



Women's R&R Bible Study 2024-2025

"YOUR WORDS WERE FOUND, AND I ATE THEM, AND YOUR WORD WAS TO ME THE JOY AND REJOICING OF MY HEART."

JEREMIAH 15:16

LIVING IN HOPE

LESSON 15

Today we will begin our study of 2 Timothy. Chronologically, the book of Titus was written between 1 and 2 Timothy, but we will be studying 2 Timothy first. Let's do a brief history of 2 Timothy before we jump right into it. We won't be spending time developing a character sketch of our author, Paul, because hopefully his story is still fresh in our minds.

These are Paul's last written words to Timothy, and to the church. It is often called Paul's last will and testament. As you read, listen for Paul's heart as he shares it with Timothy. If you're really quiet, you can hear it beat ...

Memory Verse of the Week: "For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind." 2 Timothy 1:7

Before we begin, let's briefly recap Paul's traveling adventures up to this point. We know that after appearing before King Agrippa (Acts 25:13-23) in AD 58, Paul journeyed to Rome (Acts 27:1-31). There he was put in prison but was treated like a political prisoner (Acts 28:16-31). He was under house arrest, which meant that he could have visitors, and had the hope of being released. From that prison he wrote Colossians, Ephesians, Philemon, and Philippians.

Paul was released and traveled to Asia Minor. He left Timothy in Ephesus (1 Timothy 1:3), while he went to Macedonia. From there, Paul wrote the letter of 1 Timothy to him. Paul probably returned to Ephesus, went to Crete, and left a man named Titus there to minister (Titus 1:5). We will be reading about him in a few weeks.

Paul continued to travel. In AD 64, the city of Rome was seriously burned. Nero, the Roman Emperor at the time, had ordered his own capital city to be torched. Everything from the shacks of the poor to the

magnificent pagan temples was destroyed. Many knew that Nero was to blame for this outrage, so he conveniently blamed the Christians, using them as a scapegoat. He convinced everyone that it was the Christians who had done this awful deed. The Christians suffered greatly at the hand of this angry man. They were severely persecuted; many being thrown into arenas with wild animals. The Roman historian Tacitus wrote, "But all human efforts, all the lavish gifts of the emperor and the propitiation of the gods did not banish the sinister belief that the conflagration was the result of an order by Nero. Consequently, to get rid of the report, Nero fastened the guilt and inflicted the most tortures on a class hated for their abominations, called Christians by the populace."

Now, five or six years later, Paul was rearrested as some type of rebel, or for "propagating a forbidden cult." Christians were very unpopular at this time, almost enemies of the state.

This imprisonment was very different from the first time Paul was arrested. This time he was treated like a criminal. He could not have any visitors, and he was chained to a soldier. Paul's cell was damp and cold, and he had no hope of release. Most of his friends had deserted him. He awaited execution at the hand of the evil Nero. (2 Timothy 4:6)

This letter contains Paul's last words to his dear friend Timothy. He didn't even know if he would ever see Timothy again. Paul knows the end is near, so he has some parting words for his son in the faith. Remember this is Paul's "last testament," so to speak, as you read through this book. This book not only contains Paul's last words to Timothy, but his last words to us, as well.

1. Read 2 Timothy 1:1-18. What facts do you find? Any repeated words or thoughts? What is his main point in this chapter? Does he give any reasons for writing?
2. How would you describe Paul's attitude?
3. Why do you think this week's memory verse would be so meaningful to Paul?

Paul continues to stress to Timothy the importance of holding on to sound doctrine, no matter what the circumstance. He wanted to make sure Timothy (and us) understood that we are to cling to the truth of God's Word, as well as protect it. William Hendriksen gives us a brief outline of this book regarding sound doctrine.

Chapter 1: **HOLD ON TO IT** "Don't be ashamed"

- A. As did Lois and Eunice
- B. As I do, never ashamed of the Gospel
- C. As did Onesiphorus, not ashamed of my chain

Chapter 2: **TEACH IT** "Suffer hardship along with us"

- A. It brings great reward; is glorious in content
- B. Vain disputes, on the contrary, serve no useful purpose

Chapter 3: **ABIDE IN IT** "Grievous times will come"

- A. Knowing that enemies will arise, who have its form, not its power
- B. Knowing that it is based on the sacred writings, as you learned from trustworthy persons

Chapter 4: **PREACH IT** "I charge you"

- A. In season, out of season, for apostasy is coming. Remain faithful, in view of the fact that I am about to set sail.
- B. Items of personal information, requests, greetings

I hope this outline helps you pull it all together as we continue on through the book.

Many believe that because of some of Paul's exhortations to him, Timothy may have been growing weary, discouraged, or even becoming lax in his ministry. His mentor was now in jail, and he was left to face many challenges, along with a huge burden of responsibility. He was a young man with a heart for God, but may have been dealing with fears, doubts, or just plain weariness. (We will examine these issues as we study through this book.) Paul knew that Timothy needed some encouragement from him.

4. Paul was facing death. Was his concern for himself?
5. How does Paul introduce himself? Who does he say he belongs to, and whose service was he in?
6. Was Paul self-appointed?
7. What is the “promise of life”? (Read verse 10 for help.)
8. What does he call Timothy? What does he pray that Timothy would receive?

Paul said that he was able to serve God with a “pure conscience.” This doesn’t mean that Paul thought he was perfect. Paul knew that he was the chief of sinners (1 Timothy 1:15), but he had a clear conscience. It did not accuse or condemn him. He had no hidden sins. He was living a life of holiness before the Lord, and he could say that in all sincerity. His forefathers were an example to him. Paul did not have a godly heritage within his own family, so he must have been talking about the holy men living before him, as well as the apostles and the Old Testament prophets.

