

Second Timothy

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SECOND TIMOTHY

LESSON I

INTRODUCTION

Much of the information found in the introduction to First Timothy applies also to Second Timothy. Paul's situation, however, had changed. Second Timothy was written from prison (2 Timothy 2:9). Paul did not expect that he would be free again (2 Timothy 4:6-7). Most students of the Bible therefore agree that Paul wrote Second Timothy during the time of his second imprisonment in Rome, in the year 66 or 67 AD. It was his last writing before his death as a martyr under the Roman Emperor Nero.

Professor August Pieper writes: "The entire second epistle to Timothy can pretty well be summarized in the single admonition: 'My son, take strength from the grace of God, which is ours in Christ' (2 Timothy 2:1, NEB). Paul provided ample foundation for this admonition. As servants of the Word, we have also received the proper spirit for our ministry—not a spirit of fearfulness, but of strength, of love, and of self-control. Without any merit on our part God in pure grace rescued us from eternal death and converted us, in accordance with his eternal purpose in Christ. Our Lord Jesus has abolished death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. If we died with Christ, we shall live with Him; if we endure, we shall reign with Him. The Lord has risen from the dead; He provides for our bodily needs; He will give us everything we need to face the difficulties that confront us in our ministry; He knows His own. Of course, if we deny Him, He will deny us, but our unfaithfulness to Him does not annul His faithfulness to us, for He cannot deny Himself.

"Perilous times will come; hypocrites and deceivers will enter the Church under the guise of true religion and will seek to win followers for themselves. But their successes will be short-lived, for God will expose them for the fools they are. The time will come when those who call themselves Christian will not endure wholesome teaching but will gather a crowd of teachers to tickle their ears. But all of this cannot and dare not rob you of your courage and strength, and make you tearful or weary in your work of love!

"Take hold of yourself, and keep a clear head by holding to the kind of sturdy, salutary words you have heard from me and by guarding that good deposit that was entrusted to you through the Holy Spirit. Entrust this to reliable men, who will also be qualified to teach others. Do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord, but in His strength endure hardship with me like a good soldier of Jesus Christ, competing according to the rules, doing your work faultlessly, keeping yourself clean from the contamination of evil. Rebuke all ungodliness, yet with kindness; shut the mouths of those who oppose you and in view of Christ's imminent return be unswerving in preaching and teaching the Word with great patience and careful instruction.

"What is at stake here is the salvation of God's elect. This is how I have conducted my ministry, and I have not been put to shame. The Lord stood beside me, delivered me from all persecution,

and strengthened me, so that through me the gospel might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it.

“Now the Lord will deliver me from the last great evil and will bring me safely to His heavenly kingdom. For I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him for that day (2 Timothy 1:12).” (Translated by Prof. John Jeske in the Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly, Vol. 72, No. 3, July, 1975.)

Prof. Pieper refers to Second Timothy as “Paul’s last will and testament to the New Testament Church,” “written with his heart’s blood.” “Timothy,” Professor Pieper states, was “the only one of Paul’s pupils and associates who could assume the leadership of the Gentile congregations Paul had founded.” Yet one thing seemed to be lacking in Timothy as a leader. He was still quite young. He needed to be strengthened in his convictions so that he could stand up fearlessly against all opposition. Such encouragement and strength Paul wishes to offer in this second epistle.

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF PAUL TO TIMOTHY
PAUL'S ENCOURAGEMENT TO TIMOTHY TO BE A STRONG PASTOR

Chapter 1: 1 - 2 Address and Greeting

CHAPTER 1, BE STRONG AS YOU REMEMBER THE PAST

Chapter 1: 3-7 Remember your early training
 8-10 Remember the grace which was given you
 11-12 Remember my example
 13-14 Remember to what you were called
 15-18 Remember the good and bad examples of others

CHAPTER 2, BE STRONG IN YOUR PRESENT CALLING

Chapter 2: 1-4 As a good soldier of Christ Jesus
 5-7 As an athlete, and as a farmer
 8-13 As a faithful follower of Jesus Christ
 14-19 As a workman approved by God
 20-26 As a useful instrument in God's house

CHAPTERS 3 and 4, BE STRONG IN THE DAYS AHEAD

Chapter 3: 1-5 Bad days are coming
 6-9 False teachers will abound
 10-13 Be true to my example
 14-17 Be true to the Holy Scriptures
Chapter 4: 1-5 Preach the unchanging Word
 6-8 Victory is assured
 9-18 Closing personal remarks
 19-22 Final Greetings

REVIEW QUESTIONS, INTRODUCTION

1. From where did Paul write his second epistle to Timothy?
2. At what time in Paul's life was this letter, therefore, written?
3. With what verse can the entire epistle be summarized?
4. Why was this admonition especially necessary?
5. With what words does Paul express his conviction that God would take care of him?
6. How can we in a general way divide this epistle into three parts?

FOR FURTHER STUDY

- A. What do the following verses of Second Timothy tell us about Paul's situation as he wrote this epistle:
 1. Chapter 1:8 and 16
 2. Chapter 4:6
 3. Chapter 4:17
- B. Find the verses in this epistle which give it the name as "Paul's last will and testament."

2 Timothy 1:1-2**TRANSLATION**

- v. 1 Paul, an Apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God according to the promise of life that is in Christ Jesus,
- v. 2 to Timothy, beloved son: grace, mercy, peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

WORD STUDY

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| v. 2 | ἀγαπητός | beloved |
| | τέκνον | child (acc. to context, son) |

EXEGESIS

- v. 1 Although this address and greeting is very similar to that in First Timothy, there are a few differences.

Again Paul introduces himself as “an apostle of Christ Jesus,” one who is sent by Jesus on a special mission, as His ambassador. Paul’s apostolic authority is an important reminder that all that He writes is in Christ’s name. This authority, Paul adds, is “by the will of God,” not by the will of man.

God’s will was still serving Paul’s good, even though Paul’s earthly life was nearing its end. Another life, however, still belonged to Paul. This will of God for Paul was “according to the promise of life that is in Christ Jesus.” Jesus Himself was the Author of this life (John 14:6). He made us sure of this life by His own resurrection from the dead. Paul had this promise of eternal life as he wrote these words to Timothy. Temporal death could not separate Paul from this life in Christ Jesus.

- v. 2 This letter is addressed by Paul “to Timothy, beloved son.” The Greek word τέκνον can mean a child of either sex. Referring to Timothy, the word is translated “son.”

In First Timothy Paul addresses him as “**true** child in faith,” or as Paul’s true representative in Ephesus. Here Paul addresses Timothy as “**beloved** son,” in order to emphasize the close bond of Christian love which joined these two men. “The whole letter throbs with the love of a father for a beloved child,” Lenski states.

The same greeting as in First Timothy now follows: “Grace, mercy, peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.” God’s grace and mercy give the believer peace with a heavenly Father through the Lord Jesus Christ. There is no greater blessing. There can be no finer greeting.

APPLICATION

Again Paul comes to Timothy in this letter with assurance, in order to give Timothy confidence for his work in the ministry.

The authority for this work rests with God, not with man, as Paul once more points out. This time, however, Paul reminds Timothy of the promise of eternal life which every believer has in Christ. He does so with a special word of endearment. He calls Timothy his “beloved son.”

We remember that Paul wrote these words in the shadow of death, placing into Timothy’s hands the work which was to be carried on in Jesus’ name. This address and greeting set the tone for a letter which is deeply personal, and yet at the same time gives strength. We can compare this to the parting words of a father to his son, in which the father has no regrets, only good advice and encouragement. This is not, in other words, the bitter end, a time for discouragement. This is a time to be strong, confident that the work will continue to go forward.

Every pastor needs such encouragement in his work. He will certainly find it in this second epistle of Paul to Timothy, his beloved son.

REVIEW QUESTIONS (2 TIMOTHY 1:1-2)

1. By whose will was Paul an Apostle of Christ Jesus?
2. What promise did Paul have in Christ Jesus?
3. What kind of life is meant here?
4. Why did this mean very much to Paul at that time?
5. How does Paul address Timothy in this second epistle?
6. What same greeting follows?
7. Why was it important for Timothy not to be discouraged in his work?

FOR FURTHER STUDY

- A. 1. Read 1 John 1:2. Who brought true life to this earth?
2. Read Colossians 3:3-4; 1 John 5:11. What kind of life do we have in the Son of God?
3. Read John 17:3. How is this eternal life assured unto us?
- B. 1. What is an “asyndeton”?
2. Which same asyndeton do we find in Second Timothy as we have in First Timothy?

2 TIMOTHY 1:3-7

TRANSLATION

- v. 3 I thank God, whom I serve from (my) forefathers with a clean conscience, as constantly I have the remembrance of you in my prayers night and day,
- v. 4 longing to see you, remembering your tears, so that I may be filled with joy.
- v. 5 I have been reminded of the sincere faith in you, which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am persuaded that (it dwells) now in you.
- v. 6 For this reason I remind you to keep on fanning into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands.
- v. 7 For God did not give us a spirit of cowardice, but of power and of love and of acting wisely.

WORD STUDY

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| v. 3 | λατρεύω πρόγονος ἀδιάλειπτος μνεία | | serve forefather constantly, unceasingly remembrance |
| v. 4 | ἐπιποθῶν ἰδεῖν μειννημένος δάκρυον πληρωθῶ | (part. ἐπιποθέω) (aor. inf. ὀράω) (perf. part. μιμνήσκομαι) (aor. subj. pass. πληρόω) | long, desire greatly see remember, remind oneself tears fill |
| v. 5 | ὑπόμνησις λαβών ἀνυπόκριτος ἐνωκησεν μάμμη πέπεισμαι | (aor. part. λαμβάνω) (aor. ἐνοικέω) (perf. pass. πείθω) | remembrance receive, take sincere, without hypocrisy dwell in grandmother persuade |
| v. 6 | αἰτία ἀναμιμνήσκω ἀναζωπυρέω χάρισμα | | cause, reason remind, call to mind rekindle, fan into flame again gift of grace, charisma |

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|------|---------------------------------|---------------|---|
| | ἐπίθεσις | | laying on |
| v. 7 | ἔδωκεν δειλία σωφρονισμός | (aor. δίδωμι) | give cowardice, fearfulness ability to act wisely |

EXEGESIS

- v. 3 At this time of writing Paul was in prison. Tradition tells us that he was in an underground dungeon. Yet he does not complain. The first words of the body of this letter are words of gratitude: “I thank God whom I serve from (my) forefathers with a clean conscience, as constantly I have the remembrance of you in my prayers night and day.”

In prison Paul remembers things. He remembers the God whom he is now serving. This is the same God as the God of his forefathers, the true God of Israel, who kept His promise by sending the Savior. Although condemned to die because he worships this God, Paul’s conscience is clean. He remembers Timothy also in his daily prayers. No doubt he prayed especially that his imprisonment would not have a bad effect upon Timothy and others, and that they would be spared from these terrible persecutions of Emperor Nero.

- v. 4 Along with this feeling of gratitude Paul expresses another deep feeling of his heart as far as Timothy is concerned: “Longing to see you, remembering your tears, so that I may be filled with joy.”

When Paul and Timothy had met for the last time, Timothy’s eyes were filled with tears. These tears expressed fervent love, a love which these two men had towards each other. Paul hopes very strongly to see his beloved Timothy again, so that he could be filled with joy.

- v. 5 Moreover, Paul remembers something else: “I have been reminded of the sincere faith in you.” Timothy’s faith was sincere, actually unhypocritical. The word ὑπόκριτος is taken from Greek play actors, who wore masks in order to pretend to be something which they were not. Timothy’s faith was not that way. He did not pretend to be a Christian. He **was** a Christian.

Where did this faith of Timothy begin? Paul adds: “which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am persuaded that (it dwells) now in you.” Both Timothy’s mother and grandmother were true Israelites, who believed the Old Testament promises of the Messiah. Paul mentions both by name, indicating that he knew them personally. This happened, we assume, on Paul’s first missionary journey, when he came to Lystra. After Paul’s coming they also learned to believe in Jesus as the fulfillment of all the Old Testament promises. But Timothy’s faith actually began with his training in the Old Testament Scriptures as a child (cf. 2 Timothy 3:14-17). It rested on a firm foundation.

- v. 6 These advantages, Paul reminds Timothy, also placed special obligations upon him: “For this reason I remind you to keep on fanning into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands.”

These obligations—to keep on fanning into flame (ἀναζωπυρέω) the pastoral work he was doing—was now all the more urgent, because these men were now living in a time of persecution, by which Paul would soon be required to offer his life. That “laying on of hands” refers to Timothy’s ordination into the work of the holy ministry we have discussed already in 1 Timothy 4:14. Here Paul mentions that he also took part in this service.

- v. 7 Paul adds to this admonition: “For God did not give us a spirit of cowardice, but of power and love and of acting wisely.”

Some interpret these words to mean that Timothy was lacking in courage. We rather feel that Paul adds these words because the dangerous times in which the church found itself required special fearlessness. What happened in Rome under Nero could very well happen throughout the Roman Empire.

Such times required a spirit of power (δύναμις), power to endure persecution and even death, as Paul was showing by his own example. They also required the spirit of love (ἀγάπη), love which carries on with the preaching of a message of forgiveness in spite of being mistreated and despised. Finally, the spirit of being able to act wisely (σωφρονισμός) was needed. Being able to keep a clear head and to think straight under stress, choosing the best methods in all situations was very important for God’s chosen messenger.

APPLICATION

In the work of the ministry one must suffer many things. But one of the greatest burdens is to be considered as an outlaw by the government for preaching the truth of God’s Word.

We must remember that Paul’s words to Timothy were written in just such a situation. There was nothing illicit or illegal about Paul’s faith. Neither was there anything wrong with the faith which Timothy had received. Yet Paul was about to die a martyr’s death. The preaching of the Gospel was threatened everywhere.

All the more reason, Paul reminds Timothy, to treasure what has been received, and to make use of the gift of preaching and teaching God’s Word with all power, love, and wisdom!

We are living in times when the precious Gospel of Christ, in its true Scriptural meaning, has often been accused of being “contrary to the best interests of the government.” In some places today Christians are being persecuted. When will the same burden rest upon us and our church?

Paul's words in this section have a special application in just such a situation. Ridicule and even persecution is no reason to run away and hide. Our testimony to the truth of Jesus Christ and His Word must go on. It is a treasure which we have received in special measure. Threats of suffering and death must urge us "to keep on fanning into flame the gift of God" all the more.

REVIEW QUESTIONS (2 Timothy 1:3-7)

1. From what kind of place did Paul write these words to Timothy?
2. Why was Paul's conscience, however, clean?
3. What did Paul not want to have happen to Timothy because of this persecution?
4. Of what does Paul remind Timothy?
5. Where did Timothy's sincere faith begin?
6. What special gift did Timothy receive by the laying on of hands?
7. In what kind of spirit did Paul want Timothy to continue to work?
8. What do these words tell us about our work as a church in times of persecution?

FOR FURTHER STUDY

- A. Read 1 Timothy 1:13.
 1. What does Paul confess in this verse?
 2. What does Paul say, however, in 2 Timothy 1:3 about his service?
 3. Do these two verses contradict each other? Explain.
- B. Read again the section explaining the significance of the laying on of hands (Book 1, 1 Timothy 4:14).
 1. What **false** meaning do some churches give to this act?
 2. What is the true significance of this act?

**BE STRONG AS YOU REMEMBER THE PAST—
REMEMBER THE GRACE WHICH WAS GIVEN YOU**

LESSON IV

2 Timothy 1:8-10

TRANSLATION

- v. 8 Do not, therefore, be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, neither of me, his prisoner, but join in suffering evil for the Gospel according to God's power
- v. 9 who has saved us and has called us to a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given to us in Christ Jesus before the ages of time,
- v. 10 but now revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who not only destroyed death, but also brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel.

