

# English: Unlocked Literal Bible for 2 Timothy

Formatted for Translators

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Bible Text: The English Unlocked Literal Bible (ULB)

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Notes: English ULB Translation Notes

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# Introduction to 2 Timothy

## Part 1: General Introduction

### Outline of the Book of 2 Timothy

1. Paul greets Timothy and encourages him to endure hardship as he serves God (1:1-2:13).
2. Paul gives general instructions to Timothy (2:14-26).
3. Paul warns Timothy about future events and instructs him about how to carry out his service to God (3:1-4:8).
4. Paul makes personal remarks (4:9-24).

### Who wrote the Book of 2 Timothy?

Paul wrote 2 Timothy. He was from the city of Tarsus. He had been known as Saul in his early life. Before becoming a Christian, Paul was a Pharisee. He persecuted Christians. After he became a Christian, he traveled several times throughout the Roman Empire telling people about Jesus.

This book is the second letter Paul wrote Timothy. Timothy was his disciple and close friend. Paul wrote this letter while in prison in Rome. Paul would die soon after writing this letter.

### What is the Book of 2 Timothy about?

Paul had left Timothy in the city of Ephesus to help the believers there. Paul wrote this letter to instruct Timothy about various matters. The topics he addressed include warnings about false teachers and enduring difficult situations. This letter also shows how Paul was training Timothy to be a leader among the churches.

### How should the title of this book be translated?

Translators may choose to call this book by its traditional title, "2 Timothy" or "Second Timothy." Or they may choose a clearer title, such as "Paul's Second Letter to Timothy" or "The Second Letter to Timothy."

## Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

### What is the soldier imagery in 2 Timothy?

As Paul waited in prison, knowing he would die soon, he often spoke of himself as a soldier of Jesus Christ. Soldiers answer to their leaders. In the same way, Christians answer to Jesus. As "soldiers" of Christ, believers are to obey his commands, even if they die as a result.

### What does it mean that God inspired Scripture?

God is the true author of Scripture. He inspired the human authors who wrote the books. That means God in some way caused the people to write what they wrote. This is why it is also referred to as God's word. This implies several things about the Bible. First, the Bible is free from error and can be trusted. Second, we can rely on God to protect the scripture from those who want to distort it or destroy it. Third, God's word should be translated into all the world's languages.

## Part 3: Important Translation Issues

### Singular and plural "you"

In this book, the word "I" refers to Paul. Here the word "you" is almost always singular and refers to Timothy. The exception to this is 4:22.

### What did Paul mean by the expressions "in Christ," "in the Lord," and others like them?

Paul used these phrases to express the idea of a very close union between Jesus Christ and believers—that believers belong to Christ. Belonging to Christ means the believer is saved and is made a friend with God.

These phrases also have specific meanings that depend on how Paul used them in a particular passage. Depending on the the context, the word "in" can mean "because of," "by means of," "that agrees with," "in submission to," "in the manner of," or "in regard to." The translator may represent those more immediate senses. But, if possible, it would be good for the translator to choose a word or phrase that represents both the immediate sense and the sense of "in union with." (See: inchrist)

### What are the major textual issues in the text of the Book of 2 Timothy?

For the following verses, modern versions of the Bible differ from older versions. The ULB text has the modern reading and puts the older reading in a footnote. If a translation of the Bible exists in the general region, translators should consider using the reading found in those versions. If not, translators are advised to follow the modern reading.

- "Because of this, I was appointed a preacher, an apostle, and a teacher" (1:11). Some older translations read, "Because of this, I was appointed a preacher, an apostle, and a teacher to the Gentiles."
- "Warn them before God" (2:14). Some older translations read, "Warn them before the Lord."

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## 2 Timothy

**1** <sup>1</sup>Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God, according to the promise of the life that is in Christ Jesus,

<sup>2</sup>to Timothy, beloved child: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

<sup>3</sup>I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers, with a clean conscience, as I constantly remember you in my prayers night and day.<sup>4</sup>As I remember your tears, I long to see you, that I may be filled with joy.<sup>5</sup>I have been reminded of your genuine faith, which lived first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am convinced that it lives in you also.

<sup>6</sup>This is the reason I am reminding you to rekindle the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands.<sup>7</sup>For God did not give us a spirit of fear, but of power and love and discipline.

<sup>8</sup>So do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me, Paul, his prisoner. Instead, share in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God,<sup>9</sup>who saved us and called us with a holy calling. He did this, not according to our works, but according to his own plan and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before times ever began.<sup>10</sup>But now God's salvation has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who put an end to death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.<sup>11</sup>Because of this, I was appointed a herald, an apostle, and a teacher. <sup>1</sup>

<sup>12</sup>For this cause I also suffer these things. But I am not ashamed, for I know him whom I have believed. I am convinced that he is able to keep that which I have entrusted to him until that day.<sup>13</sup>Keep the example of the truthful words that you heard from me, with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.<sup>14</sup>The good thing that God committed to you, guard it through the Holy Spirit, who lives in us.

<sup>15</sup>You know this, that all who live in Asia turned away from me. In this group are Phygelus and Hermogenes.<sup>16</sup>May the Lord grant mercy to the household of Onesiphorus, for he often refreshed me and was not ashamed of my

chain.<sup>17</sup> Instead, when he was in Rome, he sought me diligently, and he found me.<sup>18</sup> May the Lord grant to him to find mercy from him on that day. All the ways he served me in Ephesus you know very well.

Some important and ancient Greek copies add to the Gentiles .

## 2 Timothy 1 General Notes

### Structure and formatting

Paul formally introduces this letter in verses 1-2. Writers often began letters in this way in the ancient Near East.