9. Do you live with a clear conscience? Can you say that you are doing your best to live a life of holiness and service before the Lord?
10. Paul’s thoughts could have been on his hopeless and discouraging situation, but they weren’t. How does this speak to your heart? Where is your focus in troubled times?
11. Paul deeply yearned to see Timothy, and he prayed for him constantly. How would that be an encouragement to Timothy?

- 12.** Who else does Paul commend in this chapter? Why?
- 13.** Paul said that seeing Timothy would fill him with joy. Is that what you fill people with? When people spend time with you, are they filled with joy?

I like to see Paul's affection for Timothy because it makes him seem so real to me. I picture him in a cold, dark, gloomy prison cell, without light, books, or friends. He knows the end is near. Yet the thought of Timothy brings joy to this old man's heart, who has served God so faithfully for so many years. His love for the truth and hope for the future outweighs any fear of the present. The thought of Paul brings joy to my heart. Do you feel the same?

- 14.** Make a list of the instructions that Paul gives Timothy in this chapter.
- 15.** How many times is the word "ashamed" mentioned in this chapter? Answer the following questions:
- A.** What does Paul tell Timothy not to be ashamed of? Why does he say this? (vs 8)
 - B.** Was Paul ashamed? Why or why not? (vs 12)
 - C.** Was Onesiphorus ashamed? How could Paul tell?
- 16.** What are some possible reasons that Paul may have said what he did in verses 6-7?
- 17.** What has been given to us, according to verse 7? Why is this so important?

- 18.** Do you ever struggle with a “spirit of fear”? Where does this come from? What should you do about it?

Timothy needed to fan the flame, or rekindle his fire of devotion, and use the gifts that God had given him to minister to the body of Christ. God had called him, and the church had ordained him. Charles Swindoll says this: “Timothy’s giftedness -- his God-given ability for ministry -- had been confirmed at his ordination (laying on of hands). But now the gifts needed stirring up. His self-discipline may have waned in study and prayer. He may have been preaching, teaching, and contending for the faith with diminished fervor. It was time to fan the dying embers of God’s gifts into full flame.”

- 19.** Do you have any gifts that need to be stirred up and used? Does your devotion need to be rekindled? What has caused them (or it) to be diminished? (Fear? Doubts? Weariness?)

A “sound mind” can also be translated self-controlled or self-disciplined. This also comes from Him. It describes a person who is sensibly minded and balanced, who has his life under control. The Holy Spirit does not give us fear, but power, love, and self-discipline. His power is limitless, His love is endless. We are not able to minister effectively without God’s power, His love, and a sound mind.

It has been said, “If a person fears satan’s persecuting power more than he trusts God’s ability and ever-readiness to help, he has lost his mental balance.”

- 20.** How did Jesus destroy death? Read Romans 3:21-26, 6:20-23, and Hebrews 2:14-15. How did He bring us life and immortality?
- 21.** For what reason does Paul say that he is suffering? (vs 11-12) Does the suffering make Paul want to quit?

22. Read verses 12-14. What is God's responsibility? What was Timothy's?

23. To what does Paul say to "hold fast"? What does that mean?

In verse 12, the phrase "keep what I have committed" means to "guard my deposit." In verse 14, the "good thing" that Paul talks about is the Gospel of truth. In verse 12, it is not quite clear what Paul means. What "deposit" is Paul referring to? There are two interpretations of this verse.

A. The deposit which has been entrusted to me, which would be the Gospel.

B. The deposit which I have entrusted to Him, which is my salvation.

Some believe that Paul is saying that he deposited his soul in the care and keeping of the Savior, and Paul knew that God would faithfully guard that. This God, who is able, is trustworthy. Amen to that!

24. How can we "keep" the treasure of the Gospel? (vs 13-14)

25. Who deserted Paul?

26. Who stood by his side? What was Paul's prayer for him? (Present and future)

Some believe that Phygellus and Hermogenes were possibly leaders in the church who wouldn't come to his defense in Rome. Perhaps they were ashamed, or fearful. Why were these two men specifically mentioned? Were they good friends of Paul who had really let him down in his time of need? Were they in a position where they could help Paul by appearing on a witness stand, but wouldn't?

Onesiphorus showed mercy to Paul in his prison, and Paul asked God to show him mercy in return. We don't know anything about this man either except that he was not ashamed of the Gospel, or of Paul's chains. His name means "profit-bearing." God used him to refresh Paul in his time of discouragement, as well as during Paul's ministry in Ephesus. The word refreshed means "to cool again."

Onesiphorus had to search diligently for him. We aren't sure why. Maybe he didn't know his way around Rome or recognize it after the fire. Maybe the prisoners were kept in secluded areas, unknown to the majority of the people. We don't have any answers, but we know this: God was faithful to Paul in sending him a brother to encourage him, and Onesiphorus was a faithful friend, risking his own life and reputation to minister to a friend in need, and support the Gospel of truth.

- 27.** Are you ashamed of the Gospel? Have you ever been asked to defend your faith? What happened?
- 28.** Why do you think we act like we're ashamed of the Lord at times? What are we afraid of?
- 29.** Have you ever felt like your friends abandoned you because they were ashamed of the Gospel? What happened?
- 30.** What are some ways that we can refresh a friend who is going through difficult times? Is there a friend you need to help refresh?

The Amplified Bible translates refreshing as "bracing me like fresh air." Let's be a breath of fresh air to those who are hurting. Let's encourage those in ministry to "keep on" ministering. Let's hold on to the truth and never be ashamed of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.