

Introduction to 2 Timothy

Authorship

See the discussion of authorship in the Introduction to 1 Timothy.

Manuscript History

No manuscripts of this epistle predate the reign of Constantine. The earliest manuscripts date to the fourth century. The fourth century manuscripts preserving 2 Timothy are:

Ⲛ, or Sinaiticus, now housed in London, contains all of the New Testament. It is traditionally said to have been prepared especially for the emperor Constantine. The manuscript is calligraphically beautiful but textually sloppy and has had a number of correcting hands. This manuscript has been dated paleographically to the fourth century.

All of the other many manuscripts date even later than this one.

Canon

See the discussion of canon in the Introduction to 1 Timothy.

Setting

This letter was written just weeks before Paul's death in the summer of AD 64, and serves as a sort of last will and testament. Paul wintered at Nicopolis (Titus 3:12), then attempted to rejoin Timothy at Ephesus by way of Troas. There he was re-arrested at the instigation of Alexander the metalworker and brought to Rome for trial. At the time of writing this letter Paul has already endured a preliminary hearing that did not go well (2 Tim. 4:1), and he knows that the end is near. Paul writes Timothy, his longtime missionary companion, to make sure that he is prepared to carry out the work Paul had started.

Outline

- I. Salutation (1:1-2)
- II. Encouragement in Light of Paul's Situation (1:3-18)
- III. Exhortation to Faithful Endurance (2:1-26)
- IV. Commissions to Timothy (3:1-4:8)
- V. Concluding Remarks (4:9-22)

Further Readings

Non-LDS Sources

Johnson, Luke Timothy. *The First and Second Letters to Timothy: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. Anchor Bible. New York: Doubleday, 2001.

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Gentry, Leland H. "Seducing Spirits and Doctrines of Devils." *The New Testament and the Latter-day Saints*. *Sidney B. Sperry Symposium*. Orem: Randall Book, 1987, 75-87.

Scott, John G. "A Triumph of Faith: Paul's Teachings in Second Timothy." *The Apostle Paul: His Life and His Testimony*, *Sidney B. Sperry Symposium*, ed. Paul Y. Hoskisson. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1994, 178-87.

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The Second Epistle of Paul the Apostle to Timothy

Chapter 1

Salutation

¹ PAUL,¹ an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus,² To Timothy, *my* dearly beloved son:² Grace, mercy, *and* peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

Loyalty to the Gospel

³ I thank God, whom I serve from *my* forefathers³ with pure⁴ conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day; ⁴ Greatly desiring to see thee, being mindful of thy tears, that I may be filled with joy; ⁵ When I call to remembrance the unfeigned⁵ faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother⁶ Lois, and thy mother Eunice;⁷ and I am persuaded that in thee also.⁸ ⁶ Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up⁹ the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands.¹⁰ ⁷ For God hath not given us the spirit of fear;¹¹ but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.¹² ⁸ Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner:¹³ but be thou partaker of the afflictions of¹⁴ the gospel according to the power of God; ⁹ Who hath saved us, and called *us* with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,¹⁵ ¹⁰ But is now made

¹ IE from Paul.

² Metaphoric, as a convert of Paul's; Timothy was not his literal son.

³ IE as my ancestors did.

⁴ OR a clear.

⁵ OR sincere.

⁶ μάμη *mammē* orig. mother, but over time the word came to have the connotation grandmother.

⁷ Although Timothy's father was Greek, his mother and grandmother were both Jewish. See Acts 16:1. It is unclear whether they too were Christians.

⁸ OR I am convinced that it [sincere faith] is in you, too.

⁹ OR rekindle. The image is one of stirring the coals in a fire that is dying out.

¹⁰ An allusion to Paul's ordination of Timothy.

¹¹ Apparently Timothy exhibited a certain timidity in proclaiming the gospel; Paul exhorts him to boldness.

¹² OR sound judgment, self-control.

¹³ An allusion to Paul's imprisonment.

¹⁴ IE accept your share of suffering for.

