

# STUDY GUIDE FOR 2 TIMOTHY

## *God's Word for Troubled Times*

### **Background and Setting** (MacArthur Study Guide)

Paul was released from his first Roman imprisonment for a short period of ministry, during which he wrote 1 Timothy and Titus. Second Timothy, however, finds Paul once again in a Roman prison (1:16; 2:9), apparently rearrested as part of Nero's persecution of Christians. Unlike Paul's confident hope of release during his first imprisonment (Phil. 1:19, 25–26; 2:24; Philem. 22), this time he had no such hopes (4:6–8). In his first imprisonment in Rome (about A.D. 60–62), before Nero had begun the persecution of Christians (A.D. 64), he was only under house arrest and had opportunity for much interaction with people and ministry (Acts 28:16–31). At this time, five or six years later (about A.D. 66–67), however, he was in a cold cell (4:13), in chains (2:9), and with no hope of deliverance (4:6). Abandoned by virtually all of those close to him for fear of persecution (see 1:15; 4:9–12, 16) and facing imminent execution, Paul wrote to Timothy, urging him to hasten to Rome for one last visit with the apostle (4:9, 21). Whether Timothy made it to Rome before Paul's execution is not known. According to tradition, Paul was not released from this second Roman imprisonment but suffered the martyrdom he had foreseen (4:6).

In this letter, Paul, aware the end was near, passed the non-apostolic mantle of ministry to Timothy (see 2:2) and exhorted him to continue faithful in his duties (1:6), hold on to sound doctrine (1:13–14), avoid error (2:15–18), accept persecution for the gospel (2:3–4; 3:10–12), put his confidence in the Scripture, and preach it relentlessly (3:15–4:5).

### **2 Timothy 1 Courage to *Guard the Truth***

- While all around us people are turning away from the truth, stand unashamed for the faith of Jesus Christ! “Kindle afresh” in verse 6 means “get the fire roaring again.” It was used of rousing a horse to its utmost (Thayer). Our spiritual lives can become as exciting as cold spaghetti or chili unless we get before God and by His grace stir our hearts with God's truth. Notice, Paul takes us right to the great truths of God's sovereign grace and calling of us into Jesus Christ.
1. Verses 1 What was Paul called to be, how was he called to this, and what was the purpose of his calling?



7. Verse 8 In what does Paul urge Timothy to join him? What does this tell you about Timothy?

8. Verse 9 How, why, when, and by whom did God determine to call us to Himself? What kind of calling is it?

9. Verse 10 What did Christ do when He appeared the first time?

10. Verse 11 What three things did God appoint Paul to be? How are these three ministries similar and different?

11. Verse 12 Why was Paul not ashamed to suffer for Christ?

12. Verse 13 What did Paul urge Timothy to retain? How do you apply this today?

13. Verse 14 What are you to guard? How do you do this? By what power can you do this?

14. Verses 15-16 Who turned away from Paul in Asia?

15. Verses 16-18 In what ways was Onesiphorus a special blessing to Paul?

**THINK ABOUT IT:**

1. How could you use 2 Timothy 1:7 to encourage another believer?

2. What will help us avoid being ashamed or embarrassed about the gospel?

## Summing Up ...

“Faithful ministry in the Lord’s service is always bittersweet. It brings suffering and joy, disappointment and gratitude. ... Duty can bring the deepest pain or the highest joy. Spiritual duty unfulfilled brings untold dissatisfaction, regret, and anguish, no matter how easy unfaithfulness may be. On the other hand, spiritual duty fulfilled brings untold satisfaction and happiness, whatever the cost of faithfulness. The Christian who is obedient to his duty under the Lord can say with Peter, ‘If anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not feel ashamed, but in that name let him glorify God’ (1 Pet. 4:16).” —*John MacArthur*

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### **2 Timothy 2 Determination to Teach the Truth**

- Paul uses seven portraits of the man of God: teacher, soldier, athlete, farmer, workman, vessel, and bondservant. In each one, there is the element of the Word of God.

1. Verse 1 In what did Paul want Timothy to be strong? How would this help Timothy? How does it help you?

2. Verse 2 What was Timothy to entrust to other men? What kind of men should he be looking for? How does this verse apply in the local church?

3. Verses 3-4 How does Paul compare a believer to a soldier?

4. Verse 5 What do you learn from athletics that will help you in your Christian life?

5. Verse 6 What does farming have in common with living for Christ?

6. Verses 7-8 What did Paul urge Timothy to remember?

7. Verses 9-10 What perspective did Paul have on God's Word and God's saving work while in prison?

8. Verses 11-13 What happens if we deny Christ? What happens if we are faithless? What is the difference?

9. Verse 14 What was Timothy solemnly to charge the believers in Ephesus? Why?

10. Verse 15 How was Timothy to present himself to God? What was required to do this? How do you apply this verse to your own life?

