

2 Timothy

1. **Who is the author? What does the letter reveal of his situation at the time of writing?** The apostle Paul was the writer of this letter as clearly indicated in verse 1 of this letter. Apparently Paul was in prison one last time in his life because of his strong stand for the gospel -- see 1:8, 2:9. This imprisonment was around AD 66 in Rome (1:16-17) during the rule of Nero. Unlike his first Roman imprisonment of AD 62/63 spoken of in the last chapter of Acts, this time Paul didn't have unlimited access to his friends. He obviously had chains this time (1:16), and Onesiphorous had to search for him eagerly in order to discern his whereabouts. Paul also knew that he was about ready to die (4:6). We don't know whether this information was given to Him by revelation from the Spirit, or if he had already been condemned when he wrote the letter. One way or another, Paul knew that his life was about over, and he was ready to finish strong.
2. **What is a drink offering (4:6)?** Drink offerings are mentioned numerous times throughout the Old Testament, but only twice (metaphorically) in the New Testament -- here in 2 Timothy 4:6 as well as in Philippians 2:17. Drink offerings or libations generally accompanied other offerings, such as the burnt offering, grain offering, and peace offering -- see Numbers 15:4-10. The drink offering was usually a prescribed portion of wine to be poured out in conjunction with whatever other offering was being presented -- see Numbers 28:14. The drink offering seemed to communicate the joy of having fellowship with God restored -- it was a soothing aroma to Him. In the New Testament, we see that Paul uses the drink offering symbolically. In Philippians 2:17, Paul speaks of himself being poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrifice and service of the faith of the Philippian brethren. In other words, Paul was recognizing the sacrifices that the Philippians had made to the Lord, and he regarded his efforts as a joint offering with them. Here in 2 Timothy, Paul was soon going to have his blood poured out in death. He recognized this as the consummation of his whole Christian life that he had rendered in service to God. While Paul's death would be painful, he knew that it truly was a moment of joy as he would enter into eternal fellowship with the Father. There is a neat tie-in with Psalm 116:15 -- "Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of His godly ones."
3. **To whom was it written? What was his connection to the author?** This letter was Paul's second inspired letter to Timothy -- see 1:2. In our overview of 1 Timothy, we explored the relationship of Paul and Timothy in some detail. Without rehashing all of that material, we do find a couple of interesting tidbits about their relationship within this second letter.
 - 1) Paul calls Timothy his beloved son -- 1:2.
 - 2) Paul was familiar with Timothy's grandmother and mother -- 1:4.
 - 3) Paul had laid hands on Timothy, thereby giving him a gift of the Spirit -- 1:6.
 - 4) Timothy had been Paul's travelling companion for a substantial portion of Paul's ministry -- 3:10-11.
 - 5) Paul knew that Timothy had been raised being taught the Scriptures -- 3:14-15.
 - 6) Paul asked Timothy to come to him and bring him some special things needed at the close of his life -- 4:9-13,21

- 4. What are the main topics?** The main topics include:
- 1) Paul's encouragement to Timothy to guard what had been entrusted to him -- 1:6-14.
 - 2) Timothy's need to follow Paul's example and be strong -- 2:1-13
 - 3) Timothy's example as an evangelist -- a workman accurately handling the word of truth -- 2:14-26.
 - 4) Warning of wicked men coming into the church -- 3:1-9.
 - 5) The contrast of Timothy with those wicked men -- 3:10-17.
 - 6) The charge for Timothy to preach the word -- 4:1-5.
 - 7) Paul's needs -- 4:6-18.
 - 8) Greetings -- 4:19-22.
- 5. What occupations are mentioned? What do they illustrate?** There are three major occupations used as teaching points in this letter. They are:
- 1) Soldier -- 2:3-4. A true soldier has a tough life. He suffers hardship, giving up many niceties enjoyed by a civilian. Above all, the soldier's responsibility is to please the one to whom he enlisted. In the same way, a Christian will endure hardship in this world. The Christian isn't here to eat, drink, and be merry, but rather to bring glory to God.
 - 2) Athlete -- 2:5. An athlete cannot win unless he follows the rules associated with his competition. This includes: no shortcuts, no banned substances, no cheating. Like an athlete, the Christian must be dedicated to training. The Christian always does the right thing, never looking for an easy way out.
 - 3) Hard-working farmer -- 2:6. A farmer has to work consistently, always planning for the future. He sows months before he reaps, and he works on equipment in his down time. The farmer must diligently pray for the rains in the proper seasons, and he must make hay while the sun shines. In the same way, the Christian must work hard in order to bear fruit. There is much planning, diligence, preparatory time, and prayer associated with rescuing the perishing.
- 6. What does the author say about his popularity among the churches?** Paul doesn't say too much in this letter about his popularity in the churches. However, we see that many individuals had deserted him for various reasons, so it is probable that many congregations were ashamed of him as well. He says that all in Asia turned away from him -- 1:15. Demas, who had once been a fellow worker, had deserted him -- 4:10. Alexander the coppersmith had done him much harm, and had vigorously opposed Paul's teachings -- 4:14,15. At Paul's first defense, no one had supported him; they had deserted him -- 4:16. Though let down in one form or another by many brethren, Paul stayed committed to the faith, for the Lord stood with him and strengthened him -- 4:17.
- 7. What trends in the church are predicted?** Like most letters of the New Testament, this letter also speaks of the apostasy that would come upon the church. Chapter 3:1-9 speak in detail of some of the difficult times that were coming. This list is summed up in this statement, "holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power" (3:5). This group is led by adulterous false teachers who oppose the truth. While these false prophets are the ringleaders, they abound because there is a market for them -- 4:3-4.

The religious marketplace is driven by the law of supply and demand just like any other business. People choose pleasure over truth, and are willing to pay teachers to tell them what they want to hear.

8. What does this letter show us concerning the main purpose of an evangelist? The primary purpose of an evangelist is clearly spelled out in chapter 4, verses 1-2. Above all else, an evangelist is to preach the word. In the midst of vain philosophies, false doctrines, and weird theories, there is a need for God's Word to be proclaimed. As the wicked continually attempt to suppress the truth, an evangelist must push to have truth put back into the marketplace of ideas. Feel-good stories, personal experiences, and the ideas of men won't save the souls of anyone. It is only God's Word that is able to save souls from the eternal pits of hell. An evangelist is what he is – he preaches, in season and out of season, when it's popular and when it's not, regardless of whether or not he gets paid. This purpose of the evangelist is further explained in 2:24-25. An evangelist should:

- 1) Not be quarrelsome
- 2) Be kind to all
- 3) Be able to teach
- 4) Be patient when wronged
- 5) Correct with gentleness

9. What can the modern Christian apply from this letter? There are many things for the Christian to apply. They include:

- 1) Faith should be multigenerational -- 1:5
- 2) No shame for the One who saved us -- 1:8-11
- 3) Always maintain the standard of the Scriptures -- 1:13
- 4) Teach disciples to teach disciples -- 2:2
- 5) Remember the trustworthy statement about God's faithfulness -- 2:11-13
- 6) Present ourselves to God as unashamed workmen -- 2:15
- 7) Be a vessel for honor -- 2:21
- 8) Teach with patience and gentleness -- 2:24-25
- 9) Don't fall prey to doctrines that justify the flesh -- 3:5
- 10) Be prepared for persecution -- 3:12
- 11) Turn to the Scripture for instruction -- 3:16-17
- 12) Faithfully finish the course -- 4:7
- 13) There is a reward for the victors -- 4:8
- 14) Depend upon the Lord for rescue -- 4:18
- 15) Make it to heaven -- 4:18