WORD STUDY

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|-------|----------------|---|--|
| v. 8 | ἐπαισχυνθῆς | (aor. subj.; with μή- negative imp., ἐπαισχύνομαι) | be ashamed of |
| | δέσμιος | | prisoner |
| | συγκακοπάθησον | (aor. imp. συγκακοπαθέω) | suffer evil together, join in suffering |
| v. 9 | σώσαντος | (aor. part. σώζω) | save |
| | καλέσαντος | (aor. part. καλέω) | call |
| | κλήσις | | calling |
| | πρόθεσις | | purpose |
| | δοθεῖσαν | (aor. part. pass. δίδωμι) | give |
| | αἰώνιος | | eternal; here with χρόνος it is translated "before the ages of time" or "before the beginning of time" |
| v. 10 | φανερωτεῖσαν | (aor. part. pass. φανερώω) | reveal |
| | ἐπιφάνεια | | appearing |
| | καταργήσαντος | (aor. part. καταργέω) | destroy |
| | μέν...δέ | | not only...but also |
| | φωτίσαντος | (aor. part. φωτίζω) | bring to light |
| | ἀφθαρσία | | incorruptibility, immortality |

EXEGESIS

- v. 8 Paul has other reasons why he can encourage Timothy to be strong (“be not ashamed”) as he remembers the past. These reasons lie in the wonderful grace which he received in Christ Jesus.

First the repeated encouragement to be strong: “Do not, therefore, be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, neither of me, his prisoner, but join in suffering evil for the Gospel according to God’s power.” Paul uses the aorist subjunctive with *μή* to express a negative command. Timothy was not to permit persecution, as experienced by Paul, to lessen his zeal for the witness of Christ. Rather he should be willing to join in suffering any shame or disgrace which this testimony would bring along with it. The verb *συγκακοπαθέω* simply means “to suffer evil together.” The fact that Paul, the great leader, was a prisoner in Rome was already being used by enemies to bring ridicule and shame to his fellow-Christians. Timothy was to bear this evil “according to God’s power,” never forgetting what that power had already achieved. This is explained by Paul in the next verse:

- v. 9 “Who has saved us and has called us to a holy calling.” Aorist participles of the verbs are used to show that these acts of God’s power are accomplished facts. Our salvation in Christ is accomplished. So also our coming to faith. Paul speaks to Christians. This “holy calling” is the calling to faith by the Holy Spirit, whereby we as Christians are separated from this ungodly world and turned to a new life of faith. It is the fact of our conversion.

Why were we thus saved and called? “Not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace.” Our salvation, also our call to faith in Christ, does not rest in any way upon our works (*κατὰ τὰ ἔργα ἡμῶν*), however (*ἀλλά*) according to God’s very own purpose and grace (*κατὰ ἰδίαν πρόθεσιν καὶ χάριν*). He, God, decided this. He did this entirely on His own. Grace alone moved Him to do this.

When was this gracious counsel of love formulated? “Which was given to us in Christ Jesus before the ages of time.” Before the foundations of the world were laid, before God had created a single human being, God had this purpose for us which resulted in our call to faith in Christ. Whenever we think of this eternal purpose of God, which we call His election or predestination, we must remember these things: it is by grace alone; it is always in Christ (*ἐν Χριστῷ*); it is unto faith; it is intended to strengthen us in our conviction that we are God’s own children, both now and forever. Surely no one can be ashamed of this Gospel!

- v. 10 But how was this grace of God published, or made known? Paul continues: “But now revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus.” In the fulness of time God made His eternal purpose of grace known when He sent His only-begotten Son into this world of sin. The grace of God was revealed (*φανερώω*). Christ had an appearing, an epiphany (*ἐπιφάνεια*). He was seen on earth. These are historical facts. Our faith rests not only upon ancient promises, but upon that which was personally seen and heard here on earth.

And what did this Savior do by His coming into this world? He “not only destroyed death, but also brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel.”

καταργέω not only means to destroy. It means to destroy thoroughly, abolish once and for all time, completely shatter and bring to destruction. This the Savior did to that great enemy known as death. Temporal death lost its power, and eternal death, or separation from God, lost its terrors for the believers. In place of that the Savior “brought to light” (*φωτίζω*) eternal life. Both verbs here, which tell what Christ accomplished, are in the aorist tense, expressing completed action. By Christ’s own action, accomplished in his own death and resurrection, this destruction of death and this bringing to light of eternal life were complete.

This we know through the Gospel, the good news of our salvation in Christ. Amazing grace! We are saved, body and soul. This life includes *ἀφθαρσία*, incorruption (cf. 1 Corinthians 15:53-57). A reminder of this amazing grace should certainly serve to encourage Timothy, making him strong in the Lord’s service.

APPLICATION

The work of the ministry is surrounded by many dangers. Among these dangers is the shame and contempt which is directed at the followers of Christ by the people of this world who hate Him.

Sometimes we are surprised, it seems, when we see how the world ridicules our faith in the Holy Scriptures. Here in Africa they call the Bible a “European fable,” a “tool of colonialism,” etc. Even many who call themselves Christians no longer believe in the simple teachings of the Bible about sin and grace, Law and Gospel. They twist the meaning of Scripture so that it agrees with whatever political views happen to be popular. We see all these things and we are tempted to lose courage. Are we all alone? Are the enemies stronger than we are? Does our faith have any power at all?

First of all, we should not be surprised when we see how the sinful world hates us. Jesus said this would happen. His great messenger to the Gentiles was a prisoner, ready to die as a Christian.

Rather than to be surprised by this hatred and persecution, we should accept it as a fact. And we should not doubt the power of the Gospel because of this hatred.

Just remember what God did for you—how He called you in Christ to be His very own before the world began; how He sent His only begotten Son into this world to reveal His great love; how this Son destroyed death by His own death and assured us of eternal life by His resurrection. Remember the grace of God in Christ!

This remembrance can be our greatest source of strength in days of trouble and persecution. God has not lost His power. He is still there, with all His gracious help. Not even death in this life can separate us from our eternal life with Him.

REVIEW QUESTIONS (2 Timothy 1:8-10)

1. Of what did Paul not want Timothy to be ashamed?
2. Of whose great power does Paul remind Timothy?
3. What did God do for us as Christians to show this power?
4. When did God decide to do this for us?
5. How did God prove this power in the history of this world?
6. What did Christ do by His own death and resurrection?
7. Why are we sometimes tempted to lose courage?
8. Why should we not be surprised when this happens?
9. What should we remember so that we are strong?

FOR FURTHER STUDY

- A. 1. Read Mark 8:38. What will happen to those who are ashamed of Christ?
2. Read Hebrews 11:26. Which man in the Old Testament chose disgrace for the sake of Christ?
3. Read Romans 1:16. Which man in the New Testament was not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ? Why not?
- B. Read Ephesians 1:4-6.
1. When did God choose His believers in Christ?
 2. In whom did the Father choose them?
 3. Why did God do this?
 4. What words of Paul to Timothy also teach this doctrine of predestination or election?
- C. What is the exact meaning of ἀφθαρσία?

What does this tell us about life after death?

Can you think of other Bible passages which speak of the “resurrection of the body”?

2 Timothy 1:11-12

TRANSLATION

- v. 11 Unto which (Gospel) I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher.
- v. 12 For this cause I also suffer these things. Yet I can not ashamed for I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to guard that which was entrusted to me unto that very day.

WORD STUDY

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|-------|------------|---------------------|--|
| v. 11 | ἐτέθην | (aor. pass. τίθημι) | appoint |
| v. 12 | πεπίστευκα | (perf. πιστεύω) | believe; in perfect tense it has the sense of fulfillment, as trust implicitly and completely. |
| | παραθήκη | | the entrusted deposit; something which has been entrusted to another person. |
| | φυλάχαι | (aor. inf. φυλάσσω) | guard, keep |

EXEGESIS

- v. 11 Some commentators, such as Lenski, connect this verse with the previous section. We rather begin another brief part with this verse, attaching it to the following verse, v. 12. In these two verses Paul calls attention to himself as an example for Timothy's encouragement. As a source of added strength Timothy should remember Paul's willingness to suffer for the cause of the Gospel: "Unto which (Gospel) I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher."

Timothy and Paul shared the same calling, proclaiming the same Gospel. Then Paul adds:

- v. 12 "For this cause I also suffer these things." The cause was the cause of the Gospel. The things (ταῦτα) which Paul was suffering for the cause of the Gospel were well known to Timothy. "Yet," Paul now declares, "I am not ashamed. " His suffering as a common prisoner, about to be killed as a great evildoer, was no disgrace to Paul. Then, with unforgettable words of conviction, Paul gives his reason for not being ashamed:

"For I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to guard that which was entrusted to me unto that very day." The perfect tense of πιστεύω expresses childlike trust. Paul has rested his case completely into the hands of God.

But what is the παραθήκη, the trust which God has committed into Paul's hands? (Not, as KJ, NIV, and other versions translate: "that which Paul has committed into God's hands"!) That can only mean the Gospel and its work. God will guard that Gospel. Its work will be kept safe. When

it leaves Paul's hands, at the day of his death, God will continue to guard this Gospel, placing it into other hands. In simpler words we could state the sense of this passage as follows: "Even when I die, God will continue to guard that Gospel which was entrusted to me." This interpretation makes sense. The other interpretation—that Paul committed something into God's hands, as perhaps his soul or his spirit—leaves us with many questions.

APPLICATION

The importance of these verses for us lies in Paul's confidence in the face of persecution and death. "I know," Paul said. "I am persuaded." Nothing -- no power on earth -- could separate him from the love of God in Christ Jesus. This is what he preached to others. This is what he personally believed and lived. For Paul temporal death had lost its power when Jesus died on the cross. Moreover, "I know **whom** I have believed," Paul declares. Jesus Christ, the crucified, risen, and ascended Lord, that was the object of Paul's faith. "For me to live is Christ, to die is gain," he could say. Why should he, therefore, be ashamed?

This same confidence can sustain every pastor in the time of trouble. This same faith is powerful enough to overcome any problem. If our work is built upon ourselves, or upon our desire for earthly things, or for any selfish reason, then we have nothing to sustain us when the trials and temptations of this life come. And come they most certainly shall!

If on the other hand our work is resting on Christ, the sure foundation, then we, too, can say, "I know; I am persuaded." We can say this, come what may. Even our death cannot harm the cause of the Gospel. God is in the heavens. He knows what He is doing. He can carry on His work without us.

REVIEW QUESTIONS (2 Timothy 1:11-12)

1. To what three kinds of work was Paul appointed by God?
2. What was required of him in the cause of the Gospel?
3. Why was he, however, not ashamed?
4. Of what was Paul persuaded?
5. What had God entrusted to Paul?
6. What would God also do after Paul's death?

FOR FURTHER STUDY

- A. Paul mentions three distinct services to which he was appointed. Consult a dictionary to find the chief function of each one:
1. κῆρυξ
 2. ἀπόστολος
 3. διδάσκολος
- B. τὴν παραθήκην μου (my deposit) can be interpreted in two ways: 1. That which Paul entrusted to God; 2. That which God entrusted to Paul. Those who favor the first interpretation say that it means "the salvation of his soul" (Kretzmann). Those who favor the second interpretation say that it means "the Gospel" (Lanski). Explain which interpretation you prefer.

2 Timothy 1:13-14

TRANSLATION

- v. 13 Hold to the pattern of healthy words, which you heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.
- v. 14 Guard the good deposit entrusted to you, through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us.

WORD STUDY

- | | | | |
|-------|-------------|------------------------------|---|
| v. 13 | ὑποτύπωσις | | pattern, model |
| | ὑγιαίνοντων | (part. ὑγιαίνω – be healthy) | used here as an adjective, in the sense of healthy or sound |
| v. 14 | φύλαξον | (aor. imp. φυλάσσω) | guard |
| | ἐνοικοῦντος | (part. ἐνοικέω) | dwell in |

EXEGESIS

- v. 13 As a further reminder of past blessings Paul now calls attention to the special training and the calling which Timothy had received. He begins: Hold to the pattern of healthy words, which you heard from me.”

Timothy had a good teacher, who gave him a good pattern to follow. That teacher was none other than Paul himself. Paul’s teaching was with “healthy words.” This is a favorite expression of Paul, as we noticed in our study of Paul’s first epistle. Paul could claim healthy teaching because his teaching was directly from Christ Himself. There was nothing false, unhealthy, or unsound about it.

Timothy was to hold to this healthy teaching “in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.” The purpose of all sound teaching is faith and love in the Savior, clinging to Him, following His example in teaching others.

Timothy, we see, was especially blessed in his training. He truly had in Christ and Paul the greatest patterns of all to follow. Holding fast to these words and examples would surely give him strength.

- v. 14 Moreover, Timothy had been entrusted with a special gift: “Guard the good deposit entrusted to you, through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us.”

In our previous section we mentioned in Paul’s case what this “deposit” was. Both Timothy and Paul had the same deposit. It was the Gospel of Christ. When Timothy became a pastor, he was entrusted with the work of the public ministry of this Gospel.

But how could he, a sinful human being, guard this precious trust against all contamination? Could he do this by his own power? Not at all. But through the indwelling Holy Spirit of God he

could do this. That Spirit of God was received in his baptism. He continues to make His dwelling (present participle of ἐνοικέω) in every Christian who places his trust and hope in the Word of Christ.

APPLICATION

The attacks made against the Gospel of Christ and those who are His ministers are vicious. We perceive them in these last evil days especially. Sometimes it seems that the whole world has turned upside down. What God's Word condemns is praised, and what God's Word teaches is ridiculed. Such attacks even come from those who call themselves "Christians."

How can a faithful pastor stand up against such things? How can he keep his teaching healthy, when surrounded by such spiritual sickness on every side?

"Hold fast to the pattern of healthy words!" Paul tells us. "Guard the good deposit entrusted to you!" he adds. One of the most vicious attacks against Christ's Gospel today is that it does not need to be kept pure and sacred. "Ideas change," we are told. "So do the teachings of the Christian religion," they say. "We must move with the times and accommodate our thinking and our teaching to the new ideas of an enlightened mankind," they argue. "The old religion is outmoded. It may have been all right many years ago. But not anymore!"

As we as pastors hear such statements—and we do hear them these days—we should remember the training we received in God's Word, and the Gospel entrusted to us at our ordination. Let us thank God for teachers who honored God's Word. Let us be true to the precious Gospel which we promised to teach "in truth and purity." Let us "hold fast" and "guard the deposit," given us as a sacred trust. God's Spirit will help us do so, if we ask Him.

REVIEW QUESTIONS (2 Timothy 1:13-14)

1. Who was Timothy's teacher?
2. What does Paul urge Timothy to do with this teaching?
3. What "good deposit" is entrusted to every pastor?
4. What must he do with it?
5. Who will help him do so?
6. Why are such admonitions especially needed these days?

FOR FURTHER STUDY

- A. Read the following passages: 1 Timothy 1:10; 1 Timothy 6:3; 2 Timothy 4:3; Titus 1:9; Titus 1:13; Titus 2:1-2; Titus 2:8.
 1. What expression of Paul is found in all of these passages?
 2. What Greek word is used to describe doctrine?
 3. What is the literal meaning of this word?
- B. Read 1 Timothy 6:20. What admonition of Paul is also found in these closing words of Paul in his first letter to Timothy?