¹⁵ Lit. before eternal times (possibly an allusion to preexistence).

manifest¹⁶ by the appearing¹⁷ of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel: ¹¹ Whereunto¹⁸ I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.¹⁹ ¹² For the which cause²⁰ I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him²¹ against that day.²² ¹³ Hold fast the form²³ of sound words,²⁴ which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. ¹⁴ That good thing²⁵ which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us.

¹⁵ This thou knowest, that all²⁶ they which are in Asia²⁷ be turned away from²⁸ me; of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes. ¹⁶ The Lord give mercy unto the house²⁹ of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed³⁰ me, and was not ashamed of my chain.³¹ ¹⁷ But, when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found *me*. ¹⁸ The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day:³² and in how many things he ministered unto me at Ephesus, thou knowest very well.

Chapter 2

A Good Soldier of Christ Jesus

¹ THOU therefore, my son,³³ be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. ² And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses,³⁴ the same commit³⁵ thou to

¹⁶ OR apparent.

¹⁷ Alluding to the incarnation of Jesus in the flesh.

¹⁸ IE for this (gospel).

¹⁹ A number of early mss. omit "of the Gentiles."

²⁰ OR because of this.

²¹ The GR lit. says "my entrustment," and could mean either "that which I have entrusted to him" [IE my life] or "that which he has entrusted to me" [IE the gospel].

²² IE the day of judgment.

²³ ὑποτύπωσιν *hupotupōsin* pattern, model.

²⁴ The pattern of sound words is the apostolic testimony of the gospel, which Timothy is to take as his example.

²⁵ IE the truth of the gospel.

²⁶ An example of hyperbole.

²⁷ Meaning the Roman province of Asia in Asia Minor, not the continent of Asia.

²⁸ OR deserted.

²⁹ IE family.

³⁰ OR revived.

³¹ Synecdoche for imprisonment.

³² IE the day of judgment.

³³ Timothy was not lit. Paul's son, but was his son in the gospel inasmuch as Paul converted him.

³⁴ IE in the presence of many others as witnesses.

³⁵ OR entrust.

faithful men, who shall be able³⁶ to teach others also. ³ Thou therefore endure hardness,³⁷ as a good soldier³⁸ of Jesus Christ. ⁴ No man that warreth³⁹ entangleth himself with the affairs of *this*⁴⁰ life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.⁴¹ ⁵ And if a man also strive for masteries,⁴² *yet* is he not crowned,⁴³ except he strive lawfully.⁴⁴

⁶ The husbandman⁴⁵ that laboreth must be first partaker of the fruits. ⁷ Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things. ⁸ Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed⁴⁶ of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel: ⁹ Wherein⁴⁷ I suffer trouble, as an evil doer,⁴⁸ *even* unto bonds;⁴⁹ but the word of God is not bound.⁵⁰ ¹⁰ Therefore I endure all things for the elect's⁵¹ sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. ¹¹ *It*⁵² is a faithful⁵³ saying:

For if we be dead with *him*, we shall also live with *him*:

¹² If we suffer,⁵⁴ we shall also reign with *him*:

if we deny⁵⁵ *him*, he also will deny us:

¹³ If we believe not,⁵⁶ *yet* he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself.⁵⁷

An Approved Workman

³⁶ IE competent.

³⁷ OR suffer hardship.

³⁸ Martial metaphors are common in the pastorals. The soldier's willingness to suffer in order to accomplish a goal was a commonplace in Hellenistic literature. In the succeeding vv., Paul will make the same point using as examples the commitment of the athlete and the farmer.

³⁹ IE is engaged in military service.

⁴⁰ IE everyday.

⁴¹ IE his recruiter.

⁴² IE competes as an athlete.

⁴³ στεφανοῦται *stephanoutai* crowned, alluding to the garland with which victors in contests were crowned. Cf. the ENG name "Stephen," which means "crown."

⁴⁴ IE according to the rules of the particular athletic competition.

⁴⁵ γεωργὸν *geōrgon* farmer. Cf. the ENG name "George."

⁴⁶ IE posterity.

