

Wheelersburg Baptist Church 7/1/09 Wednesday evening

## New Testament Survey—2 Timothy

If you knew you were going to die, and die *soon*, and if you could write a letter to a close friend, what would you say? What kind of things would you write about? And if this particular friend was struggling with fear, particularly the fear of persecution for following Christ, what encouragement might you offer him to help him stay in the race? And aside from your personal feelings, what would matter most to you in those final days, matter so much that you would want to do all you could to insure its future success following your departure from this world?

That's the setting for 2 Timothy. 2 Timothy is a personal, affectionate, warm, even heart-wrenching letter from to his chief assistant and friend, Timothy. It's Paul's last letter. It's full of practical instruction in light of the pressing circumstances facing the apostle.

To do: Divide into two groups. Mark all the commands/responsibilities Paul gives to Timothy in this letter (note the difference between indicative and imperative)... [over 30 commands in NIV]

### *In chapters 1-2...*

1:6 Fan into flame the gift of God

1:8 Do not be ashamed...Join with me in suffering

1:13 Keep what you have heard from me...Guard the good deposit

2:1 Be strong in the grace of Christ

2:2 Entrust to reliable men...

2:3 Endure hardship

2:8 Remember Jesus Christ

2:14 Keep reminding them of these things. Warn them about quarreling about words.

2:15 Do your best to present yourself to God...

2:16 Avoid godless chatter

2:22 Flee the evil desires of youth, and pursue righteousness

2:23 Don't have anything to do with foolish and stupid arguments

### *In chapters 3-4...*

3:1 Mark this...

3:5 Have nothing to do with them.

3:14 Continue in what you have learned.

4:2 Preach the Word; be prepared in season...correct, rebuke, encourage

4:5 Keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry

4:9 Do your best to come to me quickly.

4:11 Get Mark and bring him with you

4:13 Bring the cloak...and my scrolls, and especially my parchments.

4:15 You should be on your guard against him [Alexander]

4:19 Greet Priscilla and Aquila...

4:21 Do your best to get here before winter.

- **Who wrote the book?**

--Paul

Q: To whom did Paul write this letter? Timothy, yes. But the final verse indicates this was not only for Timothy. In 4:22, Paul writes, "The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you." The first "you" is singular (referring to Timothy). The second "you" is plural. Who does Paul have in mind? Other Christians in Ephesus? The rest of God's church, including us?

- **When was the book written?**

--A.D. 66-67

### The Setting:

--After Paul's first imprisonment in Rome (A.D. 60-62, Paul was released from house arrest and began his fourth missionary journey (no mention in Scripture). During this trip he commissioned Titus to remain at Crete, and left Timothy to guide the church in Ephesus. [see NIVsb, p. 1833]

--Paul then moved on to Philippi in northern Greece where he wrote his first letter to Timothy and his letter to Titus (A.D. 63-65).

--Later he traveled to Rome, where he was imprisoned for the second time. It was during this imprisonment that Paul wrote his second (and last) letter to Timothy, shortly before he was executed (67 or 68).

Note: We don't know why Paul was arrested this second time. Some have suggested that Nero

blamed the burning of Rome on Christians since they taught a destruction of the world by fire (2 Peter 3:10-14). Since Paul was known in Rome as one of the leaders of Christianity, he was naturally apprehended [Gromacki, 302].

Another possibility is that Alexander the coppersmith brought formal charges against Paul (see 4:14). This man may have stirred up old charges of political insurrection against the apostle.

The place of his arrest is also unknown, possibly at Troas, since in 4:13 he says he left his personal possessions there (his cloak, books, parchments). If he faced a hostile, quick seizure in Troas, it's likely he was rushed off to Rome without an opportunity to contact his friends or gather his things.

Key: This was Paul's last book. Whereas his first imprisonment involved house-arrest, this time Paul experienced the harsh reality of a cold dungeon (see 4:13 "the cloak").

- **Why was the book written?**

Paul wrote to Timothy for several reasons.

1. To encourage Timothy not to be afraid in the face of opposition (1:8)
2. To instruct the Ephesian congregation about unity (2:14ff.)
3. To express his appreciation for Timothy, and his desire to see him (1:3-4; 4:21)
4. To give Timothy farewell instructions for ministry (4:1-2)

- **What is the outline of the book?**

(adapted from Wiersbe)

- I. The Pastoral Appeal--chapter 1
- II. The Practical Appeal--chapter 2
- III. The Prophetic Appeal--chapter 3
- IV. The Personal Appeal--chapter 4

- **What is the message of the book in one sentence?**

2 Timothy encourages us for ministry in tough times.

- **What contribution does the book make to biblical theology (that is, how does this book relate to the rest of the Bible)?**

1. *2 Timothy gives us valuable models for church leadership.*

See: Chapter 2--Fill in the blank from the following verses. A church leader must be like a

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2:3 A church leader must be like a *soldier*.

2:5 A church leader must be like an *athlete*.

2:6 A church leader must be like a *farmer*.

2:8 A church leader must be like *Jesus*.

2:15 A church leader must be like a *workman*.

2:20 A church leader must be like a *noble vessel*.

2:24 A church leader must be like a *servant*.

Discuss: What do these images teach us about being a leader in the church? About following leaders in the church?

2. *2 Timothy teaches us about the doctrine of the inspiration of Scripture.*

See: 3:15-17

What do the following terms mean?

*Inspiration*--God breathed; God used men to give us His authoritative Word; speaks of the source of the Scriptures

Bancroft: "By the inspiration of the Scriptures is meant that the writers were so empowered and controlled by the Holy Spirit in the production of the Scriptures as to give them divine and infallible authority." (*Elemental Theology*, p. 29)

*Inerrancy*--Without error

*Infallible*--the Bible is true (not fallible) and worthy of confidence

Discuss: Because the Bible is inspired, what follows (see 3:16-17)?

3. *2 Timothy warns us of the danger of ministering in the "last days."*

See: 3:1-9

Q: According to verse 1, when did Paul say terrible times would come? "Last days"

Key: The last days refer to the Messianic era, a time which began at Jesus' first coming (see 1 Tim. 4:1; Heb. 1:1-2; 1 Pet. 1:20). The fact that "the last days" here does not refer only to the days just prior to Jesus' second coming is apparent from Paul's command in 3:5--We are to have nothing to do with the type of people described in verses 1-4, those who have a form of godliness but deny its power.

Q: What is characteristic of this time period, according to verses 1-5?

Discuss: What counsel does ch. 3 give us about how to live in these days?