**BE STRONG AS YOU REMEMBER THE PAST—
REMEMBER THE GOOD AND BAD EXAMPLES OF OTHERS**

Lesson VII

2 Timothy 1:15-18

TRANSLATION

- v. 15 You know this, and all those in Asia turned themselves away from me, of whom are Phygelus and Hermogenes.
- v. 16 May the Lord show mercy to the household of Onesiphorus, because he often refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chain!
- v. 17 However, when he was in Rome, he diligently sought and found me.
- v. 18 May the Lord grant that he will find mercy from the Lord on that day! And in how many ways he served in Ephesus, you know very well.

WORD STUDY

| | | | |
|-------|--------------|----------------------|--|
| v. 15 | ἀπεστράφησαν | (aor. ἀποστρέφομαι) | turn oneself away from (with acc.) |
| v. 16 | δώη | (aor. opt. δίδωμι) | give, show |
| | ἀνέψυξεν | (aor. ἀναψύχω) | refresh |
| | ἄλυσις | | chain |
| | ἐπαισχύνθη | (aor. ἐπαισχύνομαι) | be ashamed of |
| v. 17 | γενόμενος | (aor. part. γίνομαι) | be |
| | σπουδαίως | | eagerly, diligently |
| | ἐξήτησεν | (aor. ζητέω) | seek |
| | εὔρεν | (aor. εὕρισκω) | find |
| v. 18 | διηκόνησεν | (aor. διακονέω) | serve |
| | βέλτιον | (adv. comp. ἀγαθός) | better; here used in the sense of “very well” |

EXEGESIS

- v. 15 Timothy well knew how those in Asia who were asked to testify in Paul’s behalf at his trial refused to do so. “You know this, that all those in Asia turned themselves away from me, of whom are Phygelus and Hermogenes.” The actions of two of them were especially disappointing to Paul. No doubt these men were afraid or ashamed to be connected with a man who was in prison. They are an example of a kind of “fairweather Christians,” of whom there are many.
- v. 16 By way of contrast, however, Paul mentions the good example of Onesiphorus: “May the Lord show mercy to the household of Onesiphorus, because he often refreshed me and

was not ashamed of my chain.” Some commentators are of the opinion that Onesiphorus was already dead when Paul wrote these words. They conclude this from the way in which Paul refers to the family (also in Chapter 4:19), but not to the man himself. Lenski does not share this view. Whatever the case, Onesiphorus showed great concern for Paul while he was in prison and bound by a chain.

- v . 17 “However, when he was in Rome, he diligently sought and found me,” Paul adds. Although this was not easy to do, and even though this required great courage in the face of a government which was unfriendly to Christians, Onesiphorus succeeded in finding the dungeon where Paul was kept. The adverb *σπουδαίως* conveys the thought that only by diligent searching was this act of love possible.
- v. 18 Paul adds the words: “May the Lord grant that he will find mercy from the Lord on that day!” Lenski states that this sentence proves that Onesiphorus was not as yet dead. Surely, he argues, the Apostle wouldn’t pray for the dead! We see this, however, as nothing more than a pious wish which we, too, express in behalf of those who have departed this life. “On that day,” of course, is the day of judgment.

As an added thought Paul adds concerning Onesiphorus: “And in how many ways he served in Ephesus, you know very well.” Timothy was himself a witness in Ephesus of the many deeds of kindness and acts of service which this man performed. (The comparative form of *ἀγαθός* which is used here—*βέλτιον*—is translated as an intensive, in the sense of “very well,” rather than “better.”)

APPLICATION

The church has always had members who cause disappointment, as well as those who bring joy and encouragement. Paul can mention such examples in his day, both bad and good. We have the same experiences today.

As disappointed as we sometimes are when our people fail to meet the test, even so God always provides good examples to reassure us again. Sometimes these good people amaze us by their courage and zeal, as Onesiphorus did in Paul’s day.

Why things happen this way we do not know. Sometimes those of whom we have great expectations fail miserably. Then again, we often find the greatest fruits of faith where they are least expected.

When people prove to be faithless, we sorrow over the weakness of men. When they show strength, we know it is the Lord’s doing. He gives gifts to His Church, and will continue to do so. Especially in the day of trouble He will show His helping hand through fellow-believers.

REVIEW QUESTIONS (2 Timothy 1:15-18)

1. What did many people in Asia do when they were asked to testify for Paul?
2. What did Onesiphorus, however, do?

3. For what does Paul therefore pray, both in behalf of Onesiphorus as well as his household?
4. How is this experience of Paul with various people repeated in our day?
5. Among what kind of people do we often find the greatest fruits of faith?

FOR FURTHER STUDY

A. Read John 6:66-68.

1. What did many of the followers of Jesus do?
2. Which disciple, however, made a good confession? Why?
3. When did all of Jesus' disciples forsake Him?
4. What did they do after His resurrection and ascension?

B. Read 2 Timothy 4:19.

1. To whom does Paul extend special greetings in this letter?
2. What do some conclude from the fact that Paul greeted "the household of Onesiphorus" and not Onesiphorus himself?

C. Read Matthew 25:36.

What is mentioned here as a fruit of Christian faith?

2 Timothy 2:1-4

TRANSLATION

- v. 1 You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.
- v. 2 And what things you heard from me through many witnesses, these things entrust to faithful men, who will be competent also to teach others.
- v. 3 Join in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.
- v. 4 No one serving as a soldier entangles himself in the affairs of this life, so that he might please the one who persuaded him to enlist.

WORD STUDY

| | | | |
|------|-----------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| v. 1 | ένδυναμοῦ | (imp. pass. ένδυναμόω) | be strong |
| v. 2 | ἤκουσας | (aor. ακούω) | hear |
| | παράθου | (aor. imp. mid. παρατίθημι) | entrust |
| | ίκανός | | competent, qualified |
| | ἔσονται | (fut. είμί) | to be |
| | διδάξαι | (aor. inf. διδάσκω) | teach |
| v. 3 | συγκακοπάθησαν | (aor. imp. συγκακοπαθέω) | join in suffering something evil |
| v. 4 | στρατευόμενος | (part. στρατεύομαι) | serve as a soldier |
| | έμπλέκεται | (mid. έμπλέκω) | become entangled or involved |
| | πραγματεία | | affairs, business |
| | στρατολογήσαντι | (aor. part. στρατολογέω) | gather an army |

EXEGESIS

- v. 1 In the previous chapter Paul called Timothy's attention to various things he needed to remember, so that he could be strong in the face of adversity as a pastoral leader. This chapter follows this preceding thought closely: "You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus." That which was important out of past remembrance now becomes equally important for the present calling.

The sense of ένδυναμοῦ is to "be made strong." Paul uses this word advisedly. Timothy is not to find this strength within his own natural powers. The source of strength lies elsewhere. It lies in the grace (χάρις), the unmerited favor of God which he has in Christ Jesus.

Paul strengthens this admonition by referring once more to their close relationship as father and son.

- v. 2 At the same time Timothy is to do something else: “And what things you have heard from me through many witnesses, these things entrust to faithful men, who will be competent also to teach others.”

That which Timothy heard from Paul were words of sound doctrine (cf. Chapter 1:13). These things were supported “by many witnesses.” Kretzmann interprets these “witnesses” as passages from Old Testament writers. Others refer to witnesses as being present when Paul instructed Timothy and when he also baptized and confirmed him. Lenski feels that these witnesses apply to Paul’s teaching, as it was attested to by many eye-witnesses. We prefer Kretzmann’s thought. God Himself substantiated Paul’s teaching by His own Word of prophecy.

Timothy was instructed to entrust (*παραθοῦ*) this sound doctrine to faithful men, competent (*ἱκανοί*) to teach others. This true teaching needed to be transmitted on and on, so that it could be preserved. Here we have Paul’s directive as to how the work of the Christian ministry was to be carried on. A strong church was a church which trained faithful workers!

- v. 3 All this referred to in verses 1 and 2 was to be done in the spirit of a person described by Paul in the next words: “Join in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.” The battle is on. Christ Jesus is the Leader. We, His workers, are His soldiers. This means, of course, that we join in whatever suffering needs to be borne (*συγκακοπατέω*).
- v. 4 This picture of a soldier in battle is developed further: “No one serving as a soldier entangles himself in the affairs of this life, so that he might please the one who persuaded him to enlist.” Serving as a good soldier requires singlemindedness of purpose. He doesn’t worry about the business affairs which he has left behind.

Jesus Christ has enlisted us as workers into His army. Our chief concern is not how to be successful in the business affairs of this earthly life. We want to please Him who has called us into His service, trusting that He will take care of our earthly needs through His Church.

APPLICATION

Again the admonition is to “be strong.” Times of stress required the single-mindedness of a soldier in battle.

An interesting additional thought lies in these verses. This is Paul’s reference to the training of faithful workers to carry on this work. Verse 2 might be called Paul’s advice concerning how to build a strong church for the future.

We are to take that which has been placed into our hands, that Word of grace which is attested to in Scripture, and entrust this to faithful men, who are to be trained thoroughly so that they will be competent to teach others.

It has often been said that errors have a way of creeping into the Church especially at that place where its future workers are theologically trained. Here this program is linked to the self-discipline of a soldier in battle.

REVIEW QUESTIONS (2 Timothy 2:1-4)

1. What admonition does Paul give once more to Timothy?
2. What advice does Paul give concerning carrying on the work?
3. What kind of teaching was Timothy to entrust?
4. What kind of men were to be trained?
5. What comparison does Paul use in this connection?
6. To what kind of work in the church does this section apply?

FOR FURTHER STUDY

- A. Which verses in 1 Timothy and in Titus give us the qualifications of a pastor?
- B. Read Ephesians 6:10-17.
 1. Against whom must a Christian soldier fight?
 2. Whose armor should he therefore put on?
 3. What do the following pieces of armor represent?
 - belt
 - breastplate
 - shoes
 - shield
 - helmet
 - sword

2 Timothy 2:5-7

TRANSLATION

- v. 5 But if anyone also competes as an athlete, he is not crowned as a victor unless he competes according to the rules.
- v. 6 It is necessary that the hard-working farmer be the first to receive a share of the fruits.
- v. 7 Consider what I say. For the Lord will give you insight in all things.

WORD STUDY

| | | | |
|------|---------------------------------|---|--|
| v. 5 | ἀλθῆ στεφανοῦνται νομίνως | (subj. ἀλθέω) (pass. στεφανέω) (adv.) | compete (as an athlete) crown (as a victor) according to the rules, lawfully |
| v. 6 | δεῖ μεταλαμβάνειν | (with acc. and inf.) | it is necessary receive a share of; share in |
| v. 7 | δώσει σύνεσις | (fut. δίδωμι) | give insight |

EXEGESIS

- v. 5 Paul now proceeds to two further examples which are to encourage Timothy to be strong in his present calling. The first picture presents an athlete competing in a contest: “But if anyone also competes as an athlete, he is not crowned as a victor unless he competes according to the rules.”

The point of comparison in the previous picture, that of a soldier in battle, was to be able to endure hardship and to remain free from business entanglements. Here the point is to compete according to the rules of the game. Any infringement of such rules—as getting a head start, pushing your opponent, etc.—would lead to disqualification. This applied also to the athlete’s training.

Applied to a worker in the Lord’s service this means, of course, that we also are bound by the rules which the Lord sets forth in His Word. These rules of conduct for a pastor are amply set forth in these Pastoral Epistles.

- v. 6 Another picture follows: “It is necessary that the hard-working farmer be the first to receive a share of the fruits.”

The progression of thought is clear. Those who endure hardship (as a soldier), who follow the rules (as an athlete), also deserve to share in the fruits.

For a pastor these fruits are twofold. Spiritually he is himself strengthened in his calling by his constant association with the Word. He can also rejoice in the harvest of souls as he sees how his work brings results. Physically he can also receive support for himself and his family in the gifts of appreciation which his members bring. We see no reason to restrict these “fruits” to spiritual blessings, as Lenski does.

- v. 7 Paul then asks Timothy to pause and consider for a moment these three examples: “Consider what I say.” Timothy is to ponder these truths, apply his mind (*νοῦς*) to them. Not that they are in themselves so difficult to understand. But they do require sober reflection and application.

In this reflection Paul adds the encouragement: “For the Lord will give you insight in all things.” The Lord does this, as we know, through continued study of His Word, through fervent prayer, and through faithful work. As the Latin proverb declares: “*Ora et labora.*” (“Pray and work.”)

APPLICATION

The work of the Christian ministry is a constant process of applying God-given principles to that which we are doing. It’s not a matter of coasting along with what we have learned, using our own ideas to change the rules as we go along, or thinking that it doesn’t make any difference at all what happens as a result of our work.

The pastor or evangelist who fails to study faithfully, who becomes more involved with his maize or cotton than caring for his people, who fails to live by the rules of conduct set forth in God’s Word, or who doesn’t much care what happens as a result of his work, as long as he gets his monthly pay, he will not be strong enough to stand fast when problems arise in his work.

Those on the other hand who do apply themselves faithfully according to their ability can rest assured that the Lord Himself will give wisdom and strength at the proper time. He will help them take the next step ahead, no matter how difficult this may seem to be.

These verses are an excellent text to encourage workers of the Lord!

REVIEW QUESTIONS (2 TIMOTHY 2:5-7)

1. What picture does Paul add to that of a soldier in battle?
2. Which point of comparison is stressed in this picture?
3. What can a hard-working farmer expect to receive?
4. How does this picture apply to a worker of the Lord?
5. To whom will every faithful worker constantly continue to look for wisdom and strength?

FOR FURTHER STUDY

- A. Read 1 Corinthians 9:24-27.

1. To what kind of people does this Scripture text compare all Christians?
 2. What must every athlete do?
 3. In what ways can Christians train themselves?
- B. Review the points of comparison in each of the pictures presented by Paul in this chapter:
1. A soldier...endures
...does not
 2. An athlete competes according...
 3. A farmer is the first to...

Explain how this applies to the work of a minister of Christ.

2 Timothy 2:8-13

TRANSLATION

- v. 8 Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, from David's seed, according to my Gospel;
- v. 9 for which I am suffering evil even unto bonds as an evildoer. But the Word of God has not been bound.
- v. 10 Therefore I am enduring all things for the sake of the elect, so that they also may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.
- v. 11 Faithful (is) the saying: if we died with him, we shall also live with him;
- v. 12 if we endure, we shall also reign with him; if we shall deny him, he also will deny us;
- v. 13 if we are unfaithful he on his part remains faithful, for he is not able to deny himself.

WORD STUDY

| | | | |
|-------|--------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| v. 8 | μνημονεύετε ἐνηγγερμένον | (imp. μνημονεύω) (perf. part. pass. ἐγείρω) | remember raise |
| v. 9 | δεσμός κακοῦργος δέδεται | (perf. pass. δέω) | bond; chain evildoer bind |
| v. 10 | ὑπομένω τύχωσιν | (aor. subj. τυγχάνω) | endure, suffer obtain (with gen.) |
| v. 11 | συναπεθάνομεν ἀρνησόμεθα | (aor. συναποθνήσκω) (fut. ἀρνέομαι) | die with deny |
| v. 13 | ἀπιστεύω μένω ἀρνήσασθαι | (aor. inf.) | be faithless remain deny |

EXEGESIS

- v. 8 With this verse Paul begins a new section, in which he urges Timothy to be a faithful follower of Jesus Christ. Being a faithful follower also means to be Christ-like. Paul begins this part with the words:

“Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, from David’s seed, according to my Gospel.”

The fact that Jesus Christ was “raised from the dead” includes the thought that Jesus also suffered death. Paul was about to suffer death. But Jesus also suffered death to accomplish His work.

