

### NAME

The title of the epistle is taken from the addresses, Timothy. The letter is designated "Second Timothy" to distinguish it from Paul's earlier epistle to young Timothy.

### AUTHOR

Laney:

The Pauline authorship of Second Timothy, along with the other Pastoral Epistles, has been questioned in recent times. Both internal and external evidence, however, demonstrates that the epistle is authentic. Paul claims to have authored the epistle (1:1) and the letter contains autobiographical material that fits the life of Paul as recorded elsewhere (2 Timothy 3:10,11; 4:10,11,19,20).

Polycarp (69-156 A.D. - Bishop of Smyrna - he died a martyr, bound and burned at the stake, then stabbed when the fire failed to touch him) reflects familiarity with Second Timothy 4:10. Paul's two epistles to Timothy are mentioned by the Muratorian Canon (c. 170 A.D.) and by Tertullian (c. 150-222 A.D.) as well. Eusebius (c. 263-339 - Bishop of Caesarea) the church historian also accepted Second Timothy as genuinely Pauline. The criticism of Eichhorn, DeWette, and F.C. Baur against the authenticity of Second Timothy is far outweighed by the internal evidence of Pauline authorship and the testimony of the early church.

### DATE

The date of the composition of the letter depends on where one places the Pastoral Epistles in Paul's ministry. The indications are that the epistle was written while Paul was a prisoner in Rome (1:8,16,17) shortly before his death (4:6-8). Evidently Paul had been released from his first detention in Rome. But after the burning of Rome in July 64 A.D., Nero blamed the Christians. He declared Christianity illegal. Paul was arrested and at the writing of this letter was evidently facing certain death. His confinement was rigorous and his friends had forsaken him. He again writes to young Timothy at Ephesus. The death of Paul took place in the spring of 68 A.D., and so the epistle is probably to be dated around the autumn of 67 A.D.

### THEME

Halley (page 44): *"Paul's Final Word"*

Nelson: *"Endurance in the Pastoral Ministry"*

Mitchell: *"The Crucial Significance of Doctrine"* - in these last days we must hold to it, teach it, abide in it and preach it! This is a day in which such admonitions are especially needed.

Laney: *"Defending the Faith in a Time of Doctrinal Defection"*

Key Word (Nelson's): Endurance in the Pastoral Ministry - Paul commissions Timothy to endure faithfully and carry on the work that the condemned apostle must now relinquish, using the Word of God constantly in order to overcome growing obstacles to spread the gospel.

### Key Verses (Nelson's):

*"Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No soldier gets entangled in civilian pursuits, since his aim is to please the one who enlisted him."* (2 Timothy 2:3,4).

*“But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it 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.” (2 Timothy 3:14,15).*

Key Chapter: 2 - The second chapter of Second Timothy ought to be required daily reading for every pastor and full-time Christian worker. Paul lists the keys to an enduring ministry: 1) A reproducing ministry (2:3-13); 2) A studying ministry (2:14-18); and 3) A holy ministry (2:19-26).

The purpose of the epistle is to encourage Timothy in the ministry and outline the course of Christ's servant during a time of doctrinal declension. Ironically, Paul in jail encourages Timothy on the outside. The letter was also intended to summon Timothy to Rome (4:9), and request that he bring Mark (4:11) and the personal possession he left at Troas (4:13).

### Outline:

- I. Introduction 1:1-5
- II. Hold To Sound Doctrine 1:6-18
  - A. Timothy must not be ashamed 1:6-11  
rekindle your gift (cultivate it), rely on God's grace (When the going gets rough, remember grace)
  - B. Paul was not ashamed 1:12-14  
The soul's eternal destiny is with Christ. Christ deposits His truth within us. We have the treasure of the Gospel message
  - C. Onesiphorus was not ashamed 1:15-18
- III. Teach Sound Doctrine 2:1-26
- IV. Abide in Sound Doctrine 3:1-17
- V. Preach Sound Doctrine 4:1-22

### RECIPIENTS

The addressee of the epistle is Timothy, Paul's "*beloved son*" (1:2).

