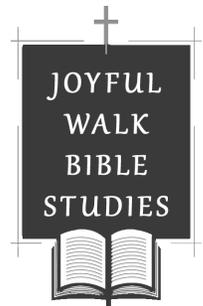


To Be Found Faithful

Making the choice to live faithfully to your God

A Study of Second Timothy

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Using This Study Guide

This study guide consists of 8 lessons covering the last letter in our New Testament written by the Apostle Paul—2nd Timothy. If you cannot do the entire lesson one week, please read the Bible passage covered by the lesson.

THE BASIC STUDY

Each lesson includes core questions covering the passage narrative. These core questions will take you through the process of inductive Bible study—observation, interpretation, and application. It is the best approach for doing Bible Study. The process is more easily understood in the context of answering these questions:

- What does the Bible say? (*Observation: what's in the text*)
- What does it mean? (*Interpretation: the author's intended meaning*)
- How does this apply to me today? (*Application: making it personal*)

STUDY ENHANCEMENTS

Study Aids: To aid in proper interpretation and application of the study, five additional study aids are located where appropriate in the lesson:

- Historical Insights
- Scriptural Insights
- From the Greek (definitions of Greek words)
- Focus on the Meaning
- Think About It (thoughtful reflection)
- Dependent Living (illustrating what it means to live dependently on God)

Other useful study tools: Use online tools or apps (blueletterbible.org or “Blue Letter Bible app” is especially helpful) to find *cross references* (verses with similar content to what you are studying) and meanings of the *original Greek words or phrases* used (usually called “interlinear”). You can also look at any verse in *various Bible translations* to help with understanding what it is saying. Feel free to add your own study at the end of each lesson.

PODCASTS

Find podcasts coordinating with these lessons at melanienewton.com/podcasts and most other podcast channels. Follow along with the “Podcast Listener Guides” for each lesson.

NEW TESTAMENT SUMMARY

The New Testament opens with the births of Jesus and John (often called “the baptist”). About 30 years later, John challenged the Jews to indicate their repentance (turning from sin and toward God) by submitting to water baptism—a familiar Old Testament practice used for repentance as well as when a Gentile converted to Judaism (to be washed clean of idolatry).

Jesus, God's incarnate Son, publicly showed the world what God is like and taught His perfect ways for 3 – 3½ years. After preparing 12 disciples to continue Christ's earthly work, He died voluntarily on a cross for mankind's sin, rose from the dead, and returned to heaven. The account of His earthly life is recorded in 4 books known as the Gospels (the biblical books of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John named after the compiler of each account).

After Jesus' return to heaven, the followers of Christ were then empowered by the Holy Spirit and spread God's salvation message among the Jews, a number of whom believed in Christ. The apostle Paul and others carried the good news to the Gentiles during 3 missionary journeys (much of this recorded in the book of Acts). Paul wrote 13 New Testament letters to churches & individuals (Romans through Philemon). The section in our Bible from Hebrews to Jude contains 8 additional letters penned by five men, including two apostles (Peter and John) and two of Jesus' half-brothers (James and Jude). The author of Hebrews is unknown. The apostle John also recorded Revelation, which summarizes God's final program for the world. The Bible ends as it began—with a new, sinless creation.

DISCUSSION GROUP GUIDELINES

1. **Attend consistently** whether your lesson is done or not. You'll learn from the other women, and they want to get to know you.
2. **Set aside time** to work through the study questions. The goal of Bible study is to **get to know** Jesus. He will change your life.
3. **Share your insights** from your personal study time. As you spend time in the Bible, Jesus will teach you truth through His Spirit inside you.
4. **Respect each other's insights.** Listen thoughtfully. Encourage each other as you interact. Refrain from dominating the discussion if you have a tendency to be talkative. ☺
5. **Celebrate our unity** in Christ. Avoid bringing up controversial subjects such as politics, divisive issues, and denominational differences.
6. **Maintain confidentiality.** Remember that anything shared during the group time is not to leave the **group** (unless permission is granted by the one sharing).
7. **Pray for one another** as sisters in Christ.
8. **Get to know the women** in your group. Please do not use your small group members for solicitation purposes for home businesses, though.

Enjoy your Joyful Walk Bible Study!

Recommended: Listen to the podcast “Staying Faithful to God by Choice” at melanienewton.com/podcasts as an introduction to the whole study.

Staying Faithful to God by Choice

“The righteous will flourish like a palm tree, they will grow like a cedar of Lebanon; planted in the house of the Lord, they will flourish in the courts of our God. They will still bear fruit in old age, they will stay fresh and green, proclaiming, ‘The Lord is upright; he is my Rock, and there is no wickedness in him.’” (Psalm 92:12-15)

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE TO STAY FRESH AND GREEN?

