

## **Week of November 12 - 18**

### **2 Timothy Overview**

This is Paul's last letter. He was arrested 66-67 AD, and we see his resignation in his words. He writes this last letter from the dungeon before being beheaded. By the time he wrote his second letter to Timothy, Timothy had been ministering in Ephesus for four years when he received his first letter from Paul. Timothy had been a faithful servant since he left home with Paul more than a decade earlier. Now Paul wrote again to encourage him in the face of difficulties and trials.

Nero had been sinking into madness since he became Caesar in AD 54. A fire in Rome in AD 64 burned half the city. Christians became the target for Nero, and Paul was one of those caught up in this persecution. He was beheaded by Roman officials soon after writing this letter.

Second Timothy shows Paul at the end of his ministry, just before his death. He was settling his accounts and preparing for the end. In the end, he mentioned a large number of people—some who had wronged him and others who had served faithfully alongside him. He is updating Timothy on their friends' current state so Timothy could carry on after Paul's death.

Paul knew Timothy's task would be thankless and difficult. He wanted Timothy to continue in the things he had learned, not just from Paul but also from his mother and grandmother.

#### **Paul Encourages Timothy to Be Faithful (2 Timothy 1)**

Paul started with thanksgiving and praise, letting Timothy know God has been with him and that he prays for the best for all of them. He wrote that he remembered Timothy in his prayers, and he would like to see him but couldn't. Paul knew Timothy had great faith, which made him happy, reminding him of Timothy's mother and grandmother's faith.

Paul told Timothy to fan the flame of faith and not be ashamed of the Gospel, to spread the Gospel without fear. He said God had given him the gifts, and he must use them.

He invited Timothy to join him in suffering because he was in prison as Paul wrote this letter. Paul said he was appointed as an apostle and teacher. He pressed on to do his work in Christ. He said Timothy should grow spiritually and guard the treasure within him. Paul believed there was a pattern to be followed and that Timothy should not stray from it.

He then spoke of those who were disloyal to him. He prayed that Timothy would not do the same, but he knew in his heart Timothy would never abandon him. Paul said, "As you know, all the Christians who came here from Asia have deserted me; even Phygellus and Hermogenes are gone. May the Lord bless Onesiphorus and all his family because he visited me and encouraged me often. He was never ashamed of my being in jail."

#### **Paul Encourages Timothy to Endure as a Workman Approved by God (2 Timothy 2)**

Next, Paul tells Timothy how to follow in the footsteps of Jesus. He wants them to not only learn from him but also take what he has taught them and go out to teach the Gospel to trustworthy men who will, in turn, pass it on to others.

Avoid being roped into worldly affairs, but to please Jesus Christ. He says they will receive the glory of the Lord as a result of their actions and belief.

"God's truth stands like a great rock and can't be shaken. It is a foundation stone with these words written on it: "The Lord knows those who are his," and "A person who calls himself a Christian should not be doing things that are wrong."

"Run from anything that gives you evil thoughts that young men often have, but stay close to anything that makes you want to do right. Have faith and love, and enjoy the companionship of those who love the Lord and have pure hearts.

"Again," Paul says, "don't get involved in foolish arguments, which only upset people and make them angry. God's people must not be quarrelsome; they must be gentle, patient teachers of those who are wrong. Be humble when you are trying to teach those who are mixed up concerning the truth. If you talk meekly and courteously to them, they are more likely to believe what is true. They will come to their senses and escape Satan's trap of slavery to sin.

"Remind your people of these facts, and command them not to argue over unimportant things. They're confusing and useless, and even harmful. Work hard so God can say to you, "Well done." Be a good workman, one who doesn't need to be ashamed when God examines your work. Know what His Word says and means. Stay away from foolish discussions that lead people into the sin of anger with each other. Things will be said that will burn and hurt for a long time. Hymenaeus and Philetus, in their love of argument, are men like that. They have left the path of truth, preaching the lie that the resurrection of the dead has occurred, weakening the faith of some who believe them.

### **Paul Talks about Godlessness in The Last Days (2 Timothy 3)**

Paul explains, "Timothy, in the last days, it is going to be challenging to be a Christian. People will love only themselves and their money and be proud and boastful, sneering at God, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful to them, and thoroughly evil. They will be hardheaded and never give in to others. They will be liars and troublemakers and will think nothing of immorality. They will be rough and cruel and sneer at those who try to be good. They will betray their friends, be hotheaded, puffed up with pride, and prefer good times instead of worshipping God. They will go to church, but they won't believe anything they hear.

"They are the kind who sneak into other people's homes and make friendships with silly, sin-burdened women and teach them their new doctrines. Women of that kind are forever following new teachers, but they never understand the truth. These teachers fight truth as Jannes and Jambres fought against Moses. They have dirty minds, warped, and twisted, and turned against the Christian faith.