### Special concepts in this chapter

#### Spiritual children

Paul disciplined Timothy as a Christian and a church leader. Paul may also have led him to believe in Christ. Therefore, Paul calls Timothy "beloved child." (See: disciple and spirit)

### Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

#### Persecution

Paul was in prison when he wrote this letter. Paul encourages Timothy to be willing to suffer for the gospel.

### Links:

- [2 Timothy 1:1 Notes](#)
- [2 Timothy intro](#)

#### 2 Timothy 1:1

##### General Information:

In this book, unless otherwise noted, the word "our" refers to Paul and Timothy

Paul

Your language may have a particular way of introducing the author of a letter. Also, immediately after introducing the author, you may need to tell to whom the letter is written, as in the UDB.

through the will of God

"because of God's will" or "because God wanted it." Paul became an apostle because God wanted him to be an apostle and not because a human being chose him.

according to

Possible meanings are 1) "for the purpose of." This means that God appointed Paul to tell others about

God's promise of life in Jesus or 2) "in keeping with." This means that just as God promises that Jesus gives life, he has made Paul an apostle.

of the life that is in Christ Jesus

Paul speaks of "the life" as if it were an object inside of Jesus. This refers to the life people receive as a result of belonging to Christ Jesus. Alternate translation: "of the life that we receive as a result of belonging to Christ Jesus"

#### 2 Timothy 1:2

to Timothy

Your language may have a particular way of introducing the person who receives a letter. Also, immediately after introducing the author, you may need to tell to whom the letter is written.

beloved child

"dear child" or "child whom I love."" Here "child" is a term of great love and approval. It is also likely that

Timothy was converted to Christ by Paul, and so this is why Paul considered him like his own child. Alternate translation: "who is like my beloved child"

Grace, mercy, and peace from

"May grace, mercy, and peace be yours from" or "May you experience kindness, mercy, and peace within from"

God the Father and

"God, who is our Father, and." This is an important title for God.

Christ Jesus our Lord

"Christ Jesus, who is our Lord"

2 Timothy 1:3

whom I serve from my forefathers

"whom I serve as my ancestors did"

with a clean conscience

Paul speaks of his conscience as if it could be physically clean. This means that a person does not feel guilty because he has always tried to do what was right. Alternate translation: "knowing I have tried my hardest to do what is right"

as I constantly remember you

"when I remember you continually" or "while I remember you all the time"

night and day

Here "night and day" are used together to mean "always." Alternate translation: "always" or "constantly"

2 Timothy 1:4

I long to see you

"I want very much to see you"

I may be filled with joy

Paul speaks of himself as if he were a container that someone could fill. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I may be full of joy" or "I may have complete joy"

I remember your tears

Here "tears" represents crying. Alternate translation: "I remember how you cried for me"

2 Timothy 1:5

I have been reminded of your

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I also remember your" or "I also recall your"

your genuine faith

"your faith that is real" or "your faith that is sincere"

faith, which lived first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am convinced that it lives in you also

Paul is speaking of their faith as if it were something that is alive and lives in them. Paul means they have the same sort of faith. This can be stated as a new sentence. Alternate translation: "faith. Lois, your grandmother, and Eunice, your mother, first had genuine faith, and I am confident that you have genuine faith as well"

Lois ... Eunice

These are names of women.

2 Timothy 1:6

Connecting Statement:

Paul encourages Timothy to live in power, love, and discipline and not to be ashamed because of Paul's suffering in prison because of his (Paul's) faith in Christ.

This is the reason I am

"For this reason I am" or "Because of your sincere faith in Jesus, I am"

to rekindle the gift

Paul speaks about Timothy's need to start using his gift again as if he were restarting a fire. Alternate translation: "to start using again the gift"

the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands

"the gift of God that you received when I laid my hands on you." This refers to a ceremony in which Paul placed

his hands on Timothy and prayed that God would enable him to do the work he had commanded him to do.

## 2 Timothy 1:7

God did not give us a spirit of fear, but of power and love and discipline

Possible meanings are 1) "spirit" refers to the "Holy Spirit." Alternate translation: "God's Holy Spirit does not cause us to be afraid. He causes us to have power and love and discipline" or 2) "spirit" refers to a characteristic. Alternate translation: "God does not cause us to be afraid but to have power and love and discipline"

discipline

Possible meanings are 1) the power to control ourselves or 2) the power to correct other people who are doing wrong.

## 2 Timothy 1:8

of the testimony

"of testifying" or "of telling others"

his prisoner

"a prisoner for his sake" or "a prisoner because I testify about the Lord"

share in suffering for the gospel

Paul speaks of suffering as if it were an object that could be shared or distributed among people. Alternate translation: "suffer with me for the gospel"

gospel according to the power of God

"gospel, allowing God to make you strong"

## 2 Timothy 1:9

with a holy calling

"with a calling that set us apart as his people" or "to be his holy people"

He did this

"He saved and called us"

not according to our works

"not because we did anything to deserve it"

but according to his own plan and grace

"but because he planned to show us kindness"

in Christ Jesus

"through our relationship to Christ Jesus"

before times ever began

"before the world began" or "before time began"

## 2 Timothy 1:10

God's salvation has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus

Paul speaks of salvation as if it were an object that could uncovered and shown to people. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has shown how he will save us by sending our Savior Christ Jesus"

who put an end to death

Paul speaks of death as if it were an independent process instead of the event of people dying. Alternate translation: "who destroyed death" or "who made it possible for people not to remain dead forever"

brought life and immortality to light through the gospel

Paul speaks of teaching about eternal life as if it were an object that could be brought from darkness into light so that people could see it. Alternate translation: "taught what life that never ends is by preaching the gospel"

## 2 Timothy 1:11

I was appointed a herald

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God chose me to be a herald"

a herald

a person who proclaims important or official messages

2 Timothy 1:12

For this cause

"Because I am an apostle"

I also suffer these things

Paul is referring to being a prisoner.

to keep that which I have entrusted to him

Paul is using a metaphor of a person leaving something with another person who is supposed to protect it until he gives it back to the first person. Possible meanings are 1) Paul is trusting Jesus to help him remain faithful, or 2) Paul is trusting that Jesus will ensure that people continue spreading the gospel message.