### Historical Setting (Laney):

Since his first epistle to Timothy in the autumn of 62 Paul had probably visited Ephesus (1 Timothy 3:14) and ministered in Asia Minor, Macedonia, Spain, and on the island of Crete. The persecution of Christians in Rome began shortly after Rome burned in July of 64 A.D. Nero blamed the Christians for this catastrophe and Christianity was made an illegal religion. It was probably in the summer of 64 A.D. under the persecution of Nero that Peter was martyred.

The apostle Paul was probably arrested in the autumn of 67 A.D. and brought to Rome where he was incarcerated as a criminal (2:9). (see comparison below) There in chains in the Mamertine prison adjacent to the Roman Forum Paul addressed his second epistle to his protégé Timothy. Paul knew that his death was imminent and that his work on earth was done (4:6-8). He was alone in Rome except for Luke (4:11). Apparently some had deserted him at his first defense before the Roman authorities (4:16). In his letter Paul requested that Timothy, who was still in Ephesus (1:16,18; 4:19), make every effort to join him in Rome before winter (4:9) and to bring John Mark with him (4:11). Paul needed the fellowship and understanding heart. There is almost

a pathetic note when he says “*only Luke is with me*” (4:11). Tychicus was apparently being sent to Ephesus to replace Timothy there (4:12). Paul also requested that Timothy bring the cloak, books, and parchments which he left in Troas, perhaps due to a hurried escape from the city or a surprise arrest (4:13).

### Comparison of Paul's Two Roman Imprisonments (Nelson's):

#### First Imprisonment

Acts 28 - wrote the Prison Epistles

Accused by Jews of heresy and sedition

Local sporadic persecutions (60-63 A.D.)

Decent living conditions in a rented house (Acts 28:30,31)

Many friends visited him

Many opportunities for Christian witness were available

Was optimistic for release and freedom (Philippians 1:24-26)

#### Second Imprisonment

Wrote 2 Timothy

Persecuted by Rome and arrested as a criminal against the Empire

Neronian persecution (64-68 A.D.)

Poor conditions, in a cold, dark dungeon

Virtually alone (only Luke with him)

Opportunities for witness were restricted

Anticipated his execution (2 Timothy 4:6)

Laney:

The immediate occasion of the epistle was the need to encourage Timothy to stand fast in the face of opposition and apostasy. Paul could not be sure Timothy would arrive in Rome before his death and he wanted to present some final instructions to his most intimate disciple before his death.

### CONTRIBUTION TO CANON

#### Peculiarities (Mitchell):

1. This is the last Pauline letter (Paul's swan song). It has been referred to as “The last will and testament of Paul.” This being true, it gives special importance to this little letter, because men facing death do not deal in trivialities. Paul commissions Timothy to endure faithfully and carry on the work that the condemned apostle must now relinquish, using the Word of God constantly in order to overcome growing obstacles to the spread of the gospel.
2. The book pictures a consistent close to a consistent life. Paul was still firm in faith, not ashamed, not regretting for one moment his sufferings for the Lord (c.f. Romans 1:16,17). His end was like the rest of his life. Paul had learned to be content in Christ.
3. Rich in similarities are the death of Jesus and Paul (four distinct similarities):
  - a. Both were alone in death.
  - b. Both were aware that death was near.
  - c. Both appeal to followers for fidelity.
  - d. Both alerted their followers concerning their death.
4. Unlike most of Paul's letters there are no sharp clear cut divisions. It is not laid out systematically (i.e. Romans)

**RESOURCES**

Gromacki, Robert C. *New Testament Survey*, Grand Rapids, Michigan, Baker Book House, 1978

Robert H. Gundry, Ph.D., *A Survey Of The New Testament*, Grand Rapids, Michigan, Zondervan Publishing House, 1970

Halley, Henry H. *Halley's Bible Handbook*, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House

Horton, David, General Editor. *The Portable Seminary*, Grand Rapids, Michigan, Bethany House Publishers, 2006

*Nelson's Quick Reference - Bible Maps And Charts*, Nashville, Tennessee; Thomas Nelson, Inc., 1994

As general resources I've relied on my class notes from various professors at Biola University (especially those of Dr. Curtis Mitchell), Western Conservative Baptist Seminary (WCBS - [especially those of Dr. J. Carl Laney]), and Talbot Seminary as well as notes shared with me by Annie Kartoizian.

Additional reference material has come from the study Bibles of the English Standard Version, New American Standard Version, and The New Living Translation.

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