- To stay fresh and green means to stay faithful to the Lord and useful to Him in bearing fruit.
- In many of his last letters, and especially in 2 Timothy, the Apostle Paul showed us in his life and in his words how we can stay faithful to Jesus for a lifetime.

ABOUT PAUL AND TIMOTHY

- Timothy was a teenager when he met Paul (Acts 16). Timothy’s mom and grandmother were faithful Jewish women who taught the Old Testament scriptures to him. As the women heard Paul preach, they believed in Jesus, and so did Timothy.
- Paul invited Timothy to travel with him on his second missionary journey. Timothy helped Paul as he preached throughout Greece. When Paul was in Ephesus teaching the Ephesians about the amazing power of God, Timothy was there, too.
- When Paul was under Roman house arrest for two years, Timothy was right alongside him much of the time, unselfishly taking care of Paul’s needs.
- After being set free, Paul and Timothy traveled to visit the churches they had founded. When they got to Ephesus, Paul left Timothy to teach truth to the church there while Paul went on to Macedonia. From there, he wrote the letter we have called *First Timothy*.
- Paul was arrested again and thrown into a cold dungeon in Rome. He wrote the letter called *Second Timothy*. In this letter, Paul reminds Timothy to stay faithful to the truth in spite of the persecution and suffering.

STAY FAITHFUL NO MATTER WHAT

*“Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!”
(Matthew 25:23)*

- The definition of faithful is “unwavering in belief, consistently loyal.” We all want those closest to us to remain faithful to us. Faithfulness is an important character quality.
- Our God is a faithful God. He is consistently loyal to those whom He loves and who place their trust in Him.
- God desires that we also be faithful to Him—to be unwavering in belief and consistently loyal to Him throughout our lifetime. The great news is that God is also the One who enables us to live faithfully as we choose to do so. We make the choice. He empowers us to live out that choice.
- Throughout this study of 2 Timothy, we will see faithfulness encouraged and lived out. We will see the importance of staying faithful to Jesus. We will see the importance of staying faithful to God’s truth from His Word and what we learn from those who have taught us truth. *2 Timothy 1:12; 2 Timothy 3:14*
- We will see the importance of staying faithful to the community of believers, especially during tough times.
- Paul knew His God. He knew God was trustworthy. Paul chose to be unwavering in belief and consistently loyal to the Lord Jesus Christ—even as an old man in his 60s, in a Roman dungeon, with memories of persecution and beatings still engraved in his brain, and awaiting execution at any moment. He chose to stay fresh and green and write this beautiful letter of encouragement that not only fed Timothy’s soul but millions of other Christians who have clung to its verses for the past 2000 years. We learn from Paul how to make choices to stay fresh and green while we are growing older.

MAKE CHOICES TO STAY FRESH AND GREEN WHILE GROWING OLD

- Choose to stay tuned to the needs of the people around you and desire to reach and teach them.
- Approach your Bible study with fresh eyes every day, looking for the new things the Lord will be teaching you and how you can share that with someone who needs to know it.
- Recognize God’s work in your life every day, not just what He did years ago. That gives you a new song to share about what the Lord is doing in your life.

Through this study of 2 Timothy, we will learn how to stay faithful to our God—to be unwavering in belief and consistently loyal to Him as we live each day. We can stay faithful to His truth, to His people, to His ways, to His reputation, and to His purposes for our lives. And, our faithful God is the One who enables us to do so. The wisdom of His Word and His Spirit living inside us together give us the ability to remain faithful, to stay fresh and green and fruitful for Him. The choice is up to you.

Let Jesus satisfy your heart with His faithfulness. Then, make the choice to stay faithful to Him for the rest of your life.

1: Truth and Faithfulness

DAY ONE STUDY

The ABCs of 2nd Timothy—Author, Background, and Context

Like any book you read, it always helps to know a bit about the author, the background setting for the story (i.e., past, present, future), and where the book fits into a series (that's the context). The same is true of Bible books.

AUTHOR

Paul identifies himself as the author of this letter written to Timothy. Paul, whose Hebrew name was Saul, was born in Tarsus, a major Roman city on the coast of southeast Asia Minor. Tarsus was the center for the tent making industry. Paul was trained in that craft as his occupation (his primary paying profession). As a Jewish Pharisee from the tribe of Benjamin, Paul was educated at the feet of Gamaliel, a well-respected rabbi of the day. Paul was an ardent persecutor of the early church until his life-changing conversion to Christianity.