I am convinced

"I am certain" or "I know for sure"

that day

This refers to the day when God judges all people.

2 Timothy 1:13

Keep the example of the truthful words that you heard from me

"Keep teaching the correct ideas I have taught you" or "Use how I taught you as a pattern for what and how you should teach"

truthful words

The Greek word translated "truthful, is a word meaning "healthy" and here is a dead metaphor for true, trustworthy, and morally good. Alternate translation: "trustworthy words"

with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus

"as you trust in Jesus Christ and love him"

2 Timothy 1:14

The good thing

This refers to the work of proclaiming the gospel correctly.

guard it

Timothy needs to be alert because people will oppose his work, try to make him stop, and distort what he says.

through the Holy Spirit

"with the power of the Holy Spirit"

2 Timothy 1:15

turned away from me

This is a metaphor that means they stopped helping Paul. They abandoned Paul because the authorities had thrown him into prison. Alternate translation: "have stopped helping me"

Phygelus and Hermogenes

These are names of men.

2 Timothy 1:16

Onesiphorus

This is the name of a man.

to the household

"to the family"

was not ashamed of my chain

Here "chain" is a metonym for being in prison. Onesiphorus was not ashamed that Paul was in prison but came to visit him frequently. Alternate translation: "was not ashamed that I was in prison"

2 Timothy 1:17

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

2 Timothy 1:18

May the Lord grant to him to find mercy from him

"May Onesiphorus receive mercy from the Lord" or "May the Lord show him mercy"



to find mercy from him

on that day

Paul speaks of mercy as if it were an object that could be found.

This refers to the day when God will judge all people.

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2 <sup>1</sup>You therefore, my child, be strengthened in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.<sup>2</sup>The things you heard from me among many witnesses, entrust them to faithful people who will be able to teach others also.

<sup>3</sup>Suffer hardship with me as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.<sup>4</sup>No soldier serves while entangled in the affairs of this life, so that he may please his superior officer.<sup>5</sup>Also, if someone competes as an athlete, he is not crowned unless he competes by the rules.

<sup>6</sup>It is necessary that the hard-working farmer receive his share of the crops first.<sup>7</sup>Think about what I am saying, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything.

<sup>8</sup>Remember Jesus Christ, a descendant of David, who was raised from the dead. This is according to my gospel message,<sup>9</sup>for which I am suffering to the point of being bound with chains as a criminal. But the word of God is not bound.<sup>10</sup>Therefore I endure all things for those who are chosen, so that they also may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory.

<sup>11</sup>This is a trustworthy saying:

"If we have died with him, we will also live with him.

<sup>12</sup> If we endure, we will also reign with him.

If we deny him, he also will deny us.

<sup>13</sup> If we are unfaithful, he remains faithful, for he cannot deny himself."

<sup>14</sup>Keep reminding them of these things. Command them before God not to quarrel about words; it is of no value and only ruins those who listen. <sup>15</sup>Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a laborer who has no reason to be ashamed, who accurately teaches the word of truth.

<sup>16</sup>Avoid profane and empty talk, which leads to more and more godlessness.<sup>17</sup>Their talk will spread like cancer. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus,<sup>18</sup>who have gone astray from the truth. They say that the resurrection has already happened, and they destroy the faith of some.

<sup>19</sup>However, the firm foundation of God stands. It has this inscription: "The Lord knows those who are his" and "Everyone who names the name of the Lord must depart from unrighteousness."<sup>20</sup>In a wealthy home there are not only containers of gold and silver. There are also containers of wood and clay. Some of these are for honorable use, and some for dishonorable.<sup>21</sup>If someone cleans himself from dishonorable use, he is an honorable container. He is set apart, useful to the Master, and prepared for every good work.

<sup>22</sup>Flee youthful lusts. Pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace with those who call on the Lord out of a clean heart.<sup>23</sup>But refuse foolish and ignorant questions. You know that they give birth to quarrels.

<sup>24</sup>The Lord's servant must not quarrel. Instead he must be gentle toward all, able to teach, and patient,<sup>25</sup>correcting his opponents with gentleness. Perhaps God may give them repentance for the knowledge of the truth.<sup>26</sup>They may become sober again and leave the devil's trap, after they have been captured by him for his will.

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<sup>1</sup>Some important and ancient Greek copies read, Warn them before the Lord .

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## 2 Timothy 2 General Notes

### Structure and formatting

Some translations set words farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text. The ULB does this with verses 11-13. Paul may be quoting a poem or hymn in these verses.

### Special concepts in this chapter

We will reign with him

Faithful Christians will reign with Christ in the future. (See: faithful)

## Important figures of speech in this chapter

### Analogies

In this chapter, Paul makes several analogies to teach about living as a Christian. He uses analogies of soldiers, athletes, and farmers. Later in the chapter, he uses the analogy of different kinds of containers in a house.