⁴⁷ IE for which.

⁴⁸ IE as though I were a criminal.

⁴⁹ IE imprisonment.

⁵⁰ Paul may be bound by chains in prison, but the word of God is subject to no such limitation.

⁵¹ IE those chosen by God.

⁵² OR this (referring to that which follows).

⁵³ OR trustworthy.

⁵⁴ OR endure, stand firm.

⁵⁵ OR renounce.

⁵⁶ ἀπιστοῦμεν *apistoumen* break faith, go back on our word.

⁵⁷ Vv. 11-13 may derive from an early Christian hymn.

¹⁴ Of these things put *them* in remembrance,⁵⁸ charging *them* before the Lord that they strive⁵⁹ not about words to no profit,⁶⁰ *but* to the subverting of⁶¹ the hearers. ¹⁵ Study to shew⁶² thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing⁶³ the word of truth. ¹⁶ But shun profane *and* vain babblings:⁶⁴ for they will increase unto more ungodliness. ¹⁷ And their word will eat as doth a canker:⁶⁵ of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; ¹⁸ Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already;⁶⁶ and overthrow the faith of some. ¹⁹ Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal,⁶⁷ **The Lord knoweth them that are his.**⁶⁸ And, Let every one that nameth⁶⁹ the name of Christ depart from iniquity. ²⁰ But in a great⁷⁰ house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth;⁷¹ and some to honour, and some to dishonour. ²¹ If a man therefore purge himself from these,⁷² he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet⁷³ for the master's use, *and* prepared unto every good work. ²² Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.⁷⁴ ²³ But foolish and unlearned questions⁷⁵ avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes.⁷⁶ ²⁴ And the servant⁷⁷ of the Lord must not strive;⁷⁸ but be gentle unto all *men*, apt⁷⁹ to teach, patient,

⁵⁸ IE remind people.

⁵⁹ OR dispute.

⁶⁰ OR benefit.

⁶¹ Lit. overthrow; IE upset.

⁶² OR present.

⁶³ ὀρθοτομοῦντα *orthotomounta*, a metaphor from cutting a straight road; IE accurately carving out.

⁶⁴ OR empty chatter.

⁶⁵ OR their talk will eat its way [lit. "have pasture"] like gangrene [GR γάγγραινα *gangraina*]; IE spread (rapidly) like an infection.

⁶⁶ The false teachers claimed that the resurrection had already come to pass (in an allegorical, not a literal sense).

⁶⁷ Referring to the two following inscriptions.

⁶⁸ Num. 16:5.

⁶⁹ IE confesses. The GR uses a Semitic cognate accusative construction that would normally be avoided in ENG

⁷⁰ In the sense of wealthy.

⁷¹ IE earthenware.

⁷² Even in a lavish house there are ordinary vessels used as garbage cans and chamber pots.

⁷³ IE the errors of the false teachers.

⁷⁴ OR useful.

⁷⁵ Alluding to the importance of a community of believers.

⁷⁶ OR ignorant speculations.

⁷⁷ IE breed quarrels.

⁷⁸ OR slave.

⁷⁹ OR fight.

⁸⁰ IE able.

²⁵ In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves;⁸¹ if God peradventure⁸² will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;²⁶ And *that* they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his⁸³ will.

Chapter 3

The Character of Men in the Last Days

¹ THIS know also, that in the last days perilous⁸⁴ times shall come. ² For men shall be lovers of their own selves,⁸⁵ covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers,⁸⁶ disobedient to parents, unthankful,⁸⁷ unholy, ³ Without natural affection,⁸⁸ trucebreakers,⁸⁹ false accusers,⁹⁰ incontinent,⁹¹ fierce, despisers of those that are good, ⁴ Traitors, heady,⁹² highminded,⁹³ lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; ⁵ Having a form⁹⁴ of godliness, but denying the power thereof:⁹⁵ from such turn away. ⁶ For of this sort are they which creep⁹⁶ into houses, and lead captive⁹⁷ silly women⁹⁸ laden⁹⁹ with sins, led away with divers lusts,¹⁰⁰ ⁷ Ever learning,¹⁰¹ and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. ⁸ Now as Jannes and Jambres¹⁰² withstood Moses, so do these

⁸¹ IE opponents.