The reference to “David’s seed” reminds the reader that Jesus was true man, and at the same time the Messiah, promised of old. Jesus suffered death as true man and true God. This is the content of Paul’s Gospel, which is the true Gospel.

- v. 9 For this Gospel Paul is also willing to suffer: “For which I am suffering evil even unto bonds as an evildoer.” We translated ἐν ᾧ referring to the Gospel, in the sense of “for which.” For the sake of the Gospel Paul is suffering the greatest possible shame and disgrace. The expression for evil (κακός) is in both verb and subject, indicating the extreme degradation attached to his kind of imprisonment. It was an imprisonment reserved for the greatest kind of criminal, requiring that the prisoner be bound or held fast with chains.

But then Paul adds, as if in the same breath: “But the Word of God has not been bound.” The enemies of the Gospel could bind Paul, but they could not bind the Word of God. Its message was greater than any human being!

- v. 10 “Therefore” (διὰ τοῦτο), Paul continues, “I am enduring all things for the sake of the elect, so that then also may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.”

Paul’s willingness to suffer, he says, served a definite purpose. He had in mind chiefly the elect (τοὺς ἐκλεκτούς). The elect are simply the true believers in Jesus Christ. Paul wanted to encourage them by his example, making them sure that even the greatest afflictions could not rob the Christians of their salvation (σωτηρία) in Christ Jesus, and the sure hope of eternal life which they had in Him.

- v. 11 This verse actually begins a song of hope, which the Apostle is now moved to write. This song has its theme in the Christian’s life in and with Christ. Paul begins: “Faithful (is) the saying: if we died with him, we shall also live with him.”

The death referred to here is the Christian’s death to sin, which begins with baptism (cf. Romans 6:4). By daily contrition and repentance we remember this death unto sin. And daily we arise with Christ and live with Him in the new life of sanctification, a life which has no ending. That is why we can be faithful “even unto death.”

- v. 12 The song continues: If we endure, we shall also reign with him.” The word ὑπομένω in the context of this passage means “to stand one’s ground, hold out, remain steadfast” in

the face of trouble, affliction, and persecution. The test could even be facing a martyr's death. Endurance is still what our new life of faith includes.

Those who do endure will reign in heaven together with Christ. This picture, found also in passages like James 1:12; 1 Peter 5:5; Revelation 2:10 is so grand that we can hardly imagine it.

But: "if we shall deny him, he will also deny us." This states again what Jesus Himself says repeatedly (Matthew 10:33; Mark 8:38; Luke 9:26). Here, too, the statement is made emphatic by the use of ἐκεῖνος, translated: "He also, He on His part, or He Himself."

Every follower of Christ is to "take up his cross" and follow Christ. This means suffering for Christ's sake, not being ashamed of Him, confessing His name fearlessly before men. If we fail to do this, we can expect that "He also will deny us."

- v. 13 This last verse of Paul's song strengthens the previous statement: "If we are unfaithful, he on his part remains faithful, for he is not able to deny himself."

The thought is added here that Christ cannot contradict Himself. A faithless Christian cannot expect the Lord to deny all His warning threats on Judgment Day. To do this He would be false to Himself. This is not possible for a changeless Christ.

APPLICATION

These verses contain one of the strongest warnings of Scripture to remain strong and faithful even unto death; and to endure patiently to the very end.

Often people are tempted to make excuses for those who fall away from the faith in times of trouble and persecution, as though the burden of suffering were too heavy, or the yoke of persecution too grievous. Others seem naively to feel that the warnings of Scripture to endure, to be patient, to watch and pray, to confess bravely in the face of hatred, to remain steadfast in the face of opposition are not to be taken too seriously. Perhaps Christ will change His decision at the last moment.

The warnings of Scripture are not empty threats, as these verses clearly show. But Paul bases this upon something: "Remember Jesus Christ," he says. "Remember His life and death, in which the whole Gospel message is centered." He goes on to use his own life as proof of this need to suffer for the Gospel's sake. He is surely practicing what he preaches! Above all, he reminds us that the whole existence of a Christian can be summed up as dying with Christ, and living with Him. What does our baptism mean? What does our whole life as a follower of Christ mean if it does not include faithfulness to the very end! Anything less than this would be a denial of Christ and of the Gospel.

"Be strong, Timothy," Paul declares, "as a faithful follower of Jesus Christ." Paul's admonition is the same to every Christian, and especially to every pastor.

REVIEW QUESTIONS (2 Timothy 2:8-13)

1. Whom should Timothy especially remember?
2. What should Timothy remember about Christ?
3. What does Paul remind us about Christ when he refers to Him as “David’s seed”?
4. What is Paul doing for the cause of this Gospel?
5. For whose sake is Paul doing this?
6. Mention things which Paul includes in his song concerning what it means to be a faithful follower of Jesus Christ.

FOR FURTHER STUDY

A. Read Romans 1:7; Ephesians 1:1; Philippians 1:1.

1. Who are the elect?
2. What are they also called?
3. To which Church do they belong?

B. Read Romans 6:4.

1. Of what does our baptism remind us?
2. What meaning does our baptism have for our daily life as Christians? (See Luther: “What does this baptizing with water signify?”)

C. Read Hebrews 12:4; Hebrews 12:32; Acts 20:24.

1. What are Christians sometimes called upon to endure for Christ’s sake?

Read James 1:12; 1 Peter 5:4; Revelation 2:10.

2. What will those receive who remain faithful unto death?

2 Timothy 2:14-19

TRANSLATION

- v. 14 Remind them about these things, testifying in the sight of God not to fight over words for that which has no value, for upsetting of those who hear.
- v. 15 Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed, who cuts in a straight line the Word of truth.
- v. 16 Turn away from profane babblings. For they will progress more and more in ungodliness;
- v. 17 and their word will have pasture as gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus,
- v. 18 who missed the mark concerning the truth, saying that the resurrection has already taken place, and they are upsetting the faith of some.
- v. 19 Nevertheless, the foundation of God stands firm, having this seal: “The Lord knows those who are his;” and, “Everyone who confesses the Lord’s name must turn away from wickedness.”

WORD STUDY

- | | | | |
|-------|---|---|---|
| v. 14 | ὑπομίμνησκε διαμαρτυρόμενος λογομαχέω χρήσιμος καταστροφή ἀκούοντων (part. ἀκούω) | (imp. ὑπομιμνήσκω) (part. διαμαρτύρομαι) | remind testify, swear fight over words valuable, useful overturning, upsetting (catastrophe) hear |
| v. 15 | σπούδασον δόκιμος παραστήσαι ἐργάτης ἀνεπαίσχυντος ὀρθοτομοῦντα (part. ὀρθοτομέω) | (aor. imp. σπουδάξω) (aor. inf. παρίστημι) | do one’s best; be zealous approved, tested present oneself; set forth workman one not needing to be ashamed cut in a straight line; handle correctly |
| v. 16 | βέβηλος κωνοφωνία | | accessible to anyone, therefore, unholy, profane empty sounds, babbling |

| | | | |
|-------|--|---|---|
| | περίιστασο ἐπὶ πλεῖον προκόψουσιν | (imp. περιίσταμαι) (fut. προκόπτω) | turn away from; avoid more and more; increasingly progress, go forward |
| v. 17 | γάγγραινα νομή ἔξει | (fut. ἔχω) | gangrene, cancer pasture have |
| v. 18 | ἤστοχῆσαν γεγονέναι ἀνατρέπω | (aor. ἀστοχέω) (perf. inf. γίνομαι) | miss the mark become; take place upset, destroy |
| v. 19 | μέντοι στερεός θεμέλιος ἔστηκεν σφραγίς ἔγνω ὄντας ἀποστήτω ὀνομάζων | (perf. ἵσταμαι) (aor. γινώσκω) (part. εἰμί) (aor. imp. ἀφίσταμαι) (part. ὀνομάζω) | indeed, nevertheless solid, firm foundation stand seal, inscription know be turn away from name |

EXEGESIS

- v. 14 With this verse Paul begins a new part concerning the practical work of the ministry itself, and how this calling requires a special measure of strength in the face of difficulties.

First of all, there were teachers in the churches supervised by Timothy who were not preaching correctly. Timothy’s difficult task was to set them straight: “Remind them about these things, testifying in the sight of God not to fight over words for that which has no value.”

Arguments over words, human philosophies, unprofitable quarreling—all these things were present in the churches already in these early days. Teachers in the congregations were becoming involved in such word-battles, with this result: “for upsetting of those who hear.” The hearers were becoming suspicious of divine truths because of such leaders. The Greek word *καταστροφή*, from which our English word “catastrophe” is derived, aptly pictures the sad results. There is no greater catastrophe than confusion in the church!

- v. 15 Timothy was therefore especially urged by Paul: “Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed.”

Aorist tenses are used to make this admonition strong: “Work hard to present yourself as one who is tested.” This “presenting” is to be “to God” in everything we say or do. Human considerations, such as being popular in the eyes of men, are not important. Moreover, as God’s workman a pastor should be *ἀνεπαίσχοντος*, not merely unashamed, but one who does not place himself in the position of being ashamed, let us say by thoughtless or improper acts.

The final test is to “cut in a straight line the Word of truth.”

The participial construction of a *ὀρθοτομέω* means more than “dividing” properly between Law and Gospel, as the King James Version suggests, and as Luther interprets. This meaning is included, of course. But the word applies to **all** Scriptural interpretation, in small and large matters. The Word of truth is to be cut straight. The true Scriptural meaning as intended by God, interpreting Scripture with Scripture, is all-important. Let the Word of truth speak clearly and directly!

- v. 16 “Turn away from profane babbling,” Paul continues. Again he uses the word *βέβηλος*, which is something accessible to everyone and used by everyone, therefore “unholy” or “profane.” The word which we translate with “babblings” is *κενοφωνία*, which means “empty sounds.” Some preachers seem to delight in proclaiming their own clever wisdom at the expense of God’s Word. From such emptiness Timothy should turn away. Why? “For they will progress more and more in ungodliness,” Paul declares. He refers to such men who indulge in vain babblings. It’s amazing how quickly foolish talk encourages godlessness (*ἀσεβεία*). Just how serious these babblers can become is expressed more fully in the next verse:
- v. 17 “And their word will have pasture as gangrene.” Surely a striking picture! *γάγγραινα* is a cancerous growth which eats away sound flesh and spreads throughout the whole body until a person finally dies. Like cattle eating in a pasture, the word of these babblers eats away the truth until none is left. A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump. Thus there is no such thing as “a little false doctrine.” Two of these people are mentioned by name: “Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus.” The former is mentioned also in 1 Timothy 1:20, whom Paul had to excommunicate. Philetus occurs only here.
- v. 18 These men “missed the mark concerning the truth, saying that the resurrection has already taken place, and they are upsetting the faith of some.” The cancer has grown in the case of these two from vain babblings to outright false doctrine, a denial of the resurrection of the dead. This, they taught, had already taken place. They taught, in other words, a spiritual resurrection, and denied a physical resurrection of the body as something yet to happen in the future. Any denial of the “resurrection of the body” at the last day is a rejection of a fundamental article of the Christian faith. Some were deceived by this. Their faith was upset or overturned. Fortunately not all were fooled by these vain babblers.

- v. 19 “Nevertheless,” Paul continues, “the foundation of God stands firm.” ὁ θεμέλιος, the foundation of God, has been interpreted as “the Church of God” (Lenski), “the Word of God” (Kretzmann), “the promises of God,” etc. Here the Church of all true believers, as it is built upon Jesus Christ, seems to fit best. This stands firm. The picture is one of solid strength, having been already established (perfect tense of ἵσταμαι).

Upon this solid foundation is a twofold **seal**: “The Lord knows those who are his” and “Everyone who confesses the Lord’s name must turn away from wickedness.” The first seal is fixed with God’s knowledge which began in eternity (aorist of γινώσκω). Although we translate this as “know,” one could just as well say “knew.” Neither the changing conditions of this world nor the ideas and efforts of men could effect this everlasting decree of God which rests with His mercy alone.

The second seal is for this time and this life. Those whom God has chosen are also those who confess His name. They separate themselves from all unrighteousness. They are truly His own people.

APPLICATION

False teachers are a constant danger to the Church of Jesus Christ. With empty words and vain babblings they will continue to work under Satan’s influence, doing their damage. At times it will seem as though their ungodly words and ways are working like an incurable cancer, with power to destroy everything holy and sacred.

“Do your best!” Paul says to Timothy. “Do this in God’s sight, not in man’s. This means to cut in a straight line the Word of truth.”

Do this faithfully, Paul means to say, and trust that the Church of God will continue to stand fast. God has determined that fact already from eternity. The fruits will not be lacking. God has promised us that, too!

As pastors we need to be thus encouraged again and again.

REVIEW QUESTIONS (2 Timothy 2:14-19)

1. How were some teachers upsetting their hearers?
2. What kind of workman was Timothy to be?
3. How could he be such a workman?
4. What happens when false teaching is not checked?
5. Concerning which doctrine especially did certain men teach falsely? How?
5. Why would the true Church, however, continue to stand firm?
7. How would the fruits of true preaching continue to show themselves in this Church?

FOR FURTHER STUDY

- A. Explain what is meant by “cutting in a straight line the Word of truth.” (Consult ὀρθοτομέω in a dictionary.)

B. Read John 5:28; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 1 Corinthians 15:12-20.

1. What kind of resurrection do these passages clearly teach?
2. With what words of the Apostles' Creed do we confess this truth?
3. How did some false teachers try to change this doctrine?

2 Timothy 2:20-25

TRANSLATION

- v. 20 Now in a large house there are not only utensils of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay; and some for honor and some for dishonor.
- v. 21 If, therefore, one cleanses himself of those (which are for dishonor), he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified, useful to the Master, having been prepared for every good work.
- v. 22 But flee the youthful lusts, pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace, together with those who call upon the Lord out of a pure heart.
- v. 23 Refuse foolish and uninstructed questionings knowing that they beget fights.
- v. 24 Now the Lord’s servant does not need to fight, rather must be gentle toward all, apt to teach, bearing injustice;
- v. 25 in meekness instructing those who oppose, if perhaps God may give them a change of heart toward realization of truth,
- v. 26 and that they will again become sober out of the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him for his own will.

WORD STUDY

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|-------|--|--|--|
| v. 20 | σκεῦος χρυσοῦς ἀργυροῦς ξύλινος ὄστράκιος | (neut. irregular noun, pl. σκεύη) | utensil, vessel, article made of gold, golden made of silver made of wood made of clay |
| v. 21 | ἐκκαθάρη ἔσται ἡγιασμένον εὐχρηστος ἡτοίμαχμένων | (aor. subj. ἐκκαθα) (fut. εἰμί) (perf. part. pass. ἀγιαξω) (perf. past. pass. ἐτοιμάξω) | cleanse be sanctify, make holy useful prepare |
| v. 22 | νεωτεριός ἐπικαλουμένων | (part. midd. ἐπικαλέω) | youthful call upon |

| | | | |
|-------|-----------------|----------------------------|---|
| v. 23 | μωρός | | foolish, trying to establish what cannot be established |
| | ἀπαίδευτος | | uninstructed, uneducated |
| | ζητήσεις | | investigation; questioning; discussion or debate |
| | παραιτοῦ | (imp. παραιτέομαι) | refuse |
| | εἰδώς | (part. οἶδα) | know |
| | γεννάω | | beget |
| v. 24 | ἥπιος | | mild, gentle |
| | ἀνεξίκακος | | bearing injustice; not resentful |
| v. 25 | πραΰτης | | meekness |
| | ἀντιδιαθεμένους | (part. ἀντιδιατίθεμαι) | those placing themselves in opposition |
| | μήποτε | | if perhaps |
| v. 26 | ἀνανήφωσιν | (aor. subj. ἀνανήφω) | again be sober, come to one's senses |
| | ἐξωγρημένοι | (perf. part. pass. ξωγρέω) | take captive; capture alive |

EXEGESIS

v. 20 δέ is not adversative. This means that it does not begin a contrary thought. That which follows continues to deal with the work of a pastor, this time making use of an interesting comparison: “Now in a large house there are not only utensils of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay.”

