



## 2 Timothy

Like 1 Timothy, this book is addressed to Timothy, whom Paul calls 'beloved child'. Whereas 1 Timothy feels as though there is a wider audience beyond just Timothy, 2 Timothy reads much more as a personal letter and is the most intimate of the three letters (1 and 2 Timothy, and Titus). There is a strong theme of suffering that runs all through the letter and of standing firm despite that suffering.



### How long will it take?

**Read** **e:** 11 mins  
**S , f e?** Just read 1.1-18; 4.1-8



### Genre

Epistle



### Anything tricky?

The trickiest thing about the book is whether Paul wrote it or not (for more on this see below). This feels like such a personal book and if Paul did not write it, it raises the question of who did and why they felt able to claim it was by Paul.



### Inspiring quotes

For God did not give us a spirit of cowardice, but rather a spirit of power and of love and of self-discipline.

(2 T 1.7)

Guard the good treasure entrusted to you, with the help of the Holy Spirit living in us.

(2 T 1.14)

<sup>16</sup> All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, <sup>17</sup> so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work.

(2 T 3.16-17)



## About the Author

2 Timothy 1.1 gives its author as the apostle Paul.

1 and 2 Timothy and Titus are widely viewed by scholars not to be by Paul despite their introductions. The reason for this is a different style of writing (i.e. different words used and sentence structures) and a different focus.

2 Timothy is a very personal letter but still, many would argue, feels very different from the rest of Paul's letters; others maintain that 1 Timothy and Titus might be written by someone other than Paul but that 2 Timothy is by Paul himself; others still attribute all three to Paul.

You might like to think about authorship as you read and ask whether the 'voice' of the author sounds similar to what you know of Paul from elsewhere.

**W** **?**

**Paul** is probably the best known of all the early Christians. Before encountering Jesus Christ on the road to Damascus, he was a zealous Pharisee who sought to maintain the purity of Judaism. After his experience on the Damascus road, he turned his zeal to proclaiming Jesus Christ among the

Gentiles. This brought him into conflict with some other early Christians, not least Peter, who thought that followers of Jesus Christ should convert to Judaism. He travelled around the Roman Empire (though primarily in Asia Minor – modern-day Turkey – and Greece) proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ and founding communities of Christians as he went. He also wrote a large number of letters, 13 of which are preserved in the New Testament. 2 Timothy has traditionally been thought to be one of these.

**Timothy**, here not the author but the recipient of the letter, was born in Lystra in Asia Minor of a Jewish mother and Greek father. Acts 16.1-3 recounts his meeting of Paul in Lystra and of Paul's desire to take him with him on his journeys. Paul often sent Timothy to communities that he had founded to take letters to them and so that he could report to Paul about what was going on, as indeed he did with the Thessalonians (see 1 Thessalonians 3.2 and 6). Two letters in the New Testament (1 and 2 Timothy) are reputed to be letters of encouragement from Paul to Timothy in Ephesus. Christian tradition identifies Timothy as the first Bishop of Ephesus.

## About the times

Those who think it is by Paul would date it to



## How is it structured?

- 1.1-2      Opening greeting
- 1.3-7      Thanksgiving for Timothy's faith
- 1.8-18     Reflections on suffering based on Paul's suffering
- 2.1-26     Reflections on leadership
- 3.1-9      What false leaders look like
- 3.10-17    The need to remain faithful to the gospel
- 4.1-5      Keep preaching the gospel
- 4.6-22     Farewells and greetings



### What could this mean for me?

Notice the strand of faithfulness in suffering that runs through the book. What do you think about the advice Paul offers? Can you imagine offering this kind of advice today?



### Look out for...