

PAUL'S^a SECOND LETTER TO TIMOTHY

Greeting

1 From Paul, an apostle^b of Christ Jesus by God's will—in line with the good news of Life that's in Christ Jesus. ¶To Timothy, my dear child. Grace, mercy, and peace to you, from God the Father, and from Christ Jesus our Lord.

Prayer of Thanksgiving and Encouragement to Hold On

¶I thank God for you, as I serve God with a clean conscience, in the tradition of my ancestors. I constantly remember you in my prayers, night and day. ¶I remember your tears, and I really want to see you, so I can be full of joy. ¶I've been thinking of the real^c faith that's in you—which first found a home in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice.^d And I'm convinced it's in you too. ¶That's why I'm reminding you to stir up the fire of God's gift in you—which you got when I laid my hands on you.^e ¶After all, God hasn't given us a spirit of fearfulness, but of power, love, and self-discipline. ¶So don't be ashamed of your testimony to our Lord. And don't be ashamed of me, his prisoner. No, with the power of God, join in the sufferings that go along with preaching the good news. ¶God has saved us, and has given us a holy calling.^f It's not because of anything we've done—not at all. It's because of God's own purpose and grace,^g which he gave us in Christ Jesus before time began. ¶And it's now been revealed by the appearance of our Savior Christ Jesus. He has abolished death, by shining the light of Life and immortality^h through the good news. ¶That's the reasonⁱ I was appointed a preacher, apostle,^j

^a Many—but not all—Bible scholars think that this letter is pseudonymous—that is, they think it shows signs of having been written by someone else using Paul's name. Pseudonymous writings were common in the ancient world.

^b See "Bible Words."

^c Lit. "unfeigned."

^d Pm. **yoo**-niss.

^e Lit. "...God's gift, which is in you through the laying on of my hands."

^f Lit. "has called us with a holy calling."

^g Traditionally: "...calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace."

^h Lit. "incorruptibility."

ⁱ Lit. "...good news, for which."

^j Or "emissary"; see "Bible Words." Paul saw himself as a member of the very first generation of apostles, appointed by Jesus himself. See Gal. 1:11–2:10.

and teacher.^a ¹²And that’s why I’m going through these sufferings. But I’m not ashamed. Because I know Who I believe in. And I’m convinced that Jesus^b is strong enough to protect what I’ve left in his care. On That Day, he’s going to give it back to me.^c ¹³Hold onto the example of healthy teachings that you’ve heard from me. Hold onto it in faith, and in the love that’s in Christ Jesus. ¹⁴Protect the precious thing that’s been left in your care.^d Protect it with the help of the Holy Spirit, who lives in us.

¹⁵As you know, everybody in the province of Asia^e has turned their back on me—for example, Phygelus^f and Hermogenes.^g ¹⁶May the Lord show mercy to the family^h of Onesiphorus!ⁱ Because he gave me a place to rest^j lots of times. And he hasn’t been ashamed of my imprisonment.^k ¹⁷Far from it. When he was in Rome, he actively^l looked for me, and he found me. ¹⁸May the Lord give him his own mercy on That Day! And you know very well the ways he served me when I was in Ephesus.^m

Be a Strong Soldier for Christ Jesus

2 So be strong, my son!ⁿ Be strong with^o the grace that’s in Christ Jesus. ²And pass on the things you’ve heard from me in front of lots of witnesses. Pass them on to faithful people—people who’ll be able, in turn,^p to teach others. ³Join me in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. ⁴Nobody on active military service gets themselves tangled up in day-to-day business matters. They have to be accountable to^q the person that recruited them. ⁵And also, suppose somebody competes in a sport. They aren’t crowned the winner unless they compete within the rules. ⁶The farm worker that works hard should get their share of the harvest

^a Many mss have “and a teacher of the Gentiles/nations” (see 1 Tim. 2:7).

^b Lit. “he.” Paul could possibly be talking about God.