Paul now refers by means of this picture to the visible church. Just as in a large house the tools or utensils are of all different kinds, from the very expensive to those which have very little value, even so in the visible church there are also “good and bad.” There are members who are like pure gold, and members who are of little use. Or, as Paul compares: “And some for honor and some for dishonor.” Some, in other words, may have the outward show of usefulness, but serve little or no real purpose whatsoever. Some ought to be kept, and others which serve no purpose are to be discarded.

v. 21 Paul now carries on with this picture: “If, therefore, one cleanses himself of those (which are for dishonor), he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified, useful to the Master, having been prepared for every good work.”

The thought is this: if a person keeps himself clean from these “utensils of little value,” he will then be a utensil with value. He will be set apart, ready to be used by the Master, who is the Lord of the Church Himself.

In applying this picture we must remember the other warnings of Scripture, which tell us that it is not always so easy to judge by the outward appearance. And so here Paul can

only mean such people who outwardly profess to be members of the Christian Church, while at the same time doing things which are contrary to a Christian confession. From such people the true Christian is to keep himself free, lest he, too, become associated with their dishonorable ways. He is, of course, also to practice Christian admonition, as other passages of Scripture indicate.

The positive admonition here is to be a useful instrument in God's house. This we cannot be if we associate with such who live contrary to God's Word. "Tell me who your friends are, and I shall tell you who you are," is a well-known saying.

- v . 22 A "useful instrument" will show that he is made of the right material. Paul continues: "But flee the youthful lusts, pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace, together with those who call upon the Lord out of a pure heart." In both cases the verb "flee" and "pursue" are in the present imperative tense. This gives the sense of continuation: "keep on fleeing," "keep on pursuing." Paul wasn't admonishing Timothy because he had been guilty of youthful lusts, etc. He was rather encouraging him to show continued growth in Christian virtues.

ἐπιθυμίαι, translated "lusts," refers to all evil desires, as forbidden by the first two commandments. In 1 Timothy 6:11 we have the same virtues mentioned. Here "peace" is added. Peace is the opposite of fighting over words which have no value (v. 14).

Rather than to associate with those living unchristian lives, Timothy is urged to associate "together with those who call upon the Lord out of a pure heart." The opposite of evil lust is "a pure heart," the center of our whole Christian personality. Although it is often argued that we cannot look into the hearts of others, this verse surely indicates that there are ways of determining to some extent, at least, those who do call upon the Lord sincerely. "By their fruits ye shall know them," Jesus says.

- v. 23 Next Paul urges Timothy: "Refuse foolish and uninstructed questionings." The words *μωρός*, foolish or moronic, and *ἀπαιδευτος*, unschooled, as applied to repeated "questionings" points to people who raise silly questions and discussions which have no sense or basis in Scripture whatsoever. "Don't be fooled by these things!" Paul declares, "knowing that they beget fights." They end up in useless battles. Some people like to sit and talk for hours over matters which are trivial, and which lead to no real purpose. "Don't waste your time on such discussion," Paul says.
- v. 24 Rather than to become involved in such things, Paul adds: "Now the Lord's servant does not need to fight, rather must be gentle toward all, apt to teach, bearing injustice."

The picture before us is still that of a useful instrument of the Lord. He is actually a servant, or, more closely a slave of the Lord (*δοῦλος κυρίου*). His Lord's will controls him. He, therefore, doesn't provoke a fight (cf. Matthew 12:19 and Isaiah 41:2). He is *ἥπιος*, "gentle," also to the ungodly. Converts are not won by winning a battle of words! One who is *διδασκτικός*, "apt to teach," knows this. Yes, he even is willing to be

ἀνεξίκακος in the Lord's service, which means "putting up with things which are bad." How often in our work do we not find it necessary to put up with things which are very unpleasant, indeed! Here we are not talking about useless discussions, which Paul warns against in the previous verse. Before I gain others for Christ, I can expect that people will be suspicious of me. They may even be hostile, at first, accusing me of things which are not true. But I should try to do everything possible to win their confidence.

It is a different matter, of course, when those who are enemies of the Gospel openly oppose my work, or when false teachers try to destroy what has been done. Then a faithful minister of Christ will certainly do all that he can to defend the truth of God against vile attacks.

Here, however, we consider a situation where a minister of Christ deals with the weaknesses and the ignorance of natural man, who has not learned the truth of the Gospel, or who is as yet weak in his Christian understanding. This he must do constantly. This he must do in a gentle, winning way, suffering many things in a humble spirit for Christ's sake. To do this day after day in the spirit of understanding, with patience for the weaknesses of others, "bearing all things," as Paul says elsewhere, is not easy!

- v. 25 It is in this same sense that Paul continues this thought: "In meekness instructing those who oppose, if perhaps God may give them a change of heart toward realization of truth."

The important thought added here is that it is God, finally, who does the converting. God changes the heart (Jeremiah 31:18; 2 Corinthians 4:6; 2 Timothy 1:9, etc.). He who was in Satan's bondage came to realize the truth of what it means to have a Savior. Such a turning about is God's doing, an act of His grace alone.

- v. 26 This change is further described: "And that they will again become sober out of the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him for his own will." Like blind drunkards people were caught in the devil's trap. To repent is to be sober again, no longer ensnared by Satan's wiles. The past participial phrase, "having been taken captive, etc." has been interpreted in various ways. Lenski states that this refers to God, not Satan. (He bases this largely on the use of the perfect participle *ἐξωγρημένου*). Most translators apply this to the devil, continuing the thought expressed in the first part of this verse. This seems to follow most naturally.

The thought is this: in dealing with those whom we seek to win, we should do this in the spirit of evangelical kindness. The unconverted are in Satan's power. Only God can break this power. He has seen fit to use us as His instruments in this all-important work.

APPLICATION

This is one of the more difficult passages in Second Timothy to interpret. A thorough study of it, however, can be highly profitable, especially to a pastor who has experienced trials and hardships in his ministry.

A pastor is an instrument of God. This thought is vividly portrayed by means of a picture. In order to be a useful instrument, he will first of all be careful of his associations. He will keep himself free from useless pursuits as far as his work is concerned. We have often wondered about men who get involved in all sorts of community affairs, even in politics, and who try to be faithful pastors at the same time!

Moreover, as an instrument of God a pastor will not waste his time on all sorts of silly discussions. These only lead to fights.

As an instrument of God the pastor will rather seek to win for Christ, as well as to strengthen in their Christian faith, those who need his gentle guidance, sound teaching, and patient care. This is a full-time occupation. This is a difficult task.

The fruits of such a ministry, however, are souls snatched from the snares of Satan, hearts turned to God. There is no greater work in the world than to be God's own instrument for such a high purpose.

In these days we often see the two kinds of ministers of Christ referred to in these verses. There are these, first of all, whom Paul warns against. They seek the headlines in the newspapers. They are always getting involved in the affairs of this world. They want to win a popular name for themselves. They are vessels of clay.

There are those, on the other hand, who faithfully carry on their ministry of the Word according to Christ's direction. They are not renowned. They are often despised. Their purpose, however, is God's eternal purpose, which is to rescue lost sinners so that they become the people of God for all eternity. They are the vessels of gold.

Lord, make us useful instruments in Thy work, to Thy glory alone!

REVIEW QUESTIONS (2 Timothy 2:20-26)

1. To what does Paul compare ministers of Christ?
2. How should a man be a vessel for honor?
3. What should he refuse to do? Why?
4. What are the outstanding qualities of a faithful servant of the Lord?
5. What is his great purpose in all his work?
6. Briefly describe the two kinds of ministers of Christ to whom these verses apply.

FOR FURTHER STUDY

- A. Read 1 Corinthians 3:9-15.
 1. To what is every pastor compared in these verses?
 2. What kind of materials does he use for his work?
 3. What is the application of this picture?
- B. Read Matthew 10:34-36 and Matthew 23:33-39.

How do these passages agree with the verses of this section, where Paul urges pastors to be gentle, peaceful, and not causing fights?

2 Timothy 3:1-5

TRANSLATION

- v. 1 But take note of this, that in the last days there will arise difficult times.
- v. 2 For the people will be self-loving, money-loving, boastful, haughty, blasphemous, disobedient to elders,
- v. 3 ungrateful, unholy, loveless, unforgiving, slanderous, uncontrolled, untamed, not loving the good,
- v. 4 traitorous, rash, puffed up, pleasure-loving rather than God-loving,
- v. 5 having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof. Turn away from these!

WORD STUDY

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|------|--|------------------|---|
| v. 1 | ἔσχατος ἐστήσανται καιρός χαλεπός | (fut. ἐνίσταμαι) | last be established, occur a certain, definite period of time difficult; evil; grievous; hard to endure |
| v.2 | ἔσονται φίλαυτος φιλάργυρος ἀλάξων ὑπερήφανος γονεῖς ἀπειθής | (fut. εἰμί) | be self-loving money-loving boastful, loud-mouthed showing off, haughty elders disobedient |
| v.3 | ἄστοργός ἄσπονδος διάβολος ἄκρατής ἀνήμεπος ἀφιλάγαθος | | loveless, without natural affection not ready to compromise, unforgiving slanderous, diabolical without power over oneself, uncontrolled untamed, running wild not loving that which is good |
| v.4 | προδότης | | traitorous, treacherous |

| | | |
|-----|---|---|
| | προπετης τετυφωμένοι (perf. part. pass. τυφώω) | falling over oneself, rash blinded by smoke, puffed up, conceited |
| | φιλήδονος | pleasure-loving |
| v.5 | μόρφωσις ἡρνημένοι (perf. part. ἀρνέομαι) ἀποτρέπου(imp. ἀποτρεπομαι) | form; outward appearance deny turn away from; avoid |

EXEGESIS

- v. 1 Paul prophesies bad days ahead. A similar prophecy is found in 1 Timothy 4:1-3. Again Paul speaks by special revelation of God's Spirit. His words are intended once more to prepare and to strengthen Timothy.

“But take note of this,” Paul warns, “that in the last days there will be difficult times.” We translate the present imperative γίνωσκε as “take note of.” Timothy should know and continue to know with personal concern that “in the last days,” or in the days before Christ's second coming there would be certain periods of time (καιροί) which would be especially grievous. χαλεπός when related to καιροί means “times of stress,” or “times difficult to bear.” A καιρός is a specific period of time, thus not continuous, but coming and going.

- v. 2 The people (οἱ ἄνθρωποι) living in these times would make them difficult: “For the people will be self-loving, money-loving, boastful, haughty, blasphemous, disobedient to elders.”

First of the list of evil characteristics Paul places φίλαυτος, a love of self. Next is φιλάργυρος, a love of money. The first leads to the second, and all the other characterizations follow in their wake: being boastful or loud-mouthed (ἀλάξων), always showing off in a haughty way (ὑπερήφανος), and disobedient to elders.

- v. 3 The list of evil characteristics continues: “Ungrateful, unholy, loveless, unforgiving, slanderous, uncontrolled, untamed, not loving the good.” The list becomes more vicious. Where people lose respect for divine authority, they lose respect for human authority. Even natural qualities of love and decency toward fellow human beings disappear (ἄστοργος, loveless; ἄσπονδος, unforgiving). People become slanderous (διάβολος), uncontrolled (ἀκρατής), running wild (ἀνήμερος), generally without love for anything good (ἀφιλάγαθος). A sense of moral values once upheld by human society is turned upside down. Right becomes wrong and wrong becomes right as everything is twisted and turned in the wrong direction. Even human wisdom becomes a tool of evil, which is defended with a great show of knowledge.

- v. 4 But even more: “Traitorous, rash, puffed up, pleasure-loving rather than God-loving.”

They do not hesitate to betray (*προδοτής*), since there is no longer a sense of fair-mindedness. They plunge ahead without thinking of what they are doing (*προπετής*). They walk around like in a fog of smoke (*τετυφωμένοι*), puffed up as though they know it all.

To sum it up where it began: pleasure-loving (*φιλήδονος*) rather than God-loving (*φιλόθεος*).

- v. 5 And all this in the name of religion! “Having a form of godliness,” Paul adds, “but denying the power thereof.” Not only false-Christians, but people of every religious heresy can be included in this sweeping statement. Some of the greatest deceptions come in the name of religion. Some of the worst crimes are committed by religious fanatics.

“Turn away from these,” Paul urges. The present imperative again reminds us that we need to heed this warning constantly. The same evils keep cropping up again and again. After seeming to die down for awhile, they come back with increased viciousness.

APPLICATION

The words of this section speak pretty well for themselves. In almost every generation we hear it said, “I’d hate to have to be a pastor in these evil days!” We think that the times cannot get any worse, and yet they do.

Our own days show an increasing disrespect for the values set before us in God’s holy Law. The very opposite is often upheld and highly praised by intellectual experts. Marriage is no longer necessary, abortion is legal, might is right, open sins are excused as being permissible, and the Bible is a book of fables.

Is it any wonder that the world of today is under the constant threat of terrorism! Human life, personal and public property, practically anything which people cherish is just another object used by evil men to get what they want.

And some of the bitterest clashes are caused by religious fanatics, as we see in Ireland and in the Middle East. It hardly seems necessary to apply words of prophecy which are being literally fulfilled in every news announcement of today.

REVIEW QUESTIONS (2 Timothy 3:1-5)

1. What does Paul prophesy in the days to come?
2. What two evil characteristics head the list?
3. Name as many of the evils as you can remember.
4. With what words does Paul include religious fanatics?
5. Mention events going on today which are a fulfillment of these words.

FOR FURTHER STUDY

A. Read 1 Timothy 4:1-3; 2 Thessalonians 2:3 ff; Matthew 24:11-12.

Why do many evil things happening in the world today not surprise us?

B. Read Matthew 24:24 and also Matthew 24:35.

What assurance does the Lord give us concerning these last evil days?

2 Timothy 3:6-9

TRANSLATION

- v. 6 They are the kind who are sneaking into the houses and leading captive childish women who have been laden with sins, driven with lusts of different kinds,
- v. 7 always learning and never being able to come to a realization of truth.
- v. 8 In that manner as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so also these withstand the truth, men having been corrupted in their minds, not standing the test concerning the faith.
- v. 9 But they will not proceed farther, for their folly will be fully manifest to all, as also happened in the case of those (mentioned before).

WORD STUDY

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|------|-----------------|--------------------------------|---|
| v.6 | ἐνδύνοντες | (part. ἐνδύνω) | enter in a secret way; sneak or creep |
| | αἰχμαλωτιζόντες | (part. αἰμαλωτίζω) | lead captive; gain control over |
| | γυναικάριον | (diminutive of γυναική) | little women, usually in the sense of silly or childish women |
| | σεσωρευμένα | (perf. part. pass. σωρεύω) | weighted down, laden |
| | ἀγόμενα | (part. pass. ἄγω) | drive, lead |
| | ποικίλος | | of different kinds, manifold, varied |
| v. 7 | πάντοτε | | ever, always |
| | μανθάνοντα | (part. μανθάνομαι) | learn |
| | μηδέποτε | | never |
| v. 8 | τρόπος | | manner |
| | ἀνέστησαν | (aor. ἀνίσταμαι) | withstand, oppose |
| | κατεφθαρμένοι | (perf. part. pass. καταφθείρω) | corrupt |
| v. 9 | προκόψουσιν | (fut. προκόπτω) | proceed farther, progress |
| | ἐπὶ πλείον | | farther |
| | ἄνοια | | folly, lack of understanding |
| | ἔκδηλος | | fully manifest, very apparent |

EXEGESIS

- v. 6 In the previous section Paul has prophesied evil times in days ahead, characterizing the kind of evil persons as well as evil teachers who would come. He has described them as men who have an outward form of godliness, but who deny its real power.

