

Twelve Lessons

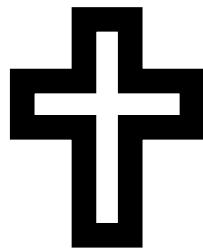
on

II Timothy

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INTRODUCTION TO II TIMOTHY – LESSON 1

Introduction: The Epistle of II Timothy was the last of three letters written by Paul to instruct and encourage pastors. The three “Pastoral Epistles” are I Timothy, Titus, and II Timothy.

Lesson Goals:

1. This lesson will introduce the Epistle of II Timothy.
2. To present the epistle in light of the historical and spiritual background surrounding it.

Definitions of Important Terms/Phrases:

1. Charge – A mandate; proclamation, a command or commandment, is strictly used of commands received from a superior and transmitted to others.
2. Commit – Commend; signifies to entrust, commit to one's charge.

THE TIME, PLACE, AND AUTHOR OF THE EPISTLE

1. This letter was written by the Apostle Paul. He probably wrote the letter to explain to Timothy why he had not been able to return to Ephesus. Paul had written of his plans to come to Ephesus in the first epistle to Timothy. I Timothy 3:14 states, *“These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly:”*
2. Paul had not returned to Ephesus because he had been imprisoned in Rome by the Emperor Nero. Paul wrote the letter from the inner cell of the Mamertine Prison. Knowing that Luke was also present suggests that he may have recorded the words for Paul.
3. The historical facts surrounding Nero's reign place the writing of the epistle approximate to the year A.D. 68. It should be noted that this was a time of great persecution among Christians.

THE PURPOSE OF THE EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY

1. This epistle was written by Paul with the same intention as the first epistle. Paul is “committing” to Timothy the sacred teachings which he had personally received from the Lord Jesus Christ. In both epistles, Paul charges Timothy to “guard” that which has been committed to his trust. The words “charge”, “keep”, “commit” and “command” are all key words in the study of I & II Timothy.
 - a. *“That thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine”* – I Tim. 1:3
 - b. *“Now the end of the commandment is charity...”* – I Tim. 1:5
 - c. *“This charge I commit unto thee...”* – I Tim. 1:18
 - d. *“These things command and teach.”* – I Tim. 4:11
 - e. *“I charge thee before God and the Lord Jesus Christ...”* – I Tim. 5:21
 - f. *“I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ...”* – II Tim. 4:1

Paul wrote in this serious manner to encourage Timothy to remain faithful. At this time there had been a tremendous assault on the church by apostates. Paul understanding that he would not be living to defend the Gospel now places its defense in the hands of Timothy. Timothy would soon face his own persecution because of the position he held in the church. Therefore, Paul writes a very personal letter of encouragement.

2. Both epistles deal with behavior.
 - a. I Timothy – Paul instructed Timothy on the subject of behaving in the house of God as a pastor.
 - b. II Timothy – The emphasis of Paul is placed upon behaving as a man of God in the eyes of the world.
3. When Paul wrote the first epistle to Timothy, the young man had recently been placed in the position of pastor. History reveals that at the time of the second epistle, Timothy had been involved as an evangelist in the surrounding communities of Ephesus.

PAUL'S IMPRISONMENT

1. We understand from the history found in the Scriptures that Paul was imprisoned in Rome on two occasions. The first imprisonment is recorded in Acts 28. Paul had been accused by the Jews and made an appeal to his Roman citizenship in order to attain a hearing before Caesar (Acts 22, 25, 26). At this time Paul was given opportunity to preach for two years in a rented building. At this time he had a great ministry among the Jews. After being released, Paul traveled as a missionary for approximately 6 years. At this time it is believed that Paul visited Ephesus, Macedonia, Nicopolis, Crete, Miletus, Troas, and Spain. There is also a historical hint that Paul may have traveled to Britain. In this period Paul spent most of his time in Ephesus where he left Timothy in charge.
2. The second imprisonment surrounds the writing of II Timothy. Paul's second imprisonment was much

different than the first. Between the two imprisonments Nero, the emperor, had unleashed a great persecution against all Christians. Paul had been falsely charged as a “ring leader” of the Christian “cult” and was now awaiting his execution. The all stemmed from a false accusation from Nero that Christians had set fire to the city of Rome in A.D. 64. (See section below on Nero: The “unrighteous judge”.)

