linus, too, the future bishop of Rome, Pudens, the son of a senator, and Claudia, his bride, perhaps the daughter of a British king (see on 2Ti 4:21), were among his visitors; and Tychicus, before he was sent by Paul to Ephesus (2Ti 4:12 ; perhaps bearing with him this Epistle).

OBJECT OF THE EPISTLE .—He was anxious to see his disciple Timothy, before his death, and that Timothy should bring Mark with him (2Ti 1:4). But feeling how uncertain it was whether Timothy should arrive in time, he felt it necessary, also, to give him by letter a last warning as to the heresies, the germs of which were then being scattered in the Churches. Hence he writes a series of exhortations to faithfulness, and zeal for sound doctrine, and patience amidst trials: a charge which Timothy seems to have needed, if we are to judge from the apostle’s earnestness in urging him to boldness in Christ’s cause, as though Paul thought he saw in him some signs of constitutional timidity (2Ti 2:2–8 ; 4:1–5 ; 1Ti 5:22 , 23).

Taken from *A commentary, critical and explanatory, on the Old and New Testaments*

2 Timothy 1 (ESV)

Space to write observations, circle/define key words, cross-references, etc.

¹ Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God according to the promise of the life that is in Christ Jesus, ² To Timothy, my beloved child: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

³ I thank God whom I serve, as did my ancestors, with a clear conscience, as I remember you constantly in my prayers night and day. ⁴ As I remember your tears, I long to see you, that I may be filled with joy. ⁵ I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you as well. ⁶ For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands, ⁷ for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.

⁸ Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God, ⁹ who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began, ¹⁰ and which now has been manifested through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, ¹¹ for which I was appointed a preacher and apostle and teacher, ¹² which is why I suffer as I do. But I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that he is able to guard until that Day what has been entrusted to me. ¹³ Follow the pattern of the sound words

that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. ¹⁴ By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, guard the good deposit entrusted to you.

¹⁵ You are aware that all who are in Asia turned away from me, among whom are Phygelus and Hermogenes. ¹⁶ May the Lord grant mercy to the household of Onesiphorus, for he often refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chains, ¹⁷ but when he arrived in Rome he searched for me earnestly and found me— ¹⁸ may the Lord grant him to find mercy from the Lord on that Day!—and you well know all the service he rendered at Ephesus.

INTERPRETATION (Use space below to write out and answer some of the questions you have about the passage...also write out other things you decided to study)

SUMMARY (Make a chart, drawing, list, or write 1-2 sentence summary statement)

BIG IDEA (Theme of the passage in 3-5 words)

PRINCIPLES (Universal statements of truth derived from passage)

APPLICATIONS (Specific steps of action)

2 Timothy 2:1-13 (ESV)

Space to write observations, circle define key words, cross-references, etc.

¹ You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, ² and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. ³ Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. ⁴ No soldier gets entangled in civilian pursuits, since his aim is to please the one who enlisted him. ⁵ An athlete is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules. ⁶ It is the hard-working farmer who ought to have the first share of the crops. ⁷ Think over what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything.

⁸ Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, the offspring of David, as preached in my gospel, ⁹ for which I am suffering, bound with chains as a criminal. But the word of God is not bound! ¹⁰ Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. ¹¹ The saying is trustworthy, for: If we have died with him, we will also live with him; ¹² if we endure, we will also reign with him; if we deny him, he also will deny us; ¹³ if we are faithless, he remains faithful— for he cannot deny himself.

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PRINCIPLES (Universal statements of truth derived from passage)

APPLICATIONS (Specific steps of action)

2 Timothy 2:14-26 (ESV)

Space to write observations, circle define key words, cross-references, etc.

¹⁴ Remind them of these things, and charge them before God not to quarrel about words, which does no good, but only ruins the hearers.

¹⁵ Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth. ¹⁶ But avoid irreverent babble, for it will lead people into more and more ungodliness, ¹⁷ and their talk will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, ¹⁸ who have swerved from the truth, saying that the resurrection has already happened. They are upsetting the faith of some. ¹⁹ But God's firm foundation stands, bearing this seal: "The Lord knows those who are his," and, "Let everyone who names the name of the Lord depart from iniquity."

²⁰ Now in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver but also of wood and clay, some for honorable use, some for dishonorable. ²¹ Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from what is dishonorable, he will be a vessel for honorable use, set apart as holy, useful to the master of the house, ready for every good work. ²² So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart. ²³ Have nothing to do with foolish, ignorant controversies; you know that they breed quarrels. ²⁴ And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, ²⁵ correcting his opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth, ²⁶ and they may escape from the snare of the devil, after being captured by him to do his will.

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2 Timothy 3 (ESV)

Space to write observations, circle define key words, cross-references, etc.

¹ But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. ² For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, ³ heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, ⁴ treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, ⁵ having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people. ⁶ For among them are those who creep into households and capture weak women, burdened with sins and led astray by various passions, ⁷ always learning and never able to arrive at a knowledge of the truth. ⁸ Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so these men also oppose the truth, men corrupted in mind and disqualified regarding the faith. ⁹ But they will not get very far, for their folly will be plain to all, as was that of those two men.

¹⁰ You, however, have followed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, ¹¹ my persecutions and sufferings that happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, and at Lystra— which persecutions I endured; yet from them all the Lord rescued me. ¹² Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, ¹³ while evil people and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. ¹⁴ But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it ¹⁵ and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are

able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶ All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.

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2 Timothy 4 (ESV)

Space to write observations, circle define key words, cross-references, etc.

¹ I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: ² preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. ³ For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, ⁴ and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths. ⁵ As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

⁶ For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. ⁷ I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. ⁸ Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that Day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing.

⁹ Do your best to come to me soon. ¹⁰ For Demas, in love with this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica. Crescens has gone to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia. ¹¹ Luke alone is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is very useful to me for ministry. ¹² Tychicus I have sent to Ephesus. ¹³ When you come, bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas, also the books, and above all the parchments. ¹⁴ Alexander the coppersmith did me great harm; the Lord will repay him according to his deeds. ¹⁵ Beware of

him yourself, for he strongly opposed our message.

¹⁶ At my first defense no one came to stand by me, but all deserted me. May it not be charged against them! ¹⁷ But the Lord stood by me and strengthened me, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it. So I was rescued from the lion's mouth. ¹⁸ The Lord will rescue me from every evil deed and bring me safely into his heavenly kingdom. To him be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

¹⁹ Greet Prisca and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus. ²⁰ Erastus remained at Corinth, and I left Trophimus, who was ill, at Miletus. ²¹ Do your best to come before winter. Eubulus sends greetings to you, as do Pudens and Linus and Claudia and all the brothers. ²² The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you.

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