^c Or “to guard what I’ve entrusted to him for That Day” (the day of judgment and resurrection). See 1 Tim. 6:20 for similar words. He has made a permanent decision to trust Jesus with his (eternal) life, and so he is willing to preach the good news even when doing so risks his (mortal) life.

^d Lit. “protect the good deposit/trust.”

^e See “Bible Words.”

^f Pm. **fye-ga-las**.

^g Pm. her-**mojj-a-nee**.

^h Lit. “household.”

ⁱ Pm. oh-na-**siff-or-us**.

^j Or “he refreshed me.” I suspect that the blessing on Onesiphorus’s family is because the whole family joined Onesiphorus in offering him hospitality when he needed a rest.

^k Lit. “And he wasn’t ashamed of my chain.” It might have been extremely risky for someone to associate themselves with a person (or the religion of a person) accused of spreading an illegal religion. When he says Onesiphorus “wasn’t ashamed,” it means that he continued to publicly affirm his loyalty to Paul.

^l Lit. “eagerly.”

^m Pm. **ef-fa-siss**.

ⁿ Lit. “my child.”

^o Lit. “in.”

^p Lit. “—who’ll be sufficient also.”

^q Lit. “to please.”

first. Think about what I'm saying, and^a the Lord will give you understanding about it all.

Remember Jesus Christ, David's descendent, who's risen from among the dead according to the good news that I preach.^b That's what I'm suffering for—to the point of being chained up in prison as a criminal. But God's message^c isn't bound!
 10 And so^d I'm enduring all these things for the sake of the people God has chosen.^e It's so that they can get the salvation that's in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory.
 11 This saying is trustworthy:

If we've died with him, we're going to live with him too.

12 If we hold on, we're going to reign with him too.

If we deny him, he'll deny us too.

13 If we're faithless, he stays faithful,
 Because he can't deny himself.

Always Encourage and Warn People

14 Remind people of these things. Warn them in front of God^f not to argue back and forth over words. They don't serve any purpose, except to totally mess up those who listen. 15 Do your best to stand approved before God. Show yourself to be a worker with nothing to be ashamed of—go^g straight ahead with the true message. 16 And stay away from people talking irreligious nonsense. Because they're just going to go further, into more irreverence. 17 Their message is going to spread like gangrene.^h For example, Hymenaeusⁱ and Philetus.^j 18 They've gotten way off, as far as the truth goes. They say that the resurrection has already happened,^k and they're upsetting some people's faith. 19 But God's foundation stands firm, and it has this seal:

The Lord knows his own.^l

And,

^a Lit. "For."

^b Lit. "according to my good news."

^c Or "word."

^d Lit. "Because of this."

^e Traditionally: "for the sake of the elect" (see "Bible Words").

^f Some mss have "the Lord" or "Christ."

^g Lit. "cut."

^h Gangrene is an infection that sets in when there is dead tissue in the body. It can spread quickly and become deadly if the dead tissue is not removed.

ⁱ Pm. hye-ma-nee-us.

^j Pm. fil-leet-us.

^k The resurrection, that is, of Christians, which the New Testament writers associate with the future return of Christ.

^l Num. 16:5.

Everybody who names the name of the Lord has to turn away from wrongdoing.^a

²⁰And in a large household, there aren't only gold and silver bowls and things—there are wooden ones, and ones made of pottery. Some are valuable, and some are ordinary.^b ²¹So if somebody washes themselves clean from this kind of thing,^c they're going to be a valuable one, made holy, useful to the owner of the house. They'll be prepared for every good use.^d

Go After Integrity, Faith, Love, and Peace

²²So avoid the lusts that go along with being young.^e Instead, join people who^f call on the Lord out of a clean heart—go after integrity, faith, love, and peace. ²³But stay away from foolish, ignorant^g speculations. You know they just lead to conflicts.^h ²⁴And a servant of the Lord shouldn't be fighting—just the opposite. They should be kind to everyone. They should be able to teach, and be tolerant. ²⁵They should gently instruct their opponents. That way, maybe God will give them a change of heartⁱ that will lead to a recognition of the truth—²⁶and they'll come to their senses, and escape from the devil's trap. They had been captured by him so they would do what he wanted.