In these verses Paul describes these false prophets in even greater detail: “Then are the kind who are sneaking into the houses and leading captive childish women who have been laden with sins, driven with lusts of different kinds.”

Just as Satan came first to Eve, so also these false teachers use the method of approaching women. They enter into their homes in a tricky way, hiding their real purpose so that they can deceive and gain control over such women. The diminutive form for woman used here (*γυναικάριον*) usually has a derogatory meaning, indicating that these women were an easy prey, easily misled, moved by emotions rather than mature wisdom.

These women are further described as such who have been weighed down (perf. part. pass. of *σωρεύω*) with sins, and driven by all sorts of lusts. They are insecure, restless, unhappy, discontented—just the kind to be taken in by such who promise all sorts of easy solutions to their problems.

- v.7 Moreover, these women are “always learning and never being able to come to a realization of truth.”

The true Gospel doesn’t suit their fancies. They are rather searching for something different, something more exciting, something which these slick-talking religious salesmen seem to offer. Sometimes they jump from one new thing to the next. And as a result the true answer is never realized by them.

- v. 8 Paul gives two examples of such deceitful practice out of Old Testament history: “In that manner as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so also these withstand the truth.”

Jewish tradition teaches that these two men were the sons of Balaam, and that they were Egyptian magicians. In any case, as Paul declares, they refused to listen to anything which Moses and Aaron had to say. The emphasis, or point of comparison, is their opposition to the truth (the verb *ἀνθίσταμαι*, is used twice). These false teachers helped to harden Pharaoh’s heart against the message of God. Even so (*οὕτως καὶ οὗτοι*) these false prophets will turn the hearts of their silly followers against the Gospel’s saving truth.

They are “men having been corrupted in their minds.” The use of the perfect participle (*κατεφθαρμένοι*) indicates that this depraved condition began in the past and is a continuing process. The passive tense shows that the devil actually did the corrupting. Furthermore, they are men “not standing the test concerning the faith.” “Faith” here is the objective truth of the Gospel, the doctrine which true Christians believe. Over against this truth of God these men are *ἀδόκιμοι*, unable to stand the test of truth and therefore rejected.

- v. 9 The preceding words of Paul portray a grim picture as far as the future is concerned. Paul, however, has words of encouragement to offer: “But then will not proceed farther, for their folly will be fully manifest to all, as also happened in the case of those (mentioned before).”

Evil has its season. But only up to a certain point; and then it advances no farther. Even in this world corrupted by sin there comes a time when this extreme folly reaches a limit and is openly exposed for what it is God is not mocked. He, who controls all things, does not permit the rule to be taken out of His hand.

As in the case of Jannes and Jambres—not only the Israelites, but even the Egyptians learned to recognize them as deceivers.

The closing words of this verse are difficult to translate literally, but obviously refer to the Jannes-Jambres case. We add the words “mentioned before” to indicate this.

APPLICATION

In our days of Watchtower, Mormonism, Adventism, as well as the five to six thousand sects following Bantu “prophets” south of the Sahara desert in Africa, it isn’t difficult to apply Paul’s words in this section of verses. Africa has its share of religious fanatics, leaders with some new “medicine.”

In Europe and America it seems also that every kind of peculiar teaching is able to win a large following. Often the farther from the truth it is, the more popular it becomes. Even Indian “gurus” and followers of Krishna are growing.

People throughout the world are restless. Women especially are seeking new outlets for their “freedom.” One can take any number of sentences out of these verses and see where they apply so strikingly to the situation in the world today. A glance at any newspaper or magazine is all that is needed to verify this. People today are “always learning and never being able to come to a realization of truth.”

Will these foolish ideas swallow us up? Fortunately there comes a time when God Himself declares: “Stop. I’ve had enough!” Eventually error must break down before the power of eternal truth and be exposed for the foolishness that it is. And at the end of it all, we know, the justice of God will surely prevail. Only God’s Word endures forever.

REVIEW QUESTIONS (2 Timothy 3:6-9)

1. How does Paul further describe the methods of these false teachers in winning followers?
2. What do these silly followers never realize in spite of all their learning?
3. Which men in the Old Testament were examples of such who opposed the truth?
4. What assurance does Paul give in this whole matter?
5. What will happen to all foolish teachings by which so many people are deceived?

FOR FURTHER STUDY

A. Read Acts 13:6-12.

1. Which sorcerer tried to oppose Paul?
2. Which man did he try to win as a follower?
3. What happened to him?

B. 1. From the record of Moses and Aaron before Pharaoh in Egypt (Exodus 7:10-13; Exodus 7:22; Exodus 8:7), what were the magicians and sorcerers able to do?

2. By whose power did they do this?
3. Read Exodus 8:18-19; Exodus 9:11. Who put a limit to the power of these magicians?

C. Describe the methods of a religious sect known to you which fits Paul's words of prophecy in this section.

2 Timothy 3:10-13

TRANSLATION

- v. 10 You, however, have closely followed my teaching, my way of life, my purpose, my faith, my long-suffering, my love, my endurance,
- v. 11 my persecutions, my sufferings, what things happened to me in Antioch, in Iconium, in Lystra, what kind of persecutions I endured, and from all the Lord rescued me.
- v. 12 And all, moreover, who want to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.
- v. 13 But wicked men and imposters will proceed from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.

WORD STUDY

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|-------|---|--|--|
| v. 10 | παρακολούθησας (aor. παρακολουθέω) ἀγωγῇ πρόθεσις | | follow closely way of life, conduct purpose, way to a goal |
| v. 11 | διωγμός οἷος ὑπήνεγκαν (aor. ὑποφέρω) ἔρρύσατο (aor. ῥύομαι) | | persecution what kind of endure rescue, save |
| v. 12 | ζάω διωχθήσονται (fut. pass. διώκω) | | live persecute |
| v. 13 | γόης (derived from γοάω – wail) χείρων πλανῶντες (part. πλανᾶω) | | lit. one who wails, or cries out some formula of witchcraft; an imposter worse deceive, lead astray |

EXEGESIS

- v. 10 By way of contrast to the deceivers just described, Paul again reminds Timothy of his own example: “You, however, have closely followed my teaching, my way of life, my purpose, my faith, my long-suffering, my love, my endurance.”

The Greek text emphasizes Timothy (σὺ δέ) in contrast to those previously mentioned. Their way was not Timothy’s way. Why? Because Timothy followed Paul’s way.

Paul mentions the things which Timothy learned to follow, and did follow (aorist). The first was Paul's teaching (διδασκαλία). That was the basis. Closely connected to this was Paul's way of life or entire conduct (ἀγωγή). That way of life had a purpose, a goal (πρόσθεσις). It was something in which Paul firmly believed (πίστις). Paul believed it sufficiently to be willing to teach with long-suffering (μακροθυμία), love (ἀγάπη), and endurance (ὑπομονή).

- v. 11 Yes, Paul's purpose and conviction meant other things: "My persecutions, my sufferings, what things happened to me in Antioch, in Iconium, in Lystra, what kind of persecutions I endured."

Timothy was well acquainted with these adverse experiences in Paul's life. The places here mentioned were in and near Timothy's home, and took place on Paul's very first missionary journey into Galatia (Acts 13:45 to 14:19). A brief study of these experiences will show how from the very beginning Paul was required in his work to bear intense hatred and vicious persecutions. Often his very life was in extreme danger. These experiences are referred to by Paul not in order to boast, but to show by way of contrast what a faithful ministry required.

They also revealed something else: "And from all the Lord rescued me." God's saving hand was there, in the midst of the greatest dangers.

- v. 12 Such sufferings are not strange and exceptional: "And all, moreover, who want to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted."

These words are both reassuring and at the same time serious to the true Christian. Reassuring, first of all, because **all** (πάντες) are expected to suffer for Christ's sake. No one need think that he's the only one. It's part of being a Christian to bear the cross patiently and courageously. Serious, at the same time, because no one will escape the test. Some may suffer persecutions more than others. Persecution may take various forms. But no one is excluded.

- v. 13 "But wicked men," Paul continues, "and impostors will proceed from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived."

The word which is translated impostors—γόης—is an interesting word. It is derived from γοάω, which means to wail. The wailing was done by jugglers or sorcerers as they carried on their work of deception. In a transferred sense the word γόης can mean a deceiver or an impostor. We translate ἐπὶ τὸ χεῖρον "from bad to worse." Literally it means "unto the worse."

The meaning is simply this: as wickedness progresses, it reaches the point eventually where it becomes self-destructive. Even the wicked men and impostors are caught up in their own evil schemes and destroyed by them.

APPLICATION

This group of verses emphasizes once more a truth often pointed out by Scripture: bearing a cross is a self-evident part of a Christian life. “Beloved, think it not strange,” Peter says. “We must through much tribulation,” Paul declares elsewhere. “These are they,” John writes, “who have come out of great tribulation.” “Ye shall be hated by all men for my name’s sake,” is a word of Jesus, who also says, “Whosoever will my disciple be, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me.”

This doesn’t mean that we must suffer from a “persecution complex,” or imagine that we must openly provoke such persecution in order to be “Christian.” Here we mean suffering for Christ’s sake, in the cause of His Gospel, bearing whatever shame and contempt goes along with being a confessing Christian.

We don’t by nature welcome this aspect of our Christian life. In fact, we often shrink from it and try to avoid it. But sooner or later, in some way or other, the Lord puts his finger on us and says, “I mean you. What are you going to do about confessing my name in spite of opposition and hardship?”

When that time comes, it will become evident whether or not we have closely followed Paul’s and Christ’s teaching, way of life, purpose, conviction, long-suffering, love, and endurance. Lord, help us meet the test in keeping with our calling and our profession!

REVIEW QUESTIONS (2 Timothy 3:10-13)

1. What happened to Paul as a result of his confession of Christ?
2. What will happen to all who want to live a godly life in Christ Jesus?
3. What will happen to wicked men and impostors?
4. Whose example are we encouraged to follow?
5. Why is persecution nothing to fear?

FOR FURTHER STUDY

- A. Read Acts 13:45 to Acts 14:19. List some of the things Paul suffered in Timothy’s home country.
- B. Read John 16:1-4
 1. What will some people think when they put Christ’s followers to death?
 2. Why will they think this way?
 3. Why does Jesus say this to His disciples?

2 Timothy 3:14-17

TRANSLATION

- v. 14 But as for you, continue in the things you have learned and were assured of, knowing from whom you learned them;
- v. 15 and that from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.
- v. 16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is profitable for teaching, for refutations for restoration, for instruction in righteousness,
- v. 17 so that the man of God may be capable, having been thoroughly equipped for every good work.

WORD STUDY

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|-------|------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| v. 14 | ἐπιστάθης | (aor. pass. πιστόω) | firmly trust; passive – be assured of |
| v. 15 | βρέφος | | newborn child, infant |
| | ἱερός | | holy |
| | τὰ ἱερὰ γράμματα | | the Holy Scriptures (in this case the Old Testament Scriptures) |
| | σοφίσαι | (aor. inf. σοφίζω) | make wise |
| v. 16 | γραφή | | Scripture; Used in the N.T. as “Holy Scripture,” as a whole |
| | θεόπνευστος | (predicative, referring to γραφή) | God-breathed, inspired |
| | ὠφέλιμος | | profitable |
| | ἐλεγμός | | rebuking, refutation (in the sense of reproving those who are guilty of religious error) |
| | ἐπανόρθωσις | | restoration, correcting (in the sense of setting straight those who have fallen into sin) |
| v. 17 | ἄρτιος | | capable, by nature fit, apt |
| | ἐξηρτισμένος | (perf. part. pass. ἐξαρτίζω) | equip thoroughly |

EXEGESIS

- v. 14 The emphasis is again upon Timothy, as in verse 10 (σὺ δέ): “But as for you, continue in the things you have learned and were assured of, knowing from whom you learned them.”

Aorist tenses are used (ἐμαθες and ἐπιστώθης). Timothy learned and was assured or convinced of certain truths. In these things he is urged to remain, to continue, to abide (μένε) also in the present and for the future. Those from whom Timothy learned these things in the past were, of course, his mother and grandmother, as the next verse brings out especially.

- v. 15 And what were “these things” of which Timothy was assured? “And that from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures,” Paul declares. The ὅτι clause is explanatory, or as we say, exexegetical. From infancy Timothy learned and therefore knew (οἶδας) the Holy Scriptures (τὰ ἱερὰ γράμματα). With or without the definite article this term is used for the canonical writings of the Old Testament.

Lenski makes quite a point of the use of γράμματα in this verse instead of γραφαί, used in the following verse. He claims that γράμματα was a term used for letters, indicating that Timothy as a little boy learned “sacred letters” from the Old Testament, not “the whole Old Testament canon.” Most Greek authorities prove clearly, however, that ἱερὰ γράμματα applied to the entire Old Testament Scriptures, and that Lenski’s distinction doesn’t have much basis in fact (cf. Arndt-Gingrich and others).

What did Timothy learn from these sacred writings? Paul explains:

“Which are able to make you wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.” Even though we are speaking about the Old Testament Scriptures, we know that they also pointed to the Messiah, giving a knowledge of that salvation which is received by faith in Christ Jesus (cf. John 5:39). At the time when Timothy as a child learned the Scriptures, the New Testament was not as yet written.

- v. 16 Paul now builds upon Timothy’s past experience to emphasize a most important truth for the present: “All Scripture is God-breathed and is profitable for teaching, for refutation, for restoration, for instruction in righteousness.”

Here Paul uses the word πᾶσα γραφή, all Scripture. Again there can be no question about the use of this word applying to the Old Testament canon. Did Paul now also mean to include the New Testament writings up to this point as well? Kretzmann sees no reason for excluding “the writings then being penned by inspiration of God.” We can go a step farther, based upon the word which modifies πᾶσα γραφή, namely θεόπνευστος. In other words, the reference here is to every Scripture which can be included as “God-breathed.” Paul lays claim to his own writings as “words taught by the Spirit” (1 Corinthians 2:13). The reference here is to all God-inspired writings.

But what do we mean by θεόπνευστος, “God-breathed”? This verbal adjective is passive, “because God is the agent,” as commentators point out. The meaning can only be explained by passages of Scripture itself, not by references to secular writings, as many so-called theologians do who try to disprove what they call the “theory” of inspiration. A passage such as 2 Peter 1:21, for example, shows how God’s Spirit was the real agent, and the holy writers were his instruments. This is the fact of inspiration, not a mere theory. And it applies to “all Scripture,” not just in its main ideas or thoughts, but in its very words (verbal inspiration!). It applies not only to the Gospel, or to doctrines relating to Christ and the way to salvation, but to all that is written. To separate thoughts from words, or Gospel from the rest, is to make man the real judge of that which is to be His holy Word.

It has often been argued that the doctrine of verbal inspiration is a “mechanical” theory. It makes “machines” out of the holy writers of the Bible. But if we believe that God made man, body and spirit, then surely this same God has the power to guide men by His Spirit without using them like machines or blocks of wood. We grant that much about this doctrine is difficult to understand. It is an article of faith. To indulge in all sorts of human speculation concerning this doctrine is to rob our Christianity of this important aspect of faith. We believe as we do because God has declared it so!