### Links:

- [2 Timothy 2:1 Notes](#)

#### 2 Timothy 2:1

##### Connecting Statement:

Paul pictures Timothy's Christian life as a soldier's life, as a farmer's life, and as an athlete's life.

my child

Here "child" is a term of great love and approval. It is also likely that Timothy was converted to Christ by Paul, and so this is why Paul considered him like his own child. Alternate translation: "who is like my child"

be strengthened in the grace that is in Christ Jesus

Paul speaks about the motivation and determination that God's grace allows believers to have. Alternate translation: "let God use the grace he gave you through your relationship to Christ Jesus to make you strong"

#### 2 Timothy 2:2

among many witnesses

"with many witnesses there to agree that what I said is true"

entrust them to faithful people

Paul speaks of his instructions to Timothy as if they were objects that Timothy could give to other people and trust them to use correctly. Alternate translation: "commit them" or "teach them"

#### 2 Timothy 2:3

Suffer hardship with me

Possible meanings are 1) "Endure suffering as I do" or 2) "Share in my suffering"

as a good soldier of Christ Jesus

Paul compares suffering for Christ Jesus to the suffering that a good soldier endures.

#### 2 Timothy 2:4

No soldier serves while entangled in the affairs of this life

"No soldier serves when he is involved in the everyday business of this life" or "When soldiers are serving, they do not get distracted by the ordinary things that people do." Christ's servants should not allow everyday life to keep them from working for Christ.

while entangled

Paul speaks of this distraction as if it were a net that tripped people up as they were walking.

his superior officer

"his leader" or "the one who commands him"

#### 2 Timothy 2:5

as an athlete, he is not crowned unless he competes by the rules

Paul is implicitly speaking of Christ's servants as if they were athletes.

he is not crowned unless he competes by the rules

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they will crown him as winner only if he competes by the rules"

he is not crowned

"he does not win the prize." Athletes in Paul's time were crowned with wreaths made from the leaves of plants when they won competitions.

competes by the rules

"competes according to the rules" or "strictly obeys the rules"

2 Timothy 2:6

It is necessary that the hard-working farmer receive his share of the crops first

This is the third metaphor Paul gives Timothy about working. The reader should understand that Christ's servants need to work hard.

2 Timothy 2:7

Think about what I am saying

Paul gave Timothy word pictures, but he did not completely explain their meanings. He expected Timothy to figure out what he was saying about Christ's servants.

in everything

"about everything"

2 Timothy 2:8

Connecting Statement:

Paul gives Timothy instructions on how to live for Christ, how to suffer for Christ, and how to teach others to live for Christ.

who was raised from the dead

Here to raise up is an idiom for causing someone who has died to become alive again. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom God caused to live again" or "whom God raised from the dead"

according to my gospel message

Paul speaks of the gospel message as if it were especially his. He means that this is the gospel message that he proclaims. Alternate translation: "according to the gospel message that I preach"

2 Timothy 2:9

to the point of being bound with chains as a criminal

Here "being chained" represents being a prisoner. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "to the point of wearing chains as a criminal in prison"

the word of God is not bound

Here "bound" speaks of what happens to a prisoner, and the phrase is a metaphor that means no one can stop God's message. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one can put the word of God in prison" or "no one can stop the word of God"

2 Timothy 2:10

for those who are chosen

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for the people whom God has chosen"

may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus

Paul speaks of salvation as if it were an object that could be physically grasped. Alternate translation: "will receive salvation from Christ Jesus"

with eternal glory

"and that they will be forever with him in the glorious place where he is"

2 Timothy 2:11

This is a trustworthy saying

"These are words you can trust"

If we have died with him, we will also live with him

This is most likely the beginning of a song or poem that Paul is quoting. If your language has a way of indicating that this is poetry, you could use it here. If not, you could translate this as regular prose rather than poetry.

died with him

Paul uses this expression to mean that people share in Christ's death when they trust in him, deny their own wants, and obey him.

## 2 Timothy 2:12

General Information:

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## 2 Timothy 2:13

if we are unfaithful ... he cannot deny himself

This is most likely the end of a song or poem that Paul is quoting. If your language has a way of indicating that this is poetry you could use it here. If not, you could translate this as regular prose rather than poetry.

if we are unfaithful

"even if we fail God" or "even if we do not do what we believe God wants us to do"

he cannot deny himself

"he must always act according to his character" or "he cannot act in ways that are the opposite of his real character"

## 2 Timothy 2:14

General Information:

The word "them" may refer to "the teachers" or "the people of the church"

before God

Paul speaks of God's awareness of Paul as if he is in God's physical presence. This implies that God will be Timothy's witness. Alternate translation: "in God's presence" or "with God as your witness"

not to quarrel about words

Possible meanings are 1) "not to argue about foolish things that people say" or 2) "not to quarrel about what words mean"

it is of no value

"this does not benefit anyone"

## 2 Timothy 2:15

to present yourself to God as one approved, a laborer who has no reason to be ashamed

"to present yourself to God as a person who has proven to be worthy and has no cause for shame"

a laborer

Paul presents the idea of Timothy correctly explaining God's word as if he were a skilled workman. Alternate translation: "like a workman" or "like a worker"

accurately teaches the word of truth

Possible meanings are 1) "explains the message about the truth correctly" or 2) "explains the true message correctly."

## 2 Timothy 2:16

Avoid profane and empty talk

"Do not pay attention to ungodly and useless talk"

which leads to more and more godlessness

Paul speaks of this kind of talk as if it were something that could physically move to another location, and he speaks of godlessness as if it were that new location. Alternate translation: "which causes people to become more and more ungodly"

## 2 Timothy 2:17

Their talk will spread like cancer

Cancer quickly spreads in a person's body and destroys it. This is a metaphor that means what those people were saying would spread from person to person and harm the faith of those who heard it. Alternate translation: "What they say will spread like an infectious disease" or "Their talk will spread quickly and cause destruction like cancer"

Hymenaeus and Philetus

These are names of men.