⁸² OR perhaps.

⁸³ IE the devil's.

⁸⁴ IE difficult, dangerous.

⁸⁵ φίλαυτοι *philautoi* self-centered (from the roots *phil* love and *autos* self).

⁸⁶ IE those who speak against God.

⁸⁷ OR ungrateful.

⁸⁸ IE unloving.

⁸⁹ IE irreconcilable. The GR ἀσπονδοί *aspondoi* is formed by a negating *alpha* privative and a form of the verb *spendomai*, which refers to pouring wine on the ground as a drink-offering to the gods (in reconciliation with one you were quarreling with).

⁹⁰ OR slanderers.

⁹¹ IE without self-control. The word does not mean to allude to a condition of the bowels, as we use it in modern ENG

⁹² OR reckless.

⁹³ OR haughty.

⁹⁴ IE outward appearance.

⁹⁵ Cf. Joseph Smith's account of the First Vision in JS-H.

⁹⁶ OR sneak.

⁹⁷ IE captivate. A common theme in Hellenistic literature was that men would seduce the women of a household by offering to teach them philosophy.

⁹⁸ The GR underlying "silly women" is γυναικάρια *gunaikaria*, which is simply the diminutive form of the word for "women"; lit. "little women."

⁹⁹ OR overwhelmed.

¹⁰⁰ OR various passions.

¹⁰¹ Continuing the description of the women from v. 6.

¹⁰² Traditional names of Pharaoh's magicians who opposed Moses. Cf. Exod. 7:12.

also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.⁹ But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all *men*, as theirs¹⁰³ also was.

Last Charge to Timothy

¹⁰ But thou hast fully known¹⁰⁴ my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity,¹⁰⁵ patience,¹¹ Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of *them* all the Lord delivered me.¹⁰⁶ ¹² Yea, and all that will live godly¹⁰⁷ in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. ¹³ But evil men and seducers¹⁰⁸ shall wax¹⁰⁹ worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived. ¹⁴ But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom¹¹⁰ thou hast learned *them*; ¹⁵ And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶ All scripture¹¹¹ *is* given by inspiration of God,¹¹² and *is* profitable¹¹³ for doctrine, for reproof,¹¹⁴ for correction, for instruction in righteousness: ¹⁷ That the man of God may be perfect,¹¹⁵ throughly furnished unto all good works.

Chapter 4

¹ I charge *thee* therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick¹¹⁶ and the dead at his appearing¹¹⁷ and his kingdom; ² Preach the word;¹¹⁸ be instant¹¹⁹ in season, out of season,¹²⁰ reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering¹²¹ and

¹⁰³ The antecedent is Jannes and Jambres.

¹⁰⁴ OR followed closely.

¹⁰⁵ OR love.

¹⁰⁶ These persecutions are described in Acts 13-14.

¹⁰⁷ IE godly lives.

¹⁰⁸ γόητες *goētes* lit. magicians; here, charlatans.

¹⁰⁹ IE get, grow.

¹¹⁰ An allusion to his grandmother and mother, Lois and Eunice.

¹¹¹ Meaning books roughly equivalent to our OT; the NT did not yet exist as such.

¹¹² θεόπνευστος *theopneustos* lit. breathed by a god; IE divinely inspired.

¹¹³ It is possible to read "all scripture inspired of God is profitable" (as the JST takes it), although the KJV probably gives the correct sense (taking the adjective as predicate rather than attributive). Less rests on whether we read the participle as attributive or predicate than is commonly believed by those who see in this v. a proof-text for biblical inerrancy, which is certainly not the import of the passage.

¹¹⁴ OR censure.

¹¹⁵ IE complete, competent (not "perfect" in the sense of absolute absence of error).

¹¹⁶ OR living.

¹¹⁷ IE the second coming.

¹¹⁸ IE the gospel message.

