



# Paul's 2<sup>nd</sup> Letter to Timothy Passing on the Baton



## Introduction to 2 Timothy

### The Pastoral Epistles

The two Letters to Timothy and the Letter to Titus are often called the Pastoral Epistles. They cover similar topics. They are written in a similar style of Greek, rather different from the other Letters of Paul that we still have – which led some 19<sup>th</sup> century scholars to question the previously accepted opinion that they were by the Apostle Paul. The differences in style may well be because they are more personal letters, rather than for reading out to all the members of a church; they cover different topics; they were written when Paul was older and perhaps using a different secretary. These matters, as well as other background questions, are explained in commentaries, such as those in ‘*The Bible Speaks Today*’ (IVP) series by John Stott: *The Message of 1 Timothy & Titus: The Life of the Local Church* (which is more detailed) and *The Message of 2 Timothy: Guard the Gospel*, all of whose Introduction is in this preview:

[https://books.google.co.uk/books/about/The\\_Message\\_of\\_2\\_Timothy.html?id=KTUtDwAAQBAJ&prints\\_ec=frontcover&source=kp\\_read\\_button&redir\\_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=false](https://books.google.co.uk/books/about/The_Message_of_2_Timothy.html?id=KTUtDwAAQBAJ&prints_ec=frontcover&source=kp_read_button&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=false)

### Who was Timothy?

Timothy came from Lystra (now southern Turkey), the son of a Jewish mother and a Greek father (who seems to have died before Timothy joined Paul). Timothy’s mother and Timothy were probably converted on Paul’s first visit to Lystra around 47AD (Acts 13:8-18) because he is called a ‘disciple’ and she is called a ‘believer’ when Paul’s second visit to Lystra around 50AD is described in Acts 16:1-3. By this time Timothy was in his 20’s and his gifts were recognized by the Christian churches in that area; prophetic words accompanied his commissioning by the local church leaders and by Paul (1 Tim 1:18; 4:14; 2 Tim 1:6).

He joined Paul on his journeys and at various times was sent by Paul to act as his representative in Thessalonica and Corinth. In several Letters, Paul mentions Timothy as being with him. The Book of Acts ends with Paul under house arrest in Rome, waiting for a hearing before the Emperor. It is likely that Paul was released around 63AD and re-visited several churches in what is now Greece and Turkey, accompanied by Timothy. Paul left Timothy in Ephesus to lead the church, as it was being undermined by false teachers (1 Tim 1:3). Paul seems to have been re-arrested when Nero increased his persecution of Christians; this time he was imprisoned in tougher conditions and he was executed in Rome around 67AD. Timothy was himself imprisoned at one point (Hebrews 13:23) but then released.

### When, Where and Why was 2 Timothy written?

Paul wrote 1 Timothy soon after leaving Timothy in charge in Ephesus (1 Tim 1:3); Paul was still free at this time and hoping to return to Ephesus and see Timothy (1 Tim 3:14). By the time he wrote 2 Timothy, Paul had been re-arrested and was in Rome (2 Tim 1:16) and in chains (2 Tim 2:8). He had already had a preliminary trial and he was anticipating his death (2 Tim 4:6-8; 4:16-18). So 2 Timothy sounds like a farewell Letter, in which Paul is passing on important instructions and preparing Timothy for difficult times ahead – *passing on the baton*, as Adrian has entitled this series, sharing some of Paul’s feelings.

Paul urges Timothy to ‘guard the Gospel’ (1 Tim 6:20, 2 Tim 1:13-14), standing up for the truth handed on to him in the face of false, or distracting, teaching. Paul gives Timothy practical advice about dealing with situations that he may encounter.

Timothy was a gifted young man but he lacked confidence, partly because of his relative youth, so he needed to be reminded of what God had done for him and of the responsibilities that he had been given. As well as warning Timothy about threats to both the church in Ephesus and to his own faith, there is a lot of personal warmth and encouragement in this letter by Paul to one of his most faithful companions, whom Paul saw as his spiritual son (2 Tim 1:2).

### **Autumn 2017**

Sept 3	2 Timothy 1: 1-10
Sept 10	2 Timothy 1: 11-18
Sept 17	2 Timothy 2: 1-13
Sept 24	2 Timothy 2: 14-19
Oct 1	<i>(Harvest – Luke 12:22-34)</i>
Oct 8	2 Timothy 2: 20-26
Oct 15	<i>(10.30am at Queen's – united service – Adrian's Last)</i>
Oct 22	2 Timothy 3: 1-9
Oct 29	2 Timothy 3: 10-17
Nov 5	2 Timothy 4: 1-8
Nov 12	<i>(Remembrance – James 3:13-4:3?)</i>
Nov 19	<i>(B1 service instead of 9.30 and 5.30?)</i>
Nov 26	2 Timothy 4: 9-22