## 2 Timothy 2:18

who have gone astray from the truth

Here "gone astray from the truth" is a metaphor for no longer believing or teaching what is true. Alternate translation: "who have started saying things that are not true"

the resurrection has already happened

"God has already raised dead believers to eternal life"

they destroy the faith of some

"they cause some people to stop believing"

## 2 Timothy 2:19

General Information:

Just as precious and common containers can be used for honorable ways in a wealthy house, any person who turns to God can be used by God in honorable ways in doing good works.

the firm foundation of God stands

Possible meanings are 1) "God's truth is like a firm foundation" or 2) "God has established his people like a building on a firm foundation" or 3) "God's faithfulness is like a firm foundation." In any case, Paul speaks of this idea as if it were a building's foundation laid in the ground.

this inscription

Possible meanings of "inscription" are 1) words written into stone with a chisel or 2) words impressed in wax by a king's ring.

who names the name of the Lord

"who calls on the name of the Lord." Here "name of the Lord" refers to the Lord himself. Alternate translation: "who calls on the Lord" or "who says he is a believer in Christ"

depart from unrighteousness

Paul speaks of unrighteousness as if it were a place from which one could leave. Alternate translation: "stop being evil" or "stop doing wrong things"

## 2 Timothy 2:20

containers of gold and silver ... containers of wood and clay

Here "containers" is a general word for bowls, plates, and pots, which people put food or drink into or on. If your language does not have a general word, use the word for "bowls" or "pots." Paul is using this as a metaphor to describe different types of people.

honorable use ... dishonorable

Possible meanings are 1) "special occasions ... ordinary times" or 2) "the kinds of activities people do in public ... the kinds of activities people do in private."

## 2 Timothy 2:21

cleans himself from dishonorable use

Possible meanings are 1) "separates himself from dishonorable people" or 2) "makes himself pure." In any case, Paul speaks of this process as if it were a person washing himself.

he is an honorable container

Paul speaks about this person as if he were an honorable container. Alternate translation: "he is like the container that is useful for special occasions" or "he is like the container that is useful for activities good people do in public"

He is set apart, useful to the Master, and prepared for every good work

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The Master sets him apart, and he is ready for the Master to use him for every good work"

He is set apart

He is not set apart physically or in the sense of location, but instead to fulfill a purpose. Some versions translate this "sanctified," but the text signals the essential idea of being set apart.

## 2 Timothy 2:22

Flee youthful lusts

Paul speaks about youthful lusts as if they were a dangerous person or animal that Timothy should run away from. Alternate translation: "Completely avoid

youthful lusts" or "Absolutely refuse to do the wrong things that young people strongly desire to do"

2 Timothy 2:24

Pursue righteousness

General Information:

Here "Pursue" means the opposite of "Flee." Paul speaks of righteousness as if it were an object that Timothy should run towards because it will do him good.

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Alternate translation: "Try your best to obtain righteousness" or "Seek after righteousness"

2 Timothy 2:25

correcting his opponents with gentleness

with those

"gently correcting those who oppose him"

Possible meanings are 1) Paul wants Timothy to join with other believers in pursuing righteousness, faith, love, and peace, or 2) Paul wants Timothy to be at peace and not argue with other believers.

his opponents

"people who say that what he teaches is not true"

those who call on the Lord

Perhaps God may give them repentance

Here "call on the Lord" is an idiom that means to trust and worship the Lord. Alternate translation: "those who worship the Lord"

Paul speaks of repentance as if it were an object that God could give people. Alternate translation: "God may give them the opportunity to repent"

out of a clean heart

for the knowledge of the truth

Here "clean" is a metaphor for something pure or sincere. And, "heart" here is a metonym for "thoughts" or "emotions." Alternate translation: "with a sincere mind" or "with sincerity"

"so that they will know the truth"

2 Timothy 2:23

2 Timothy 2:26

refuse foolish and ignorant questions

They may become sober again

"refuse to answer foolish and ignorant questions." Paul means that the people who ask such questions are foolish and ignorant. Alternate translation: "refuse to answer the questions that foolish people who do not want to know the truth ask"

Paul speaks of sinners learning to think correctly about God as if they were drunk people becoming sober again. Alternate translation: "They may think correctly again"

they give birth to quarrels

leave the devil's trap

Paul speaks of ignorant questions as if they were women giving birth to children. Alternate translation: "they cause arguments"

Paul speaks of the devil's ability to convince Christians to sin as if it were a trap. Alternate translation: "stop doing what the devil wants"

after they have been captured by him for his will

Convincing Christians to sin is spoken of as if the devil had physically captured them and made them his slaves. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "after he has deceived them into obeying his will"

<sup>3</sup> But know this: In the last days there will be difficult times.<sup>2</sup> For people will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, and unholy.<sup>3</sup> They will be without natural affection, unable to reconcile, slanderers, without self-control, violent, not lovers of good.<sup>4</sup> They will be betrayers, reckless, prideful, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God.

<sup>5</sup> They will have a shape of godliness, but they will deny its power. Turn away from these people.<sup>6</sup> For some of them are men who enter into households and captivate foolish women. These are women who are loaded up with sins and are led away by various desires.<sup>7</sup> These women are always learning, but they are never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

<sup>8</sup> In the same way that Jannes and Jambres stood against Moses, these false teachers also stand against the truth. They are men corrupt in mind, and with regard to the faith they are rejected.<sup>9</sup> But they will not advance very far. For their foolishness will be obvious to all, just like that of those men.