¹¹⁹ OR ready.

¹²⁰ IE in both good times and bad, both when convenient and when not.

¹²¹ OR patience.

doctrine.^{122 3} For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts¹²³ shall they heap¹²⁴ to themselves teachers, having itching ears;^{125 4} And they shall turn away *their* ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.^{126 5} But watch thou¹²⁷ in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist,¹²⁸ make full proof of¹²⁹ thy ministry.

⁶ For I am now ready to be offered,¹³⁰ and the time of my departure is at hand. ⁷ I have fought a good fight,¹³¹ I have finished *my* course,¹³² I have kept the faith: ⁸ Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day:¹³³ and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

Personal Instructions

⁹ Do thy diligence¹³⁴ to come shortly unto me: ¹⁰ For Demas hath forsaken¹³⁵ me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia. ¹¹ Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable¹³⁶ to me for the ministry. ¹² And Tychicus have I sent to Ephesus. ¹³ The cloke¹³⁷ that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring *with thee*, and the books,¹³⁸ *but* especially the parchments.^{139 14} Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works:^{140 15} Of whom be thou ware¹⁴¹ also; for he hath greatly withstood¹⁴² our words.

¹²² IE teaching, instruction.

¹²³ IE desires.

¹²⁴ IE accumulate.

¹²⁵ IE having a curiosity and desire to hear new things.

¹²⁶ OR myths, as described in 1 Tim. 1:4, 4:7 and Titus 1:14.

¹²⁷ OR be temperate.

¹²⁸ IE missionary.

¹²⁹ OR fulfill, accomplish.

¹³⁰ IE as a sacrifice (lit. poured out as a libation).

¹³¹ IE competed well (as in an athletic contest).

¹³² OR the race.

¹³³ IE the day of judgment.

¹³⁴ IE make every effort, do your best.

¹³⁵ OR deserted.

¹³⁶ OR useful.

¹³⁷ As winter was approaching, Paul no doubt wanted his cloak to keep him warm in prison.

¹³⁸ These would be scrolls rather than codices.

¹³⁹ The GR μεμβράνα *membrana* comes into LAT as *membrana* and into ENG as "membranes."

¹⁴⁰ An allusion to Ps. 28:4.

¹⁴¹ OR on guard, watchful.

¹⁴² OR vehemently opposed.

¹⁶ At my first answer¹⁴³ no man stood with me, but all *men* forsook¹⁴⁴ me: *I pray God* that it may not be laid to their charge.¹⁴⁵ ¹⁷ Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching¹⁴⁶ might be fully known, and *that* all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.¹⁴⁷ ¹⁸ And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve¹⁴⁸ *me* unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom *be* glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Final Greetings

¹⁹ Salute¹⁴⁹ Prisca¹⁵⁰ and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus. ²⁰ Erastus abode¹⁵¹ at Corinth: but Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick. ²¹ Do thy diligence¹⁵² to come before winter.¹⁵³ Eubulus greeteth thee, and Pudens, and Linus, and Claudia, and all the brethren.¹⁵⁴ ²² The Lord Jesus Christ *be* with thy spirit. Grace *be* with you. Amen.¹⁵⁵

The second epistle unto Timotheus, ordained the first bishop of the church of the Ephesians, was written from Rome, when Paul was brought before Nero the second time.

¹⁴³ OR defense (referring to a trial proceeding).

¹⁴⁴ OR deserted.

¹⁴⁵ IE that they may not be held accountable for it.

¹⁴⁶ IE the gospel message.

¹⁴⁷ A metaphor for a violent death.

¹⁴⁸ OR save.

¹⁴⁹ OR greet.

¹⁵⁰ The diminutive form of Priscilla, mentioned in Acts 18, Rom. 16:3-4 and 1 Cor. 16:19.

¹⁵¹ OR stayed.

¹⁵² OR make every effort.

¹⁵³ When navigation was suspended.

¹⁵⁴ Gender neutral: brothers and sisters.

¹⁵⁵ The word "amen" was not an original part of the text but was added by scribes.