

2 TIMOTHY

2 TIMOTHY 1 — PERSONAL TO TIMOTHY

When Paul addressed his earlier letter to Timothy, the latter was in Ephesus, and there are reasons to believe he was still there.

Paul was now a prisoner in Rome for a second time, awaiting a hearing before the Emperor, and he was not being treated with the consideration shown him on the earlier occasion (~~480~~ Acts 28), but like a common prisoner. The immediate occasion for this letter grew out of this, for he is anxious to have Timothy and Mark as his companions (1:4, 4:9, etc.). He is conscious that his death by martyrdom could not long be delayed, for these were the days of wicked Nero, and not knowing whether he should see Timothy again, or not, he was desirous of adding still further to the instructions he had given him.

There is reason to believe that Timothy required these encouragements in a marked degree. His character was not of the stuff that Paul's was made of. He suggests the diffidence of Jeremiah in the Old Testament, without some of the redeeming qualities he possessed. For references to the lack of courage of Timothy, see 1:5, 7; 3:10.

SALUTATION (VV. 1-2) AND THANKSGIVING (VV. 3-5)

In this thanksgiving on Timothy's behalf, there is a reference to his spiritual history which seems to have come down in his mother's line.

EXHORTATION (VV. 6-14)

The exhortation which follows, and which has grown out of the remembrance of Timothy's past life and the piety of his ancestors, contains three of four natural divisions.

1. An exhortation to firmness in the faith (vv. 6-8). This can be cultivated, stirred up. It is inherent in the spiritual gift he received from God at the time he was set apart to the ministry, and is not consonant with fearfulness, the moral cowardice to which he seems to have been

addicted, but is evinced rather in the exercise of suitable discipline in the spirit of love (RV), and in boldness of testimony even to the point of suffering.

2. This exhortation enforced by the character of the Gospel and the mercy of God (vv. 9-11).

3. Finally, the apostle cites his own example (vv. 12-14). He suffers for his testimony, and is not ashamed of it; he is willing to suffer, he counts it worth while, in the light of his faith. Let Timothy profit in word and deed by what he sees in him.

DESCRIPTION OF FALSE BRETHREN (VV. 15-18)

This exhortation to Timothy gathers force from the circumstance that some who professed fealty to Christ have been guilty of defection, if one may judge by their desertion of Christ's servant in his trial (v. 15). Their action, however, serves to bring out the stronger the love of another brother for whom he prays (vv. 16-18).

QUESTIONS

- 1.** Locate both Paul and Timothy at this time.
- 2.** State the possible reason for this epistle.
- 3.** Analyze Timothy's character and temperament.
- 4.** Divide the chapter into four parts.
- 5.** Analyze the exhortation in the chapter.

2 TIMOTHY 2-4:8 — A TEACHER OF TEACHERS

The instruction may be divided into three parts.

1. He is instructed concerning his duty as a teacher of teachers (2:2), but in that connection is again exhorted to firmness, or rather to strength and "hardness," which are practically the same (vv. 1 and 3). What figure of speech does Paul use to illuminate his theme? What particular lesson would be drawn from it (v. 4)? What second figure does he use at verse 5? Here is a reference to the Olympian games. How must a man contend in order to win the crown? What third figure is used at verse 6? What reward does the faithful husbandman receive?

It is easy to see from these illustrations the direction in which this young minister required encouragement and warning. He must separate himself from the world, strive faithfully and obediently, and work diligently to receive the blessing. Related to this, what fact was he to keep in mind (v. 8)? Note how Paul once more digresses to his own example. He was not laying upon Timothy any burden he did not himself bear. Indeed, on behalf of the Gospel, he suffered "hardship" (for so the word "trouble" should be translated in verse 9). He also endured (v. 10). For whose sake was it done? And why? Speaking of the "eternal glory" the elect were going to obtain, was it an assured experience for them (vv. 11-13)?

2. Again, in this instruction to Timothy as a teacher of teachers, he is directed to caution them about idle and foolish words (v. 14). But no sooner is this dictum laid down than he is once more exhorted as in the other case, to be the kind of teacher he would have others be. To what is he exhorted in verse 15? What do you suppose that expression means, "Rightly dividing the word of truth?" In reply, note the three classes of peoples into which Paul divides mankind in ~~400~~ 1 Corinthians 10:32. Do you not think that "rightly dividing the word of truth" must mean giving to each of these their "portion of meat in due season"? But how can this be done where one is ignorant of the dispensational teaching of the Bible, which we are trying to emphasize in this Commentary? What is to be avoided in this teaching (verse 19)? To what physical disease is that kind of foolish teaching likened in the next verse? How careful we need to be not to allow our study of dispensational truth to become fanatical gangrene! How much we need the wisdom from above, the balance of mind and heart which the Holy Spirit alone can supply!

But we need not pursue our inquiries into this chapter further. The same mingled exhortation, instruction and warning continue throughout, and can be brought out by the student through questioning and patient waiting for the answer to suggest itself as above.

3. Proceeding to chapter three, Timothy receives instruction concerning the last times, i.e., the times at the end of the present age. What kind of times does the Spirit of God, say they will be (v. 1)? The word "perilous" is in the Revised Version "grievous." What shall

constitute their grievous character (vv. 2-5)? What class of persons are designated as influenced by these things, and why (vv. 6-7)? How does the apostle seek to strengthen Timothy against these things by his own example (vv. 10-13)? And what exhortation does he now receive (vv. 14-16)? What tribute to the Holy Scriptures is in verse 15? And how is their authority and infallibility affirmed in the following verse? The Revised Version renders this verse a little differently, but this is one of the places where the King James translation is to be preferred not only as the stronger, but also the more scholarly of the two. To what "charge" to Timothy does this allusion to the Holy Scriptures lead (4:1-2)? What consideration adds solemnity to that charge (v. 1)? What consideration make that charge to be necessary (vv. 3-4)? What office is Timothy to exercise in addition to that of an overseer and teacher in order to "make full proof" or fulfill his ministry (v. 5)? What consideration personal to Paul, adds solemnity to this exhortation (vv. 6-8)?

QUESTIONS

1. How many of the questions in the text of the lesson have you answered?
2. How often does Paul allude to his own example?
3. Can you quote ~~<400>~~ 1 Corinthians 10:32?
4. Can you quote ~~<410>~~ 2 Timothy 3:16?
5. What was Timothy to be besides an evangelist?

2 TIMOTHY 4:9-22 — PERSONAL TO PAUL

We have now passed beyond the portion of the epistle devoted to instruction and reached that in which the writer deals with personal matters (4:9-22). An aged prisoner in Rome, awaiting trial, and almost certain execution, he is, alas! forsaken by many who should have stood by him. Demas has left him, Crescens, and even Titus. He wishes Timothy to hasten to his side, and to bring Mark with him. It has all been made up with Mark since the sad affair in ~~<410>~~ Acts 13. He needs his cloak too, and parchments. He can not at this moment forget that man Alexander. Is he the Alexander named in ~~<410>~~ Acts 19? Doubtless. Timothy is warned against him, for he is still in Ephesus.

Paul has had one hearing before Caesar and another is coming. At the hearing, however, he was sadly deserted by his friends. Oh the grief of defection! Nevertheless the Lord stood by him, and He will continue to do so. Friends are saluted at Ephesus. Hasten Timothy, I want you.

No questions are called for following this lesson.