<sup>10</sup> But as for you, you have followed my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, patience,

<sup>11</sup> persecutions, sufferings, and what happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, and at Lystra. I endured persecutions. Out of them all, the Lord rescued me.<sup>12</sup> All those who want to live in a godly manner in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.<sup>13</sup> Evil people and impostors will go from bad to worse, leading others astray and being led astray.

<sup>14</sup> But as for you, remain in the things that you have learned and have firmly believed. You know from whom you have learned.<sup>15</sup> You know that from childhood you have known the sacred writings. These are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

<sup>16</sup> All scripture has been inspired by God. It is profitable for doctrine, for conviction, for correction, and for training in righteousness.<sup>17</sup> This is so that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.

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## 2 Timothy 3 General Notes

### Structure and formatting

The "last days" could mean in the future just before Jesus returns. If so, Paul is prophesying in verses 1-9 and 13 about those days. The "last days" could also mean the Christian age, including Paul's time. If so, what Paul teaches about being persecuted applies to all Christians. (See: prophet and lastday)

### Links:

- [2 Timothy 3:1 Notes](#)

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#### 2 Timothy 3:1

difficult times

#### Connecting Statement:

These will be days, months, or even years when Christians will endure suffering and danger.

Paul lets Timothy know that in the future people will stop believing the truth, but he should continue trusting God's word even when he is persecuted.

#### 2 Timothy 3:2

lovers of themselves

In the last days

Here "lovers" refers to brotherly love or love for a friend or family member, a natural human love between friends or relatives. This is not the kind of love that comes from God. Alternate translation: "self-centered"

Possible meanings are 1) this is a time later than Paul's time. Alternate translation: "in the future just before Jesus returns" or 2) this refers to the Christian age, including Paul's time. Alternate translation: "during this period of time before the end"



## 2 Timothy 3:3

without natural affection

"unloving even to their own families"

unable to reconcile

"unwilling to live peacefully with others"

not lovers of good

This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "haters of good"

## 2 Timothy 3:4

reckless

doing things either without thinking about what bad things could happen or without even knowing that bad things could happen

prideful

thinking they are better than other people

## 2 Timothy 3:5

They will have a shape of godliness, but they will deny its power

Paul speaks of godliness, the habit of honoring God, as if it were a physical object that had a shape and had physical power. Alternate translation: "They will appear to honor God, but the way they act will show that they do not really believe in God's power"

have a shape of godliness

"appear to have godliness" or "appear to honor God"

Turn away from these people

"Turn away" here is a metaphor for avoiding someone. Alternate translation: "Avoid these people"

## 2 Timothy 3:6

enter into households and captivate

"enter into houses and greatly influence"

foolish women

"women who are spiritually weak." These women may be spiritually weak because they fail to work at becoming godly or because they are idle and have many sins.

who are loaded up with sins

Paul speaks of the attraction of sin as if sin were loaded on the backs of these women. Possible meanings are 1) "who sin often" or 2) "who feel terrible guilt because they continue to sin." The idea is that these men can easily influence these women because the women are unable to stop sinning.

are led away by various desires

Paul speaks about these various desires as if they could lead another person away. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they desire to sin in various ways rather than obey Christ"

## 2 Timothy 3:7

General Information:

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## 2 Timothy 3:8

Connecting Statement:

Paul gives an example of two false teachers from the time of Moses—men who are not mentioned in the Old Testament—and applies it to the way people will be. Paul encourages Timothy to follow his own example and stay in God's word.

Jannes and Jambres

These are names of men.

stood against

Paul speaks of those who argued against Moses as if they had stood against him. Alternate translation: "opposed"

stand against the truth

"oppose the gospel of Jesus"

They are men corrupt in mind

"Their minds are corrupt" or "They cannot think rightly"

and with regard to the faith they are rejected

Possible meanings are 1) here "the faith" represents the false teachers' personal faith in God. Alternate translation: "and they have shown that their faith is not sincere" or 2) here "the faith" represents the true Christian teachings about God. Alternate translation: "and, according to the true teachings of the Christian faith, God has rejected them"

2 Timothy 3:9

they will not advance very far

Paul uses an expression about physical movement to mean that the false teachers will not have much success among the believers. Alternate translation: "they will not have much success"

obvious to all

"easily seen by all" or "something everyone will see"

of those men

"of Jannes and Jambres"

2 Timothy 3:10

you have followed my teaching

Paul speaks of giving close attention to these things as if one were physically following them as they moved. Alternate translation: "you have observed my teaching" or "you have paid close attention to my teaching"

my teaching

"what I have taught you to do"

conduct

the way a person lives his life

longsuffering

one person being patient with those people who do things of which he does not approve

2 Timothy 3:11

Out of them all, the Lord rescued me

Paul speaks of God having stopped him from suffering these hardships and dangers as if God had carried him out of a physical location.