This Scripture, Paul continues, is profitable for διδασκαλίαν, teaching, a teaching that comes from God. It is profitable πρὸς ἐλεγμὸν, for refutation. The thought here is to “counteract false doctrine” rather than to “correct sin,” as is brought out by πρὸς ἐπανόρθωσιν. The latter expression really means to set straight that which has fallen, as in the case of one who has fallen into sin. Finally, Scripture is profitable πρὸς παιδείαν τὴν ἐν δαικισύνη, “for instruction in righteousness.” How to be judged righteous in God’s sight can only be learned through a study of the Holy Scriptures. These point us to Christ, who alone is our Righteousness. If we must depend upon the righteousness which we achieve before God by obeying His Law, we can only despair of any righteousness before Him.

- v. 17 Paul closes this important passage about the Holy Scriptures by pointing to the result (ἴνα) of using them according to the previous passage: “So that the man of God may be capable having been thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

ἄρτιος means “in fit condition.” The perfect participle of ἐξαρτίξω strengthens the same idea. A Christian who follows God’s Word as explained in its various uses will be fitted out to live before God and man as he should. He is not lacking in any necessary equipment. He will do the will of God.

APPLICATION

We have gone into more detail than usual in explaining this section because it is one of the important passages (*a locus classicus*) to prove the doctrine of verbal inspiration.

The application of this passage to Timothy, to every pastor, and to every Christian is clear. Paul wants Timothy to be strong. He wants every pastor and every Christian to be strong as well. And what is the greatest source of strength? Our strength must come from God, who speaks to us in His Holy Word

We can be sure that we have this Word. God inspired His Holy Writers to set down in writing everything needed for being wise unto salvation, as well as everything necessary to teach and preach this truth of God to others.

“Bad days are coming,” was the Apostle’s warning as we began this part. But we have no reason to fear, because we have something solid to which we can always cling. Let us also “continue in the things we have learned”!

REVIEW QUESTIONS (2 Timothy 3:14-17)

1. When did Timothy begin to learn the Holy Scriptures? From whom?
2. What wisdom did he learn from them?
3. How did God give men the Holy Scriptures?
4. How should they be used?
5. What purpose do they serve in the life of every man of God?
6. Where can we, too, find our greatest source of strength?

FOR FURTHER STUDY

- A. Read John 5:39. What does Jesus say about the Old Testament Scriptures?
- B. Read 2 Peter 1:21 and compare with 2 Timothy 3:16. How did God give His Word to men?
- C. Read 1 Corinthians 2:13 and 1 Thessalonians 3:17. What did Paul also state clearly about his own writings?

2 Timothy 4:1-5

TRANSLATION

- v. 1 I am bearing witness before God and Christ Jesus, the one who is about to judge living and dead, both by His appearing and His kingdom:
- v. 2 Preach the Word; stand ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke exhort, in all long-suffering and instruction.
- v. 3 For there will come a time when they will not endure the healthy teaching, but according to their own desires they will heap up for themselves teachers, as such who are itching with respect to the ear,
- v. 4 and they will turn away the ear from the truth, but will be twisting aside to the myths.
- v. 5 But as for you, be sober in all things; suffer hardship; do the work of an evangelist; carry out your service to completion.

WORD STUDY

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|------|--------------------------|-----------------------|---|
| v. 1 | διαμαρτύρομαι testify | | bear (solemn) witness; charge; |
| | μέλλοντας | (part. μέλλω) | be about to (indicating future) |
| | ζώντας | (part. ζάω) | live |
| | ἐπιφάνειαν | | appearing (here acc. with διαμαρτυρέω, indicating that by which someone has borne witness) |
| v. 2 | κήρυξον | (aor. imp. κηρύσσω) | preach |
| | ἐπίστηθι | (aor. imp. ἐφίσταμαι) | step forward; stand ready |
| | εὐκαίρως ἀκαίρως | | literally, at a favorable time or at an unfavorable time; the King James “in season and out of season” covers the meaning well |
| | ἔλεγξον | (aor. imp. ἐλέγχω) | correct, set right, bring to light, reprove |
| | ἐπιτίμησον | (aor. imp. ἐπιτιμάω) | rebuke |
| v. 3 | ἀνεξονται | (fut. ἀνέχομαι) | endure, tolerate |
| | ἐπισωρεύουσιν | (fut. ἐπισωρεύω) | heap up, gather many round about themselves |

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|------|---------------|------------------------|--|
| | κνηθόμενοι | (part. κνήθομαι) | to suffer an itch (refers here to the subject, not to the διδασκάλους) |
| | ἀκοή | (here acc. of respect) | ear |
| v. 4 | ἀποστρέψουσιν | (fut. ἀποστρέψω) | turn away from |
| | ἐκτραπήσονται | (fut. ἐκτρέπομαι) | twist aside toward |
| v. 5 | νήφε | (imp. νήφω) | be sober |
| | πληροφόρησον | (aor. imp. πληροφορέω) | fulfill, carry to completion |

EXEGESIS

v. 1 Paul's letter to Timothy is reaching its close. He has warned Timothy concerning the evil days ahead. He has pointed out the danger of false teachers, their methods, the need to follow his own example in suffering hardship, and especially the strength provided by the Holy Scriptures.

Now Paul adds one more admonition to be faithful. This is in the form of a solemn testimony. Paul calls upon God as a witness (*διαμαρτύρομαι*), which gives his statement the deepest possible solemnity: "I am bearing witness before God and Christ Jesus."

Jesus is further described as "the one who is about to judge living and dead." For Paul, who is about to die, that judgment would take place very soon! What a solemn testimony!

Paul further testifies "both by His appearing and His kingdom." The accusative with *διαμαρτύρομαι* indicates that by which a testimony has been taken. We witness, for example, before God by the confession which we have made to His Word. Paul bears witness before God and Christ by the fact of Christ's appearing. This appearance of the glorious King of kings is certain. It will take place at the time of judgment.

v. 2 Paul now comes with the purpose of the testimony itself, the solemn charge to Timothy: "Preach the Word." As a herald (*κηρυξ*) Timothy is to proclaim publicly the Word, the message which God has given him to proclaim, without personal embellishment, addition, or subtraction. Moreover, Timothy is to "stand ready in season and out of season." There is no time when proclaiming the Word is "out of season" (*ἀκαιρως*). There is no such thing as a "holiday" from God's Word. If the Word seems out of place, then we're in the wrong kind of place!

With the same Word Timothy is to "reprove, rebuke, exhort," (see 2 Timothy 3:16 for a more detailed explanation of these words!), "in all long-suffering and instruction." Some exegetes have tried to distinguish between *διδαχή* and *διδασκαλία*, as though one means the act of teaching and the other means the content of teaching. A comparison of many passages in the New Testament shows that each word is used in both ways. Here the context seems to call for the act of teaching, or the instruction given in God's Word, as this is done with all care. A faithful pastor will bring to light and then also reprove

(ἐλέγχω) the faults of others. He will rebuke (ἐπιτιμάω) sin without fear or favor. He will exhort (παρακαλέω) or admonish those who need to be encouraged. He will do this by means of a careful use of Scripture, applying God's Word to the situation as needed.

- v. 3 “Do this when the Word still speaks to the hearts of the people,” Paul implies with his next thought, as he adds: “For there will come a time when then will not endure healthy teaching, but according to their own desires they will heap up for themselves teachers.”

“Healthy teaching” (ὕγιαινούση διδασκαλία), as we know, is a favorite expression of Paul. This pure, life-giving, unadulterated teaching of the Word of God, the power of God unto salvation, will no longer be tolerated, even by the people in the churches. Instead they will heap up for themselves teachers who preach what the people want to hear according to their own natural desires. κατὰ τὰς ἰδίας ἐπιθυμίας denotes the lusts of the flesh, popular ideas which are in tune with the opinions of this sinful world. As many so-called “Christian” churches are openly doing this very thing today, contradicting the plain truth and intent of God's Word (marriage, abortion, political and social involvement, denial of miracles, the virgin birth, the resurrection, heaven, hell, etc.), we see these words of Paul fulfilled.

Paul further describes these future church-people: “As such who are itching with respect to the ear.” Religion becomes for them like ears which have an itch, always chasing about for some new way to be scratched, yet never finding the “one thing needful” to put an end to the itching.

- v. 4 As a further explanation to this Paul adds: “And they will turn away the ear from the truth, but will be twisting aside to the myths.” ἀκοη—ear—is again used for their “sense of hearing.” Their turning away from the truth of God's Word will result in a frantic twisting aside toward the myths and fables of human wisdom. As ridiculous as such perverse behavior may seem to us, we see it take place constantly. The World Council of Churches, for example, has become a worldly forum of misguided human philosophy. And this is all done in the name of Christ and under the guise of great wisdom!
- v. 5 Paul now turns to Timothy again personally (σὺ δέ) and renews his earnest plea for faithfulness: “But as for you, be sober in all things; suffer hardship; do the work of an evangelist; carry out your service to completion.”

The present imperative νῆφε (“continue to be sober”) is followed by three aorist imperatives, indicating how Timothy's continued use of sound judgment in all things is to be carried out in the definite actions which follow.

A part of this action is to “suffer hardship” (κακοπάθησον). One can hardly expect to go contrary to the wild notions of this misguided world and not suffer every kind of abuse on account of it!

Moreover, Timothy is encouraged to “do the work of an evangelist.” An “evangelist” is simply a man who works with the Gospel. That Gospel is still the only “power of God unto salvation,” the only means of bringing sinners to a knowledge of the truth. To the world this Gospel remains a “foolishness.” To those who are saved it is “the power of God” and “wisdom of God.”

Finally, Timothy is to “carry out his service to completion.” The King James translation is good: “Make full proof of thy ministry.” Also the NIV: “Discharge all the duties of your ministry.” The verb *πληροφόρησον* actually means to “fulfill,” to “do everything possible,” not to neglect any necessary duty. This is what being faithful to the calling of the holy ministry requires!

APPLICATION

Again the words of this section are so very personal and so very practical in content that a special word of application is hardly required.

In a previous notation found in my Greek text I find the words in the margin: “*Theologia est habitus practicus.*” Theology is a practical way of life, not merely an abstract expression of beautiful principles, written down on paper.

This truth of our old Lutheran dogmaticians applies especially to the office of the ministry. Paul is deadly serious as he places these words of admonition on Timothy’s heart and conscience. Paul creates no grand illusions. He paints no rosy pictures. “Timothy, this is the way it’s going to be! You have no idea how perverse fallen humanity will become! And this will happen right within the visible church itself! Men will teach and follow every kind of twisted human philosophy. Those who are not swept along in the stream of popular opinions will be the outcasts, even though they cling to the truth. Nobody, it seems, will really want to listen to the truth anymore.

“All the more reason for you, Timothy, to keep your head clear! Don’t think it strange when you suffer hardship, when public opinion goes against you. Keep on preaching and teaching the Gospel, come what may. Carry out your service of the Word faithfully in every detail. The times will demand of you nothing less!”

This is what it means—we see—to “make full proof of our ministry.”

REVIEW QUESTIONS (2 Timothy 4:1-5)

1. Whom does Paul call upon to witness his testimony to Timothy?
2. What makes the witness of Jesus Christ especially urgent?
3. What should Timothy do with the Word?
4. How should Timothy do all these things?
5. What response will Timothy be able to expect?
6. Describe the expression “itching ears.”
7. How can Timothy prove his faithfulness in the face of such opposition?

FOR FURTHER STUDY

A. Of whom is the word ἐπιφάνεια used in the following passages?

1. 1 Timothy 6:14
2. 2 Thessalonians 2:8
3. 2 Timothy 1:10

Which “epiphany” of Christ is referred to in 2 Timothy 4:1?

B. According to 2 Timothy 4:2, what is the difference in meaning between the following imperatives:

1. ἔλεγξον
2. ἐπιτίμησον
3. παρακάλεσον

BE STRONG IN THE DAYS AHEAD— LESSON XVIII

VICTORY IS ASSURED

2 Timothy 4:6-8

TRANSLATION

- v. 6 For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand.
- v. 7 I have fought the good fight; I have finished the race; I have kept the faith.
- v. 8 As for the rest, there is laid up for me the crown of the righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all those who have longed for his appearing.

WORD STUDY

| | | | |
|------|-----------|--------------------|--|
| v. 6 | σπένδομαι | (pass. σπένδω) | passive denotes a drink-offering being poured out, a typical picture of a martyr's death |
| | ἀνάλυσις | | departure; actually, loosening of cords |
| | ἐφέστηκεν | (perf. ἐφίσταμαι) | be at hand |
| v. 7 | ἄγών | (n.) | fight |
| | ἠγωνίσμαι | (perf. αγωνίζομαι) | fight (v.t.) |
| | δρόμος | | running (of a race) |
| | τετέλεκα | (perf. τελέω) | finish, complete |
| | τετήρηκα | (perf. τηρέω) | keep, preserve |
| v. 8 | λοιπόν | | finally, as for the rest, in future |
| | ἀπόκειμαι | | be in store, be ready and waiting |
| | ἀποδώσει | (fut. ἀποδίδωμι) | give as an award, present |

EXEGESIS

- v. 6 Paul now turns his attention from Timothy (σὺ δέ) to himself (ἐγὼ γάρ). He speaks of himself metaphorically as being “poured out as a drink offering”: “For I am already being poured out as a drink offering.” The picture, taken from the verb σπένδομαι, is of a libation of wine which was poured out upon or near a sacrifice as a final act of offering. (Even today before drinking a glass of wine, people will pour out a bit of it on the ground as a sacrifice to the wine-god.) Paul means to say that his life is already (ἤδη) being sacrificed in a martyr's death. As he then also adds: “And the time of my departure is at hand.” The word ἀναλύσεως was used for the loosening of cords when a ship was moored, thus the meaning “departure,” and in the case of departing this life, the word was

used as a picture of death. This is the beginning of the end! Or, as Lenski says, “Paul is taking down his tent.”

- v. 7 The pictures are now intensified: “I have fought the good fight; I have finished the race; I have kept the faith.”

Lenski makes a big point of trying to show that ἀγών is not a “battle,” but an “athletic contest.” He takes exception to versions which speak of “fighting a good fight.” We see no great problem in letting the words of our text retain their most direct meaning, comparing the life of a Christian, as in many other passages, to a battle. Yes, in the light of the weapons which God provides, and with a view towards the victory which is assured, it can even be called a “good fight” (καλὸν ἀγῶνα). Previously Timothy is encouraged to do the same (1 Timothy 1:18). The fact that Paul here uses various figures of speech in the same verse should not disturb us. He has done the same in the verse just preceding this one!

A δρόμον is a race-course. As applied to Paul’s life he has now just about finished this race-course (note perfect tense of τελέω). This is a race of endurance. Important it is that Paul has “kept the faith.” Here both objective (*fides quae creditur*) and subjective (*fides qua creditur*) faith are meant. Paul has been faithful in preserving both his own personal faith and the true object of this faith unto the very end!

- v. 8 “As for the rest, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all those who have longed for his appearing.”

Paul now looks to the future, that which remains for him (λοιπόν). There he sees already in store (ἀποκείμει) for him “the crown of righteousness.” Kretzmann very fittingly writes: “The prize and reward of grace is the crown of righteousness, the final declaration of righteousness by God, the final imputation of the righteousness of Jesus, by which we are free from all guilt and condemnation.... Christ, who will Himself be the Judge on the last day, will be acting in His capacity as just Judge in awarding this prize, not to works, but to faith. Since we shall appear before the judgment-throne of God with a firm reliance upon the imputed righteousness of Christ, it will be a merciful and yet a just judgment which will award to us the crown of righteousness.” Beautifully said! Over against the many conflicting explanations concerning “righteousness” set forth in connection with this passage, how well Kretzmann understands the concept of imputed righteousness as explained elsewhere by Paul himself!