Bad Times are Coming in the Last Days

3 Now, you should know that there are going to be bad times in the last days.^j ²Because people are going to be self-satisfied,^k money-loving braggarts. They'll be arrogant, foul-mouthed, and disobedient to their parents. They'll be ungrateful and unholy. ³They'll be callous and obstinate. They'll spread vicious rumors.^l They'll be wild and out of control, with no love of what's good. ⁴They'll be treacherous and reckless. They'll be conceited, and more in love with pleasure than with God. ⁵They'll have an appearance of reverence for God, but they'll have denied the power of it. Just stay away from them! ⁶Some of them are men who^m cleverly slip into households—and they capture weak-minded women who are loaded down with sins. They're led around by various sorts of obsessions.ⁿ

^a Or "injustice"; traditionally: "unrighteousness." See Num. 16:26.

^b Lit. "some are for honor, and some for dishonor."

^c Lit. "from these things," i.e. the foolish controversies and speculations mentioned in vv. 16-18, 23.

^d Lit. "work."

^e Lit. "But flee from the lusts of youth."

^f Lit. "together with those who."

^g Or "uninformed."

^h Lit. "speculations, knowing that they breed conflicts."

ⁱ Traditionally: "repentance" (see "Bible Words").

^j This expression, "the last days," indicates the time of the transition between this current "age" and the glorious age to come (see Isa. 2:2ff; Acts 2:17).

^k Lit. "self-loving," in a petty sense.

^l Lit. "They'll be slanderers."

^m Lit. "From them come those who."

ⁿ Or "lusts."

They're always learning, but they can never get to the point of recognizing the truth.^a And these men stand against the truth, just like Jannes and Jambres,^b who stood against Moses. They're people who've totally corrupted their minds. They've failed the test as far as the faith goes. But they won't get any further. Because their foolishness is going to become obvious to everybody—just like what happened to Jannes and Jambres.^c

Paul's Challenge to Timothy

But as for you, you've followed my teaching, my way of life, my purpose,^d my faith, my patience with people, my love, my endurance. You've followed my persecutions and my sufferings—the sorts of things that happened to me in Antioch,^e Iconium^f and Lystra^g—all the persecutions^h I've endured. And the Lord has saved me from them all. But then again, everybody that wants to live in devotion to Christ Jesus is going to be persecuted.ⁱ But evil^j people and fakes are going to go from bad to worse. They'll be deceiving people and being deceived themselves. But as for you, stay with the things you've learned and believed. Because you know the people you learned them from. And you know that you've known the holy scriptures since you were a baby. They can give you wisdom that leads to salvation,^k through your faith in Christ Jesus. All scripture is inspired by God.^l And so it's useful for teaching, challenging, and correcting, and for training people in the ways of right living.^m It's given so that the person who belongs to Godⁿ can be completely equipped for every good endeavor.

4 I challenge you in front of God, and in front of Christ Jesus, who's going to judge the living and the dead—and I challenge you by his arrival and his kingdom: Preach the message! Give it your full attention—when it's convenient, and when it's not convenient.^o Confront people. Tell them off. Encourage them.^p Use^q all your patience, and all your teaching skills.^r Because a time is coming

^a Lit. "...obsessions, always learning, and never able to come to the knowledge/recognition of the truth."

^b Pm. *jan-eez* and *jan-breez*. See Exod. 7:11, 22.

^c Lit. "...everybody, as also those other people's [foolishness] became [obvious]."

^d Or "my public message."

^e Pm. *ant-ee-ock*.

^f Pm. *eye-koe-nee-am*.

^g Pm. *lye-stra*. See Acts 13:13–14:28.

^h Lit. "the sorts of persecutions."

ⁱ Lit. "But also all those wishing to live devotedly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted."

^j Or "immoral."

^k Lit. "They can make you wise for salvation."