2 Timothy 3:12

to live in a godly manner in Christ Jesus

"to live godly lives as followers of Jesus"

will be persecuted

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "will certainly have to endure persecution"

2 Timothy 3:13

impostors

An imposter is a person who wants other people to think he is someone other, usually more important, than who he is.

will go from bad to worse

"will become even more evil"

leading others astray and being led astray

Here, to lead someone astray is a metaphor for persuading someone to believe something that is not true. Alternate translation: "deceiving and being deceived" or "teaching lies and believing lies"

2 Timothy 3:14

remain in the things that you have learned

Paul speaks of biblical instruction as if it were a place that Timothy could stay in. Alternate translation: "do not forget what you learned" or "continue doing what you have learned"

2 Timothy 3:15

the sacred writings. These are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus

Paul speaks of the message contained in the sacred writings as if it were the writings themselves and of those writings as if they were a person whose words

could make a person wise. Alternate translation: "what is in the sacred writings. When you read the word of God, you can become wise so as to receive salvation from Christ Jesus by faith"

2 Timothy 3:16

All scripture has been inspired by God

Some Bibles translate this as "All scripture is God-breathed." This means God produced the scripture through his Spirit by telling people what to write. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has spoken all scripture by his Spirit"

It is profitable

"It is useful" or "It is beneficial"

for conviction

"for pointing out errors"

for correction

"for fixing errors"

for training in righteousness

"for training people to be righteous"

2 Timothy 3:17

the man of God

This means any believer in God whether male or female. Alternate translation: "all believers"

may be competent, equipped

"may be completely prepared"

<sup>4</sup> <sup>1</sup>I give this solemn command before God and Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and because of his appearing and his kingdom:<sup>2</sup>Preach the word; be ready when it is convenient and when it is not. Reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all patience and teaching.

<sup>3</sup>For the time will come when people will not endure sound teaching. Instead, they will heap up for themselves teachers according to their own desires, who say what their itching ears want to hear.<sup>4</sup>They will turn their hearing away from the truth, and they will turn aside to myths.<sup>5</sup>But you, be sober-minded in all things. Suffer hardship; do the work of an evangelist; fulfill your ministry.

<sup>6</sup>For I am already being poured out. The time of my departure has come.<sup>7</sup>I have fought the good fight; I have finished the race; I have kept the faith.<sup>8</sup>The crown of righteousness has been reserved for me, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give to me on that day, and not to me only, but also to all those who have loved his appearing.

<sup>9</sup>Do your best to come to me quickly.<sup>10</sup>For Demas has left me. He loves this present world and has gone to Thessalonica. Crescens went to Galatia, and Titus went to Dalmatia.

<sup>11</sup>Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you because he is useful to me in the service.<sup>12</sup>Tychicus I sent to Ephesus.<sup>13</sup>The cloak that I left at Troas with Carpus, bring it when you come, and the books, especially the parchments.

<sup>14</sup>Alexander the coppersmith displayed many evil deeds against me. The Lord will repay him according to his deeds.<sup>15</sup>You also should guard yourself against him, because he greatly opposed our words.<sup>16</sup>At my first defense, no one stood with me. Instead, everyone left me. May it not be counted against them.

<sup>17</sup>But the Lord stood by me and strengthened me so that, through me, the proclamation of the message might be fully accomplished, and that all the Gentiles might hear it. And I was rescued out of the lion's mouth.<sup>18</sup>The Lord will rescue me from every evil deed and will save me for his heavenly kingdom. To him be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

<sup>19</sup>Greet Priscilla, Aquila, and the house of Onesiphorus.<sup>20</sup>Erastus remained at Corinth, but Trophimus I left sick at Miletus.<sup>21</sup>Do your best to come before winter. Eubulus greets you, also Pudens, Linus, Claudia, and all the brothers.

<sup>22</sup>May the Lord be with your spirit. May grace be with you.

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## 2 Timothy 4 General Notes

### Structure and formatting

"I give this solemn command"

Paul begins to give personal instructions to Timothy.

### Special concepts in this chapter

Crown

Scripture uses different kinds of crowns as images for different things. It appears Christ will award the crown in this chapter to believers as a reward for living rightly.

### Links:

- [2 Timothy 4:1 Notes](#)

## 2 Timothy 4:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul continues to remind Timothy to be faithful and that he, Paul, is ready to die.

this solemn command before God and Christ Jesus

"this solemn command in the presence of God and Christ Jesus." It is implied that God and Jesus will be Paul's witnesses. Alternate translation: "this solemn command, having as my witnesses God and Christ Jesus"

solemn command

"serious command"

the living and the dead

Here "the living" and "the dead" are used together to mean all people. Alternate translation: "all people who have ever lived"

the dead, and because of his appearing and his kingdom

Here "kingdom" stands for Christ's rule as king. Alternate translation: "the dead when he returns to rule as king"

## 2 Timothy 4:2

the word

"Word" here is a metonym for "message." Alternate translation: "the message about Christ"

when it is not

Here the word "convenient" is understood. Alternate translation: "when it is not convenient"

Reprove

tell someone he is guilty of doing wrong

exhort, with all patience and teaching

"exhort, and teach the people, and always be patient with them"

## 2 Timothy 4:3

For the time will come when

"Because at some time in the future"

people

The context indicates that these will be people who are a part of the community of believers.

will not endure sound teaching

"will no longer want to listen to true teaching" or "will not want to listen to reliable teaching"

they will heap up for themselves teachers according to their own desires

Paul speaks of people obtaining many teachers as if they were putting them into a heap or pile. Alternate translation: "they will listen to many teachers who assure them that there is nothing wrong with their sinful desires"

who say what their itching ears want to hear

Paul speaks of people strongly wanting to hear something as if their ears itched and could only be satisfied if teachers taught them what they wanted to hear. Alternate translation: "who say only what they want so much to hear"

## 2 Timothy 4:4

They will turn their hearing away from the truth

Paul speaks about people no longer paying attention as if they were physically turning away so they cannot hear. Alternate translation: "They will no longer pay attention to the truth"

they will turn aside to myths

Paul speaks about people starting to pay attention to myths as if they were physically turning towards them to listen. Alternate translation: "they will pay attention to teachings that are not true"

## 2 Timothy 4:5

be sober-minded

Paul wants Timothy to think correctly about everything, and he speaks about him as if he wanted

him to be sober, that is, not drunk with wine. Alternate translation: "think clearly"

the work of an evangelist

This means to tell people about who Jesus is, what he did for them, and how they are to live for him.