Even so, all Christians who have this same intense desire for Christ’s second epiphany may confidently expect the same crown of righteousness to be waiting for them!

APPLICATION

These words of this section have been aptly called “Paul’s last will and testament.” They have resounded at many a funeral of a faithful pastor. “Noble words,” Lenski declares with eloquence. “The sun is setting blood-red, but is shot through with golden glory.”

What impresses us especially about these words of Paul is the absolute assurance which he again expresses concerning the final outcome of his life of faith. He is sure of his salvation. As he expresses elsewhere in the same context: “I know...I am persuaded.” This confidence is built not upon himself, as though he has in any way deserved this eternal reward. It is **waiting** for him. It will be **given** to him. **Christ** has purchased and won it. This is an **imputed righteousness**. All those who cling to it by faith as a gift of pure grace, will be partakers of this same heavenly glory!

With these stirring words the body of Paul’s Second Epistle to Timothy is completed. That which follows consists of personal remarks and greetings.

“O Timothy, be strong!” is the stirring theme throughout. “A blessed crown of righteousness awaits you at the end!”

REVIEW QUESTIONS (2 Timothy 4:6-8)

1. What does Paul mean when he refers to himself as being “poured out as a drink offering”?
2. To what three things does he call Timothy’s attention?
3. What does Paul therefore expect to receive?
4. Who will give this to Paul?
5. When will this take place?
6. How many will take part in the same blessing?

FOR FURTHER STUDY

- A. 1. Read Numbers 15:1-10. To what kind of offerings does this passage also refer?
2. Read Philippians 2:17. What same comparison does Paul use in this passage?
 3. Why do these two letters (Philippians, 2 Timothy) stress this comparison?
- B. Note the use of the three perfect tenses of the verb in 2 Timothy 4:7.
What does the use of these tenses show about the actions to which Paul refers?

2 Timothy 4:9-18**TRANSLATION**

- v. 9 Hasten to come to me quickly.
- v. 10 For Demas deserted me, having loved this present world, and went to Thessalonica, Crescens to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia.
- v. 11 Luke is the only one with me. Take Mark along and bring him with you, for he is useful to me in service.
- v. 12 I sent Tychicus back to Ephesus.
- v. 13 When coming bring the cloak which I left behind in Troas with Carpus; also the books, especially the parchments.
- v. 14 Alexander, the coppersmith, did me much harm. The Lord will repay him according to his works.
- v. 15 Him also you should guard against, for he most strongly opposed our own statements.
- v. 16 In my first defense no one came to my side, rather everyone deserted me. May it not be reckoned against them!
- v. 17 But the Lord stood by me and strengthened me, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might get to hear it; and I was rescued from the lion's mouth.
- v. 18 The Lord will deliver me from every evil work, and will bring me safely into His heavenly kingdom. To him be glory forever and ever. Amen.

WORD STUDY

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|-------|-------------------------|--|---|
| v. 9 | σπούδασον ταχέως | (aor. imp. σπουδάζω) (adv.) | hasten, be diligent quickly |
| v. 10 | ἐγκατέλιπεν ἐπορεύθη | (aor. ἐγκαταλείπω) (aor. πορεύομαι) | desert, forsake travel, make a journey |
| v. 11 | ἄγε εὐχρηστος | (imp. ἄγω) | bring, lead useful, helpful |
| v. 12 | ἀπέστειλα | (aor. ἀποστέλλω) | send back |

| | | | |
|-------|--|---|---|
| v. 13 | φαιλόνης ἀπέλιπον μεμβράνα | (aor. ἀπολείπω) | cloak, coat leave behind parchment |
| v. 14 | χαλκεὺς ἐνεδείξατο ἀποδώσει | (aor. ἐνδείκνυμι) (fut. ἀποδίδωμι) | coppersmith, metalworker do harm, damage repay, give back |
| v. 15 | φυλάσσου λίαν ἀνέστη | (imp. φυλάσσομαι) (aor. ἀνθίσταμαι) | guard against (with acc.) very much (expression of intensification) oppose |
| v. 16 | ἀπολογία παρεγένετο λογισθείη | (aor. παραγίνομαι) (aor. opt. pass. λογίζομαι) | defense come to one's side reckon, count against |
| v. 17 | παρέστη ἐνεδυνάμωσεν πληροφορηθῆ ἐρρύσθη στόμα ἐπουράνιος | (aor. παρίσταμαι) (aor. ἐνδυναμόω) (aor. subj. pass. πληροφορέω) (aor. pass. ῥύομαι) | stand by strengthen fully proclaim, fulfill rescue mouth heavenly |

EXEGESIS

- v. 9 This section of verses consists of closing remarks of a personal nature. Paul's words contain a note of urgency: "Hasten to come to me quickly." Why was Paul in such urgent need of company?
- v. 10 The reasons follow: "For Demas deserted me, having loved this present world, and went to Thessalonica, Crescens to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia." When Paul was arrested in Rome, these men were with him. Demas, mentioned as a faithful assistant in Colossians 4:14, chose the pleasures of this life rather than the sufferings of a Christian, and returned to his home. The other two, Crescens and Titus, returned to their mission fields, no doubt at Paul's own insistence.
- v. 11 "Luke is the only one with me," Paul adds. Faithful Luke! "Take Mark along and bring him with you, for he is useful to me in service." Mark must have been somewhere on the way, assisting Timothy at this time. Timothy was requested to bring Mark along. We know also that Mark was later on in Rome. He wrote his Gospel in the first instance for Romans. Mark was a changed person since that first missionary journey, when he apparently deserted Paul and Barnabas. He was especially useful, we assume, as an interpreter.

- v. 12 “I sent Tychicus back to Ephesus,” Paul continues. At Ephesus Tychicus could take Mark’s and Timothy’s places and fill the gap caused by their coming.
- v. 13 Then Paul adds: “When coming bring the cloak which I left behind in Troas with Carpus; also the books, especially the parchments.”

On his most recent journey to Rome Paul had stopped on the way at the home of Carpus in Troas. There he had left his winter coat behind, since the weather was mild. He had also left some valuable books of papyri and parchments there. Perhaps this happened because Paul had to leave Troas in a hurry, fearing arrest. In any case he now wants these items, especially (μάλιστα) the parchments (no doubt a copy of the Septuagint). Commentators are generally agreed that the βίβλια were papyrus rolls and the μεμβράνα were parchments containing Old Testament manuscripts.

Some people have stated that this verse argues against the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures. Surely—they say—truly inspired writing would not be concerned with such insignificant items as a piece of clothing which was left behind! In answer to this we say that the Holy Spirit surely knows best what is to be considered as important or unimportant. We, therefore, turn the sword around and use this verse as an argument in favor of inspiration, stating that this demonstrates God’s loving concern for even the least little details! And these details tell us very much, indeed, about Paul’s situation.

- v. 14 But to continue with Paul’s personal remarks: “Alexander, the coppersmith did me much harm. The Lord will repay him according to his works.” Alexander was a common name. It should not be confused with references to several other Alexanders in the New Testament (1 Timothy 1:20; Acts 19:33-34). This one happened to be a coppersmith (χαλκεύς). Just how Alexander damaged Paul’s cause is not clear. According to the next verse it must have had something to do with giving contrary evidence at Paul’s trial. Paul is willing to rest his case with the Lord as far as this Alexander is concerned! The Lord has a way of settling all accounts.
- v. 15 The next verse gives us a clue as to the nature of Alexander’s damage: “Him also you should guard against, for he most strongly opposed our own statements.” Alexander’s witness for the prosecution was the direct opposite of Paul’s own testimony (οἱ ἡμέτεροι λόγοι).
- v. 16 Paul then comes to the subject of his trial: “In my first defense no one came to my side, rather everyone deserted me. May it not be reckoned against them!” At his preliminary hearing Paul was required to make his own defense, with no one to support his statements. Usually a defendant had some kind of “patron” or “amicus curiae.” It seems strange that Paul, a Roman citizen, with influential friends in high places, should have had no one to stand at his side! Yet it would seem that the serious nature of the charge, which accused Christians of being responsible for the burning of Rome in 64 AD under Nero, brought about this total abandonment by all who could have influenced the outcome of his trial. Paul’s own assistants, of course, as Luke or Tychicus, didn’t qualify.

It was not only a serious crime to be a Christian. It was a crime to speak up for a Christian, to try to champion his cause.

- v. 17 But Paul did have a Patron: “But the Lord stood by me and strengthened me, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might get to hear it.” God gave Paul the power to bear witness according to His promise. Fearlessly Paul was given opportunity to speak in his own defense. Boldly he proclaimed “the message” (τὸ κήρυγμα). Without interruption he was permitted to say what needed to be said, so that the Gentiles got the benefit of its full impact (πληροφορηθῆ) as Paul testified in court. The ἵνα clause in this verse is a result clause.

Although Paul adds: “And I was rescued from the lion’s mouth,” we know that after this first hearing he was not set free. But he did receive a stay of execution. His quotation is from Psalm 22:22.

- v. 18 Paul concludes this portion with the words: “The Lord will deliver me from every evil work, and will bring me safely into His heavenly kingdom. To Him be glory forever and ever. Amen.”

Two words with similar meaning are used: *ῥύμαι*—deliver or rescue, and *σώζω*—save. Both are in the future tense. The one follows immediately upon the other. Being delivered from the evil of this present world and being brought safely into God’s heavenly kingdom go hand in hand. There is no interval for the believer between the moment of death and his entrance into glory. To be absent from the body is to be with Christ.

This section closes with a doxology.

APPLICATION

One might almost call this section “Paul’s closing bits and pieces.” As we bring letters to a close, we so often do the same. Our main message is finished. But a lot of different thoughts occur to us at the last moment, little personal items which we feel should not be left out—references to mutual friends or enemies, allusions to problems which have just occurred, last minute requests which bear consideration.

The Holy Spirit uses His writers of epistles to do the same. All these apparently minor items serve to complete the total picture. Nothing is too small to escape His eternal purpose. All fits into His plan for our eternal salvation. Nothing about our lives is trivial.

To Him be glory forever and ever. Amen.

REVIEW QUESTIONS (2 Timothy 4:9-18)

1. What personal request does Paul have of Timothy? Why this request?
2. Who was still with Paul?
3. Whom should Timothy bring along?
4. What personal items of Paul should Timothy also bring?
5. Show how these little requests are an argument for the inspiration of the Scriptures rather than against it.
6. Against which person does Paul warn especially? Why?
7. What sad experience did Paul have at his preliminary hearing?
8. How did the Lord use this hearing in the cause of the Gospel?
9. What confidence does Paul express for the future?

FOR FURTHER STUDY

- A. 1. Read Acts 13:13, What did Mark do on Paul's first missionary journey?
2. Read Colossians 4:10 and Philemon 24. What do these verses indicate?
3. What internal evidence from Mark's Gospel indicates that he wrote for Romans rather than for Jews?
- B. We mention Paul's cloak (2 Timothy 4:13) as an example of the Holy Spirit's attention to details in inspiring the Holy Scriptures. Can you think of little details from the record of the life of Christ which add to our understanding of Him as true God and true man?
- C. Read Matthew 10:19-20; Mark 13:11-13; Luke 12:11-12. What promise do we have if we should ever be faced with the same situation as Paul?

2 Timothy 4:19-22**TRANSLATION**

- v. 19 Greet Priscilla and Aquila and the household of Onesiphorus.
- v. 20 Erastus remained in Corinth, but Trophimus I left behind in Miletus since he was sick.
- v. 21 Do your best to come before winter. Eubulus and Pudens and Linus and Claudia send greetings and all the brethren as well.
- v. 22 The Lord (be) with your spirit! Grace (be) with you!

WORD STUDY

- | | | | |
|-------|------------|------------------|-----------------|
| v. 19 | ἄσπασαι | (aor. ἀσπάζομαι) | greet |
| v. 20 | ἔμεινεν | (aor. μένω) | remain |
| | ἀσθενοῦντα | (part. ἀσθενέω) | be sick or weak |
| v. 21 | χειμών | | winter |

EXEGESIS

- v. 19 A few final greetings remain: “Greet Priscilla and Aquila and the household of Onesiphorus.” All of these are well known (Acts 18:2 and 18; Romans 16:3; 2 Timothy 1:16-18) as people who showed special kindness to Paul during his ministry. That a woman (Priscilla) should receive special mention shows their high standing as dedicated helpers in the work of the ministry.
- v. 20 Erastus and Trophimus are mentioned in the Bible (Acts 19:22; Acts 20:4; Acts 21:29). From this verse we gather that Paul had been in Corinth and Miletus shortly before his last visit to Rome, where he was now imprisoned and sentenced to die.
- v. 21 Again Paul urges Timothy: “Do your best to come before winter.” Timothy’s health, as well as the severity of storms on the sea during that season, no doubt prompt Paul’s words. Also the threat of an execution at any time. Paul so much wanted to see his beloved son in the faith!

Paul then conveys greetings from fellow Christians in Rome: “Eubulus and Pudens and Linus and Claudia send greetings, and all the brethren as well.” Tradition tells us that Linus was later on bishop of the congregation at Rome, and that Claudia was possibly his mother. The others do not appear elsewhere, either in tradition or in Scripture.

Who are οἱ ἀδελφοὶ πάντες who also send greetings? Lenski wants to exclude the Jewish Christians, claiming that they were still regarded by the authorities as members of synagogues and therefore escaped the bloody persecutions of Nero. We see no reason for excluding them. All members of the congregations were “brethren in Christ.” All (πάντες) sent greetings.

- v. 22 Paul’s final words—the last of his to be found anywhere—are words of his own personal greeting.

“The Lord (be) with your spirit!” applies to Timothy. “Grace (be) with you,” includes all fellow Christians who were with Timothy (μεθ’ ὑμῶν, pl.).

What greater blessing can anyone have than to be assured of God’s grace! This is universal. This we have in Christ. A Spirit-given faith clings to this grace as the only sure hope of eternal life.

APPLICATION

What do these final words really add, if anything?

They add a great deal. As deeply personal as this father-to-son letter is, this parting last will and testament, it is not so personal and confidential that others should not be included. Others **were** included, many others. Greetings to all are exchanged. This letter was meant for all, so that all could benefit from whatever the Apostle had to say to his son in the faith.

We are included, too. Paul’s words reach over the years and speak to us, directly, personally, individually. Especially those of us who have chosen and who have been chosen for the New Testament ministry as a life’s work, these words of Paul have a special relevance. People always seem to complain nowadays about the Scriptures losing “relevance for our times.” Do they read them? Do they apply them directly? Or do they first study all sorts of humanistic philosophy and then see if the Scriptures still fit?

We feel very strongly that every pastor ought to make these Pastoral Epistles a part of his daily reading. Especially when the turmoil of this present life closes in and threatens to smother us—as so often happens in pastoral experience—it is well to look long and hard at the words of a servant of Christ who was face to face with suffering, shame, and a criminal’s death. This was what he had to show outwardly after a life of having labored “more abundantly than they all.”

“Luke is the only one with me.” Outwardly, yes, “Everyone deserted me.” Humanly speaking, to be sure.

Yet more courageous words, more confident words, more triumphant words have never been written or spoken by anyone other than our Lord Himself. Some refer to this letter as a “last will and testament.” That it is. We also prefer to call it an “ode to victory.”

“Grace be with you.”