

Tell Me the Story: A Book-by-Book Overview

2nd Timothy: Paul's Farewell Letter

2ND TIMOTHY BACKGROUND

Author & Date

It is generally agreed upon that the Apostle Paul wrote 2nd Timothy as he was awaiting certain death in Rome during 67 or 68 AD. Chronologically, this was Paul's final letter, and we glean much about his late-life mindset from this letter. Throughout the letter, it becomes obvious that Paul expects to die and be with Christ soon. He reflects on his life and ministry, and he understands his race soon to be finished (2nd Timothy 4:6-18).

Purpose of Writing

2nd Timothy is another letter of encouragement and warning to Timothy, Paul's son in the faith. He challenges Timothy to remember his childhood lessons from the Scripture, his calling, and his mandate to preach the Word. Perhaps, Paul was concerned that Timothy was fearful and weakening in Biblical conviction amidst difficulty or persecution.

At the end of the letter, Paul pleads with Timothy to visit and bring Paul's necessities: a cloak, books, and the Scriptures.

Paul's Concern in 2nd Timothy

1. Guard the Gospel that was Entrusted to You (2nd Timothy 1 – 2).

Evidently, Timothy was being tempted to shy away from preaching the truths of the Gospel and godliness. In response to this, Paul tells Timothy to remember his calling and the mandate to pass the Word along to others.

2. Count the Cost of Following Christ (2nd Timothy 3).

Following Christ and preaching the Gospel are not for the faint of heart. Persecution is bound to come, and the Jesus-follower must understand and be prepared for this.

3. Finish Well by Finishing Faithfully (2nd Timothy 4).

Just as Paul has run the race faithfully, he desires for Timothy to do the same.

The Bible as the Foundation for Preaching **2nd Timothy 3:16 – 4:4**

1. Breathed out by God.
2. Profitable for teaching.
3. Profitable for reproof/rebuking sin.
4. Profitable for correction.
5. Profitable for training in righteousness.
6. Equips Christians for every good work.
7. Speaks across generations and cultural settings.

NOTES: _____

The People of Paul's Life

*****This list is not exhaustive.***

1. Phygelus: A man who had shown promise as a companion of Paul during a missionary journey in Asia, but deserted Paul in the face of ministry hardships and/or persecution (2nd Timothy 1:15).
2. Hermogenes: Another co-worker of Paul who deserted Paul in the face of ministry hardships and/or persecution (2nd Timothy 1:15).
3. Onesiphorus: A faithful friend and co-worker with Paul in ministry. He had not deserted Paul, but often visited Paul in prison and “refreshed” Paul through his encouragement and presence. Evidently, he lived in Ephesus and had served Paul and other Christians in Ephesus with excellence (2nd Timothy 1:16-18; 4:19).
4. Demas: A long-time friend and co-laborer with Paul in the Gospel ministry who had capsized to the cares of the world (2nd Timothy 4:10). We see Demas’ ministry to Paul during his imprisonment in Rome (Colossians 4:14; Philemon 24), but he is the example of man who didn’t faithfully finish the race.
5. Luke: Paul’s longtime friend and doctor who wrote Luke-Acts. From Acts, we understand that Luke was often present with Paul during his missionary journeys and imprisonment. Luke is the example of a Christian who is faithful to the end (2nd Timothy 4:11).
6. Mark (John Mark): A Christ-follower and fellow missionary with Paul and Barnabas. A transformation occurred in Mark’s life and his relationship with Paul. In Acts 13:13, we read where John Mark had deserted Paul and Barnabas on a missionary journey. Some believe that this issue was partially the reason that Barnabas and Paul separated during the 2nd missionary journey. However, years later we see maturity and reconciliation. Paul now asks for Mark’s presence and usefulness in ministry (2nd Timothy 4:11).
7. Alexander the Coppersmith: An opponent of Paul who intentionally harmed Paul and opposed the Gospel message. Paul leaves vengeance for Alexander in the hands of the Lord who will repay him (2nd Timothy 4:14-15).