2 Timothy 4:6

I am already being poured out

Paul speaks of his readiness to die as if he were a cup of wine being poured out as a sacrifice to God.

The time of my departure has come

Here "departure" is a polite way of referring to death. Alternate translation: "Soon I will die and leave this world"

2 Timothy 4:7

I have fought the good fight

Paul speaks of his hard work as if he had been an athlete competing for a prize. Alternate translation: "I have done my best"

I have finished the race

Paul speaks of his life of service to God as if he had been running a race on foot. Alternate translation: "I have completed what I needed to do"

I have kept the faith

Paul speaks of his trust in Christ and his obedience to God as if they were a valuable object that he kept in his possession. Possible meanings are 1) "I have been faithful in doing my ministry" or 2) "I have kept the teachings about what we believe from any error"

2 Timothy 4:8

The crown of righteousness has been reserved for me

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has reserved the crown of righteousness for me"

crown of righteousness

Possible meanings are 1) the crown is the prize that God gives to people who have lived the right way or 2) the crown is a metaphor for righteousness. Just as the

judge of a race gives a crown to the winner, when Paul finishes his life, God will declare that Paul is righteous.

crown

a wreath made of laurel tree leaves that was given to winners of athletic contests

on that day

"on the day when the Lord comes again" or "on the day when God judges people"

but also to all those who have loved his appearing

Paul speaks about this event as if it has already happened. It can be stated as a future event. Alternate translation: "but also he will give it to those who are eagerly waiting for him to return"

2 Timothy 4:9

Connecting Statement:

Paul talks of specific people and how they behaved, of God's work for and to him, and then closes with greetings to and from certain people.

come ... quickly

"come ... as soon as possible"

2 Timothy 4:10

Demas ... Crescens ... Titus

These are names of men.

He loves this present world

Here "world" refers to worldly things as opposed to the things of God. Possible meanings are 1) he loves the temporary comforts of this world or 2) he is afraid he will die if he remains with Paul.

Crescens went ... and Titus went

These two men had left Paul, but Paul is not saying that they also "love this present world" like Demas.

Dalmatia

This is the name of a land region.

## 2 Timothy 4:11

he is useful to me in the service

Possible meanings are 1) "he can help me in the ministry" or 2) "he can help me by serving me."

## 2 Timothy 4:12

General Information:

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## 2 Timothy 4:13

cloak

a heavy garment worn over clothes

Carpus

This is the name of a man.

the books

This refers to scrolls. A scroll was a type of book made of one long sheet of papyrus or leather. After writing on a scroll or reading it, people rolled it up using rods on the ends

especially the parchments

This may refer to a specific type of scroll. Alternate translation: "especially those made from animal skins"

## 2 Timothy 4:14

Alexander the coppersmith displayed

"Alexander, who works with metal, displayed"

Alexander

This is the name of a man.

displayed many evil deeds against me

Paul speaks of doing evil deeds as if they were put on display. Alternate translation: "did many evil things to me"

The Lord will repay him according to his deeds

Paul speaks of punishment as if it were payment. Alternate translation: "The Lord will punish him for what he has done"

him ... his

Alexander

## 2 Timothy 4:15

him ... he

Alexander.

opposed our words

Here "words" refers to a message or teaching. Alternate translation: "opposed the message that we teach"

## 2 Timothy 4:16

At my first defense

"When I first appeared in court and explained my actions"

no one stood with me

"no one stayed with me and helped me"

May it not be counted against them

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "May God not count it against them" or "I pray that God does not punish those believers for leaving me"

## 2 Timothy 4:17

the Lord stood by me

Paul is speaking as if the Lord had physically stood with him. Alternate translation: "the Lord helped me"

so that, through me, the proclamation of the message might be fully accomplished ... the Gentiles might hear

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that I was able to speak all of the Lord's message ... the Gentiles heard"

I was rescued out of the lion's mouth

Paul is speaking about danger as if he had been threatened by a lion. This danger could have been

physical, spiritual, or both. Alternate translation: "I was rescued from great danger"

2 Timothy 4:18

General Information:

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2 Timothy 4:19

house of Onesiphorus

Here "house" stands for the people who live there.  
Alternate translation: "family of Onesiphorus"

Priscilla

This is the name of a woman.

Aquila

This is the name of a man.

Onesiphorus

This is the name of a man. See how you translated this name in 2 Timothy 1:16.

2 Timothy 4:20

Erastus ... Trophimus

These are names of men.

Miletus

This is the name of a city to the south of Ephesus.

2 Timothy 4:21

Eubulus ... Pudens, Linus

These are all names of men.

Do your best to come

"Try hard to come"

before winter

"before the cold season"

greet you, also Pudens, Linus, Claudia, and all the brothers

This can be translated as a new sentence. Alternate translation: "greet you. Pudens, Linus, Claudia, and all the brothers also greet you"

Claudia

This is a female name.

all the brothers

Here "brothers" means all believers whether male or female. Alternate translation: "all the believers here"

2 Timothy 4:22

May the Lord be with your spirit

"I pray that the Lord makes your spirit strong." Here "you" is singular and refers to Timothy.

May grace be with you

"I pray that the Lord shows his grace to all of you there." Here "you" is plural and refers to all the believers there with Timothy.