

# 2 TIMOTHY

*"Make every effort to come before winter."*

*This* is the last letter written by the apostle Paul. He explains to Timothy his personal condition just before his death. All his companions had forsaken him except Dr. Luke. Paul is in a cold damp dungeon. He longs for his cloak, his books, and most of all for Timothy. If Paul didn't see Timothy before this winter he would never see him again.

"Make every effort to come to me soon . . . Only Luke is with me. Pick up Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for service. . . When you come bring the cloak which I left at Troas with Carpus, and the books, especially the parchments. . . At my first defense no one supported me, but all deserted me; may it not be counted against them. But the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me, in order that through me the proclamation might be fully accomplished, and that the Gentiles might hear; and I was delivered out of the lion's mouth. The Lord will deliver me from every evil deed, and bring me safely to His heavenly kingdom; to Him be the glory forever and ever. Amen. . . Make every effort to come before winter. . . The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you." (2 Timothy 4:9-22, *et passim*).

**AUTHOR:** Paul the apostle (1:1). No works of Paul are more attested as genuine than the Pastoral Epistles, with the exception of Romans and I Corinthians. External evidence supports Pauline authorship of these personal letters. Polycarp, Clement of Rome allude to them and Irenaeus and Tertullian identify them as coming from Paul. The diversity of subjects would produce some linguistic differences as would the use of a different amanuensis.

**RECIPIENT:** Paul writes to his close missionary associate Timothy (1:2).

**DATE AND PLACE:** The difficulty of dating this letter is that we know nothing about Paul after the conclusion of Acts 28. We can only hint at the order of events during the last years of his life. From Philippians 1:19, 25, 26; 2:24 we assume he was released from his first Roman imprisonment about A.D. 63. Paul wrote *I Timothy* c. A. D. 63, from Macedonia, perhaps Philippi (I Tim. 3:14, 15). Then he left Titus to continue the work on Crete (Titus 1:5). From Corinth he wrote to *Titus* (c. A.D. 63; Titus 3:12-13). Early church tradition says Paul went to Spain (Rom. 15:24, 28), and may have been arrested later at Troas (II Tim. 2:9; 4:13, 15, 20). We know that Emperor Nero died in June, A.D. 68 so the letter needs to be dated prior to that like at Paul's "second" Roman imprisonment in A.D. 66 or 67, just before his execution. Most scholars think Paul was taken back to Rome and beheaded at his second arrest. Many believe he was made the chief scapegoat for Nero's burning of Rome. Since Nero was suspected of starting the blaze, he blamed the Christians and ordered them executed. At his second imprisonment Paul was charged as a criminal (2 Tim. 2:9). He writes expecting his execution, yet triumphant: "For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. I have fought a good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; in the future there is laid u for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing" (2 Tim. 4:6-8). .

Paul wrote from solitary confinement in a prison cell at the famous Roman Mamertine Prison during his "second" imprisonment (1:8). The only entrance to his cell was through a hole in the ceiling which was 6.5

"second" imprisonment (1:8). The only entrance to his cell was through a hole in the ceiling which was 6.5 feet high. Most scholars believe Paul was acquitted at this "first" trial. Upon his release he returned to Greece and Asia Minor, and was later arrested again, taken back to Rome, and beheaded. (See introduction to *1 Timothy*). Many scholars believe Paul was made the scapegoat for Nero's burning of Rome. Nero set fire to Rome in order to rebuild it to his own designs. Since Nero was suspected of starting the blaze, he blamed the Christians for it and ordered them all to be executed. Paul was charged as a criminal.

**THEME:** The time has come for Paul's departure, and there is in store for him a "crown of righteousness." The climax comes in 4:6-8.

**KEY VERSES:** 4:17-18

**PURPOSE:** Paul writes a word of encouragement and warning as he says a genuine and warm "good bye" to perhaps his closest friend. He also writes to encourage Timothy to "come before winter."

**TONE:** The letter is genuine, warm, tender, loving, expression of the feelings of an old man living out his final hours before his execution in a cold, dark, damp Roman dungeon. It is a spiritual last will and testament of sorts, the "dying wish" of the faithful old apostle to the Gentiles saying "farewell" to a beloved traveling companion and friend. It is clear from this moving letter that he expects to be killed (4:6). It is filled with tenderness and sadness, yet triumph, glory and deep thankfulness similar to that expressed in his letter to the Philippians. Paul anticipates his "crown of righteousness" (4:8). His heart is full of love for his friends.

Leon Morris writes: "This is a very moving document as we see the aged apostle facing death, looking back at his service for God, and taking tender concern for his son in the faith that he be strong in the task to which God has called him."

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