

2 Timothy: The Good Fight Finishing Well in Christ

Lesson 38—2 Timothy 1:8-12

Continuing from our last study...

Prayer

Start by praying over the passage and asking the Holy Spirit to give you fresh insights and wisdom in understanding it. Then read through the entire passage two or three times. The depth of theology is so great that I would strongly advise using the New Living Translation for one of your Scripture readings.

Scripture Meditation/Memorization

One of the most fundamental and rewarding Christian disciplines that pays back in full spiritual dividends is Bible meditation/memorization. It is an absolutely fundamental in the formation of your spiritual development, spiritual walk and faith growth. In Psalm 1:1-2 (NLT), the Psalmist warrior, King David said,

*“Oh, the joys of those who do not follow the advice of the wicked,
or stand around with sinners, or join in with mockers.
But they delight in the law of the Lord,
meditating on it day and night.”*

Memory Verse

“[8a] Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord...[12] For this reason 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 what I have committed to Him until that Day.”—2nd Timothy 1:8a, 12 (NKJV)

Study Format

We have all had weeks in which the time available for preparation of our Bible study evaporates under an unexpected event or a pressing project at work. To enable everyone to complete the study, even when time is at a premium, questions are being divided into two categories: essential and expanded. The Essential Questions are those necessary to understand key points of the passage. The Expanded Questions or growth questions help expand knowledge and gain deeper insight into the Scripture.

If you are concerned about having enough time to complete the whole study, it is suggested that you start by first answering the Essential Questions for each day and answer the Expanded Questions as time permits.

2 Timothy 1:8-12—*Not Ashamed of the Gospel*

Paul never waived in his belief in God's sovereignty or total control of all situations. As we read over this passage, written by a man on death row, his trust in God's plan and purpose shines like a beacon of light from his dark dungeon. In the Greek these five verses are one long sentence.

Essential Questions:

1. How do the following phrases confirm God's sovereignty?

a. His prisoner (verse 8)

b. According to His own purpose (verse 9)

c. To which I was appointed (verse 11)

d. For this reason (verse 12)

2. Paul mentions being unashamed about the gospel twice in this passage.

a. What do these phrases in verses 8 and 12 mean to you?

b. What are ways that believers can be “ashamed of the gospel” while trying to fit into our culture? How can we avoid this pitfall?

c. Philippians 2:19-23

3. From verse 9 we learn that God’s purpose and plans were set in place before time began. What else do you learn about this from the following passages?

a. John 17:24

b. Ephesians 1:4

c. 1 Peter 1:20-21

d. Revelation 13:8

Expanded Question:

4. Timothy, like his mentor Paul, would eventually be arrested for the gospel (see Hebrews 13:23). Suffering for the gospel seems to be the norm, not the exception, in the lives of most believers. James MacDonald notes the difference in the source of trials when we undergo suffering. He differentiates between circumstances—things happening to us beyond our control (a true trial), and consequences—things happening to us as a result of our own actions. For those trials that are the result of circumstances, what assurance can you find in the following verses?

a. 1 Corinthians 10:12-13

b. 1 Peter 2:19-21

c. Acts 5:41-42

Lesson 38 Summary/Take Away

If one of your friends at work or a neighbor were to ask you what you did on Tuesday, you would tell them you went to a Bible study. The next question would likely be, "What did you learn?" We often summarize an entire athletic contest or a movie in a few brief sentences and easily convey the essence of the event. Now apply these same skills to give a summary of the passage in a sentence or two. Then, in an additional sentence or two, describe what impact this passage will have on how you live.

Memory Verse

"[8a] Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord...[12] For this reason 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 what I have committed to Him until that Day."—**2nd Timothy 1:8a, 12 (NKJV)**

Background Information for 2 Timothy

One commentator entitled 2 Timothy as Paul's famous last words while others have called it his last will and testimony, his swan song, or his marching orders for a young apprentice. Second Timothy is one of three Pastoral Epistles, the others being 1 Timothy and Titus. They are called Pastoral Epistles because they were letters written by Paul to two young pastors. The Pastoral Epistles have been considered to be authentic and part of the canon of Scripture since the second century. However, in the words of John MacArthur, "Many modernist critics delight in attacking the plain statements of Scripture and for no good reason, deny that Paul wrote the Pastoral Epistles, ignoring the testimony of the letters themselves and that of the early church." The critic's denial is based upon the fact that one third of the words in these epistles, in the original language, are unique and not used elsewhere in Paul's writings. Most evangelicals counter that it is not unreasonable to use different words when addressing a close personal friend as opposed to a serious theological discussion addressed to an entire gathering of often unknown church members.

Paul wrote this letter to Timothy, his true son in the faith, believing that death was imminent. The letter though very personal, has few commendations but has 25 imperatives or instructions for Timothy to help better equip him as the mantle of leadership passes to him from Paul.

A brief look at the timeline of the last decade of Paul's life is helpful to understanding these epistles.

AD 58	Paul arrested in Jerusalem
AD 60–61	Paul arrives in Rome
AD 61–63	Paul imprisoned in private home and writes Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon.
Early AD 64–67	Paul released from first imprisonment and goes on fourth missionary journey. It was during this time Paul wrote 1 Timothy and Titus while in Macedonia.

Mid-AD 64 Most of Rome burns to the ground. Most blame Nero for the fire citing his desire for “urban renewal.” Nero uses Christians as a scapegoat for fire and widespread persecution breaks out.

AD 67 Paul arrested for a second time.

AD 68 Paul martyred in Rome.

The following chart, adapted from MacArthur’s Study Bible, gives a simple comparison of Paul’s two imprisonments.

First Imprisonment	Second Imprisonment
AD 61–63	AD 67–68
Acts 2–Wrote the Prison Epistles	Wrote 2 Timothy
Lived in rented house chained to guard	Chained in dungeon of Mamertine Prison
Many visited Paul	Virtually alone (only Luke with him)
Many opportunities to witness (even to captors)	Very limited opportunities for ministry
Accused by Jews of heresy and sedition	Persecuted by Rome as a criminal against empire
Suffered as part of local sporadic persecution	Persecution of all Christians by Nero
Optimistic about his release (Philippians 1:24–26)	Anticipated his execution (2 Timothy 4:6)

Tool Box

Step 1: The Bible. Read the passage in a couple of different versions. If you are having trouble understanding a passage, choose a more dynamic version such as *New Living Translation*. To focus in on the exact meaning of a verse, choose a more literal translation such as *New King James Version*, *New American Standard Bible* or *English Standard Version*. *The Amplified Bible* is another excellent version.

Step 2: Study Tools. Use these to help you dig deeper. Background Information: 1) Unger's Bible Dictionary, 2) Bible Dictionaries online at biblestudytools.com and blueletterbible.com. (recommend both David Guzik and Chuck Smith's commentaries/study notes); Word Studies: 1) Zodhiates' *The Complete Word Study New Testament*, 2) Vine's *Complete Expository Dictionary*, and 3) Strong's *Dictionary of Bible Words*.

Step 3: Commentaries. Commentaries should not be used in place of studying God's Word directly, but they can give you additional insights. Some good commentaries include: Warren Wiersbe, J. Vernon McGee, F.F. Bruce, *the Expositors Bible Commentary*, *NIV Application Commentary*, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary* (edited by Walvoord & Zuck), *the Tyndale New Testament Commentaries*, and William Barclay (*great for background and culture, but be careful of his spiritual applications).

Step 4: Online Assistance. Should you have a specific question about the study please e-mail your inquiry to: mannyqwcm@gmail.com