^l Or "comes from God's mouth." The words "inspired by God" here render one word, which may well mean "breathed out by God" rather than "breathed into by God."

^m Traditionally: "in righteousness."

ⁿ Lit. "the person of God."

^o Traditionally: "in season and out of season."

^p Or "plead with them."

^q Lit. "With."

^r Lit. "with all teaching."

when people will not stand for healthy teaching—just the opposite. They are going to pile up teachers for themselves in line with their own lusts. They’ll be getting their ears tickled. 4And they’ll turn their ears away from the truth. They’ll turn to myths. 5But as for you, keep your head at all times.^a Endure suffering. Do your work as an evangelist. Fulfill your ministry.

6Because I’m already being poured out as a drink offering. The moment of my departure has arrived. 7I’ve run the good race; I’ve finished the course; I’ve kept the faith. 8From now on, what’s in store for me is the crown of integrity^b as my prize. The Lord, the fair judge of these games, is going to award it to me on That Day.^c And not just to me—it’ll also be given to everyone who has looked forward with love to his appearing.^d

Practical Matters

9Make a big effort to come to me quickly. 10Because Demas^e has left me—he’s in love with the present world,^f and has gone to Thessalonica.^g Crescens^h has gone to Galatia,ⁱ and Titus to Dalmatia.^j 11Luke is the only person with me. Pick up Mark and bring him with you—he’s valuable to me as a helper.^k 12By the way, I’ve sent Tychicus off to Ephesus.^l 13When you come, bring the cape I left behind in Troas with Carpus^m—and the scrolls, especially the parchments. 14Alexander the metalworker did me a lot of harm. The Lord will pay him back in line with the things he did. 15You watch out for him too, because he stood very much against our teachings.

16At my first defense, nobody stood by me. Just the opposite: everybody deserted me—may God not hold it against them.ⁿ 17But the Lord stood by me and strengthened me—so that the message of the good news could be fully preached through me, and all the Gentiles would hear it. And so I got rescued from the lion’s mouth. 18The Lord is going to rescue me from every evil thing that people try to

^a Or “be sober-minded in all situations.”

^b Traditionally: “righteousness.” It also means “vindication,” and “an innocent verdict.” This is a crown of reward or recognition, rather like a medal, not a royal crown.

^c “That Day” is the day of judgment and resurrection, and Christ is the judge. The “crown” is a prize, like an Olympic medal. See 1 Tim. 6:20 and 2 Tim. 1:12 for similar thoughts.

^d Lit. “to all those who have loved his appearing.” A few mss lack the word “all.”

^e Prn. **deem-us**.

^f Or “age.”

^g Prn. **thess-a-lo-nye-ka**.

^h Prn. **kress-ans**.

ⁱ Prn. **ga-lay-sha**.

^j Prn. **dal-may-sha**.

^k Or “he’s valuable to me in my ministry”; lit. “he is helpful/valuable for service.”

^l Prn. **tikk-ik-us, ef-fa-siss**.

^m Prn. **troe-azz, kar-pas**.

ⁿ Lit. “May it not be reckoned against them.”

do to me.^a And he's going to save me to be a part of his Heavenly Reign. Glory to him, forever and ever! Amen.

Final Greetings

¹⁹Say hello to Prisca and Aquila,^b and to the family^c of Onesiphorus.^d ²⁰Erastus stayed in Corinth, and I left Trophimus in Miletus^e because he was sick. ²¹Make a big effort to come before winter. Eubulus, Pudens,^f Linus, and Claudia, and all the brothers and sisters, say hello to you. ²²May the Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you.^g

^a Lit. "from every evil work."

^b Prn. **priss-ka** (that is, Priscilla; see Acts 18:2) and **a-kwill-a**.

^c Or "household."

^d Prn. oh-na-**siff**-or-us.

^e Prn. er-**rast**-us, **korr**-inth, **troff**-im-us, mye-**leet**-us.

^f Prn. yoo-**byool**-us, **pyood**-inz.

^g This "you" is plural.