11. Verses 16-18 What false teaching was being spread? How is false teaching like gangrene?

12. Verse 19 What two truths does God's firm foundation have on it? How does this fit into the context of this chapter?

13. Verses 20-21 What kind of vessel will you be if you cleanse yourself from false teaching?

14. Verse 22 What should a young man flee and what should he pursue? How should he call on the Lord?

15. Verses 23-25 What are five characteristics of the Lord's bondservant as he seeks to correct others?

16. Verses 25-26 What might God do in the hearts of people who have been rejecting His truth?

**THINK ABOUT IT:**

1. How do you fit into the four “generations” of biblical teaching in verse 2?
2. How do you “handle” the Word of God? How could you grow in becoming a more “approved” workman in God’s Word? Explain “hermeneutics” and list a few principles of hermeneutics.
- 3.

**Summing Up ...**

“Several years ago, engineers in New Jersey were building a bridge over the mouth of a river on the Atlantic coast. As they were putting down pilings, they came across the hull of an old ship that was buried in the sand. To keep the bridge on the planned route, the hull would have to be removed. After they tried every mechanical means they could think of, the ship remained in place. A young engineer suggested placing several large barges above the hull on either side, running cables underneath the hull, and attaching them tightly to the barges at low tide. When the tide rose, the hull was loosened some. At the next low tide the cables were tightened again, and at high tide the ship was loosened some more. After following that procedure for several cycles of tides, the ship eventually was freed. What humanly devised mechanical force could not accomplish, the immeasurably greater forces of nature accomplished easily.



3. Verse 5 How is a believer supposed to respond to people like this? Why?

4. Verses 6-7 What kind of women give these people a hearing? Why are they so vulnerable?

5. Verse 8-9 In what ways are many of these end-time characters like Jannes and Jambres?

6. Verses 10-11 What practices of Paul's life did Timothy follow? How does this describe discipleship?

7. Verse 12 What will most certainly happen to those who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus?

8. Verse 13 What can we expect from evil men? Why are they deceiving others?

9. Verse 14 In what was Timothy to continue?

10. Verse 15 Why are the sacred writings so important? What do they teach you?

11. Verse 16 What is true about all Scripture? What is it profitable for? Explain how each of the four qualities leads to the next.

12. Verse 17 What is the Scripture able to do for the man of God?

**THINK ABOUT IT:**

1. How do we avoid the three loves of 1 Timothy 3:1-4 – self, money, and pleasure?



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### **2 Timothy 4 Conviction to *Preach the Truth***

- The one final command Paul gives church leaders is: **PREACH THE WORD!** Preaching prepares men to face God and God uses preaching to change lives for time and eternity. When the “Ear Ticklers Society” (vs. 3) wants us to water down the truth to make it appealing to the flesh, there is only one answer: vs. 5 - keep preaching the Word.

1. Verse 1 Why does Paul solemnly charge Timothy to preach the Word?

2. Verse 2 What is involved in the successful preaching of God's Word?

3. Verse 3 What will people not endure or put up with in time to come? What will they want instead?

4. Verse 4 From what will people turn their ears, and to what will they turn aside? Can you identify any of these in our day?

5. Verse 5 What four things does Paul urge Timothy to do as a preacher of the gospel?

6. Verses 6-7 What does Paul know is coming soon? How does he describe his life?

7. Verse 8 What is Paul looking forward to? What other kind of people will experience this?

8. Verses 9-11 Why does Paul urge Timothy to come to him as soon as possible?

9. Verse 12 Whom should Timothy bring along? What is significant about this?

10. Verse 13 What else would Paul like Timothy to bring with him?



## Summing Up ...

“There are gifted orators who can sway an audience with the power of their persuasive rhetoric. There are men who are erudite, knowledgeable, well-trained, and worldly-wise, who can cause other men to change their minds about certain matters. There are men who can relate moving stories that tug at a hearer’s heart and move him emotionally.

Throughout the history of the church, including our own time, God has chosen to endow some ministers with such abilities. But God also has chosen not to bless every faithful preacher in those particular ways. Nevertheless, He charges them with the same task of preaching His Word, because the spiritual power and effectiveness of preaching does not rest in the skill of the speaker but in the truth.”

“In 1904, William Borden, a member of the Borden dairy family, finished high school in Chicago and was given a world cruise as a graduation present. Particularly while traveling through the Near East and Far East, he became heavily burdened for the lost. After returning home, he spent seven years at Princeton University, the first four in undergraduate work and the last three in seminary. While in school, he penned these words in the back of his Bible: ‘No reserves.’ Although his family pleaded with him to take control of the business, which was foundering, he insisted that God’s call to the mission field had priority. After disposing of his wealth, he added, ‘No retreat’ after ‘No reserves.’ On his way to China to witness to the Muslims there, he contracted cerebral meningitis in Egypt and died within a month. After his death, someone looking through his Bible discovered these final words: ‘No regrets.’ He knew that the Lord does not require success, only faithfulness.”—*John MacArthur*