3. In II Timothy, we are given a glance of the terrible conditions of the prison. Paul urgently requested Timothy to visit him in Rome and to bring with him his cloak which he left at Troas. Paul had sent Tychicus to Ephesus to relieve Timothy that he might be able to arrive in Rome before winter. No doubt Paul was dreading the coldness of winter.
4. The persecution of Christians had caused many to forsake Paul. In fact, Paul writes “only Luke is with me.”
5. Although Paul is in deplorable conditions, the letter he writes is full of joy and expectation. He was in a Roman prison, but still he recognized himself as a “prisoner of Jesus Christ.”

NERO: THE “UNRIGHTEOUS JUDGE”

In this epistle, there is an underlying contrast between Christ, the Righteous Judge, and Nero, the unrighteous judge. We will briefly discuss the life of Nero.

1. Nero was born in A.D. 37 to a very wicked family.
2. Nero’s father was an official in the Roman government. He died when Nero was 3 years old at the hands of his mother who poisoned him.
3. Nero’s mother married the third of the four Claudian emperors, Claudius. Nero’s mother had Emperor Claudius to adopt her son and persuaded him to appoint Nero heir to the Roman throne in place of his own son. When Claudius made this appointment, she murdered him to keep the appointment from being changed.
4. Nero became Emperor of the Roman Empire at age 16.
5. The history of Nero’s family.
 - a. Nero married his stepfather’s 13 year old daughter when he was 15.
 - b. Nero hired someone to murder his first wife.
 - c. Nero murdered his second wife by himself.
 - d. Nero murdered his third wife’s husband to free her for marriage.
6. Other terrible characteristics of Nero.
 - a. Nero had Claudius’ son, Britannicus, murdered to protect his throne from possible claims of royalty.
 - b. Nero invented many of the gladiator battles and chariot racing.
 - c. Nero encouraged the terrible sports of beasts against men. He enjoyed combat to the death.
7. In A.D. 64, Nero set fire to part of the city of Rome to create a location for a new palace. When rumors began to stir that he had set the fire, he turned the accusations to the vulnerable Christians and many died terrible deaths of violence.
8. At the age of 31, Nero was ruling over a weakened empire. The Roman senate declared Nero a public enemy and he was sentenced to death by flogging. Nero ended his life by suicide in view of a violent death.

AN OUTLINE OF II TIMOTHY – There are two main divisions in II Timothy. (Nelson’s Bible Outlines)

I. PERSEVERE IN PRESENT TESTINGS – 1:1-2:26

- A. Thanksgiving for Timothy’s Faith – 1:1-5**
- B. Reminder of Timothy’s Responsibility – 1:6-18**
- C. Characteristics of a Faithful Minister – 2:1-26**
 1. Discipling Teacher – 2:1-2
 2. Single-minded Soldier – 2:3-5
 3. Enduring Farmer – 2:6-13
 4. Diligent Workman – 2:14-19
 5. Sanctified Vessel – 2:20-23
 6. Gentle Servant – 2:24-26

II. ENDURE IN FUTURE TESTINGS – 3:1-4:22

- A. Approaching Day of Denial – 3:1-17**
 1. Coming of Denial – 3:1-9
 2. Confronting Denial – 3:10-17
- B. Charge to Preach the Word – 4:1-5**
- C. Approaching Death of Paul – 4:6-22**
 1. Paul’s Hope in Death – 4:6-8
 2. Paul’s Situation in Prison – 4:9-18