"But you know I'm not that kind of person. You know what I believe and the way I live and what I want. You know my faith in Christ and how I have suffered. You know my love for you and my patience. You know how many troubles I had as a result of my preaching the Gospel. You know all that was done to me while I was visiting Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra, but the Lord delivered me. Evil men and false teachers will become worse and worse, deceiving many.

"You must keep believing the things you've been taught. You know they're true. The whole Bible was given to us by inspiration from God and is useful to teach us what is true and make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It helps us do what is right. It's God's way of making us prepared at every point, fully equipped to do good to everyone. When everything else fails and is collapsing around you, the Word of God is still true.

## **Paul Charges Timothy to Preach Sound Doctrine (2 Timothy 4)**

Paul says, "I urge you before God and before Christ Jesus who will someday judge the living and the dead when he appears to set up his Kingdom, to preach the Word of God urgently at all times, whenever you get the chance, in season and out when it is convenient and when it is not. Correct and rebuke your people when they need it, encourage them to do right, and all the time be feeding them patiently with God's Word.

"A time is coming when people won't listen to the truth but will go around looking for teachers who will tell them what they want to hear. They won't listen to what the Bible says but will follow their misguided ideas.

"Don't be afraid of suffering for the Lord. Bring others to Christ. Leave nothing undone that you ought to do. I say this because I won't be around to help you much longer. My time has almost run out. Very soon, I will be on my way to Heaven. I've fought long and hard for my Lord, and through it all, I've kept true to him. The time has come for me to stop fighting and rest. In Heaven, a crown is waiting for me, which the Lord will give me on that great day of his return. And not just to me but to all those whose lives show they are eagerly looking forward to his coming.

"Come as soon as you can, for Demas left me. He loved the good things of life and went to Thessalonica. Crescens has gone to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia. Only Luke is with me. Bring Mark when you come. I need him. Tychicus is gone too, as I sent him to Ephesus. When you come, be sure to bring my coat I left at Troas and my books, but especially the parchments.

"Alexander, the coppersmith has done me much harm. The Lord will punish him, but be careful of him, for he fought against everything we said.

"The first time I was brought before the judge, no one was there to help me. Everyone had run away. I hope they won't be blamed for it. The Lord stood with me and allowed me to preach a whole sermon for all the world to hear. He saved me from being thrown to the lions. The Lord will always deliver me from evil and will bring me into his heavenly Kingdom. To God be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

"Say hello to Priscilla and Aquila and those at the home of Onesiphorus. Erastus stayed at Corinth, and I left Trophimus sick at Miletus. Try to be here before winter. Eubulus sends you greetings, and so do Pudens, Linus, Claudia, and all the others. May the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

## **Second Peter Overview**

This is Peter's 'swan song,' written about 66 AD, just before his death. He calls us to know Christ, not only to know about Him.

Peter was writing to the same group who received his first letter. He wrote it from Rome. Peter had received reports of false teachers in the churches in Asia Minor. He warned them about the dangerous presence of those who spread heresies and wanted to encourage his people to stand firm and instruct them on how best to do that.

The churches of Asia Minor were struggling with persecution and suffering addressed in Peter's first letter and had strife and dissension within their ranks. Peter emphasized the importance of

learning and clinging to the knowledge of God. His theme in this letter is to pursue spiritual maturity through the Word of God as a remedy for false teaching.

### **Peter Talks about True Knowledge (2 Peter 1)**

Peter says the Lord has given Christians everything that they need to live a blessed life. The Lord has also made many promises He will keep if the believer is living his life according to God's Word. One promise was being allowed into Heaven when the time comes to be judged for our sins.

He explains, "Do you want more and more of God's kindness and peace? Then learn to know him better and better. Then he will give you everything you need to live a truly good life. He shares his glory and goodness with us. He has given us all the rich, wonderful blessings he promised, including the promise to save us from the lust and rottenness all around us and to give us his character.

"But to obtain these gifts, you need more than faith. You must work hard to be good, and even that isn't enough. Put aside your desires so you will become patient and godly. The next step is to enjoy other people and to like them, and finally, you will grow to love them. Anyone who fails to go after these additions to faith is blind indeed, or at least very shortsighted, and has forgotten God delivered him from the old life of sin so he can live a strong, good life for the Lord.

"Work hard to prove you are among those God has called and chosen, and then you won't stumble or fall away.

"Jesus Christ has shown me my days on earth are numbered, and I am about to die. As long as I'm here, I intend to keep sending these reminders to you, hoping to impress them so clearly on you that you will remember them long after I'm gone.

"We haven't been telling you fairy tales when we explained the power of our Lord Jesus Christ. My eyes have seen his splendor and his glory. I was there on the mountain when he shone out with honor given Him by God His Father. I heard the majestic voice calling down from Heaven, saying, "This is my much-loved Son; I am well pleased with him."

"We've seen and proved what the prophets said came true. When you consider the truth of the prophets' words, then the light will dawn in your souls, and Christ will shine in your hearts. For no prophecy recorded in Scripture was ever thought up by the prophet himself. It was the Holy Spirit within these godly men who gave them true messages from God.