After believing in Jesus Christ as his Savior, Paul was sent by God as an apostle to take the gospel to the Gentiles. This was an amazing about-face for a committed Pharisee like Paul who ordinarily would have nothing to do with Gentiles. Paul wrote 13 letters that are included in the New Testament. Tradition has it that Paul was beheaded shortly after he wrote 2nd Timothy in 67 A.D. (*You can glean more about Paul's background from Acts 8:3; 9:1-31; 22:3-5; 26:9-11; and Galatians 1:11-24.*)

BACKGROUND

At the end of Paul's third missionary journey, he traveled to Jerusalem in the spring of 57 A.D. to deliver a collected offering from the Gentile churches to help the impoverished Jewish Christians. After being accused by the Jews of some technical violation of the Jewish Law, Paul was arrested by the Romans and spent the next two years in Caesarea as a prisoner (Acts 22-26). Paul appealed to Caesar so he was sent to Rome. There he lived under house arrest for another two years (Acts 27-28).

After Paul's release from this first Roman imprisonment (around 62 A.D.), he and Timothy traveled to Ephesus where Timothy was left to care for the house churches there. Paul wrote a letter (1st Timothy) around 64 A.D. to encourage Timothy in his work. Paul also went to Crete to establish churches and left Titus to oversee the work. He wrote a letter to Titus shortly thereafter. Some say Paul went to Spain, but we have no letters to confirm that. Around 67 A.D., Paul was again arrested during a time of great persecution that began three years earlier.

In 64 A.D., the Emperor Nero accused the Christians of burning Rome and began an all-out assault on them. Christians were mostly from the humbler walks of life, without prestige or influence, and many of them were slaves. The Roman historian Tacitus wrote that the Christians did not burn Rome. But, somebody had to be made the scapegoat for it. Christians were targeted as "haters of mankind" because of their refusal to participate in Roman social life that was intertwined with pagan worship. In and around Rome, scores of Christians were arrested and put to death in the cruelest ways.

It was in the wake of this persecution that Paul was arrested in Asia Minor (western Turkey) and brought back to Rome. Whatever the crime was, his trial had proceeded far enough that he knew there was no hope of escape. In contrast to his first imprisonment when he lived in a rented house

(Acts 28:30), church tradition says that he was placed in the Mamertine Prison. Few prisons were as dim, dank, and dirty as the lower chamber Paul occupied. His friends even had a hard time finding out where he was being kept. Prisoners in the ancient world were rarely sent to prison as punishment. Rather, prisons typically served as holding cells for those awaiting trial or execution.

While waiting in the Roman dungeon for the “time of his departure,” he wrote this last letter to Timothy, his “beloved son” and co-worker. Even in that dark hour, facing certain execution, Paul expresses no hint of regret for giving his life to the service of Christ and the Church. He was still confident that the Church would stay triumphant. And, Paul knew that at his death he would go straight to the arms of His Lord Jesus Christ, whom he had loved and served so devotedly. (*Adapted from various resources*)

CONTEXT

Though 2nd Timothy is the last of Paul’s letters in our New Testament, it is placed right after the book of 1st Timothy and before the letters to Titus and Philemon. This letter we know as 2nd Timothy is one of the most tender and moving of all of Paul’s letters. It contains a lot of the same encouragement Paul gave in his first letter to Timothy plus an appeal for Timothy to get to Rome to be with him before winter.

1. What grabbed your attention from the ABCs above?

GET THE BIG PICTURE

Ask the Lord Jesus to teach you through His Word.

Paul’s three letters—1st Timothy, 2nd Timothy and Titus—are called “pastoral epistles” because for the most part they are Paul’s counsel to his assistants who served in the pastoral or shepherd-like function of the local churches in the regions of Ephesus and Crete.

The three letters address the issues facing local churches just like the one you are attending now—issues faced by the pastoral leaders as well as the members. Five major themes are woven throughout Paul’s instruction to Timothy and Titus.

- 1) Teach and maintain truth and sound doctrine while guarding against error.
- 2) Identify leaders who will faithfully teach truth.
- 3) Guard the reputation of the church so that God may not be dishonored.
- 4) Do good deeds demonstrating the truth you believe.
- 5) Live dependently on Christ’s power for all of the above.

These themes are especially evident in 1st Timothy and Titus, but you will see glimpses of them in 2nd Timothy as well.

Ready to get started? Let’s go!

What does the Bible say? (This is the “Observation” step in the process of Bible Study.)

Where do we begin? Have you ever heard the saying, “You can’t see the forest for the trees?” The best way to study any book of the Bible is to begin with the “forest” (survey the whole) and then proceed to the “trees” (the individual parts). We will start by getting an overview of what Paul wrote in his first letter to Timothy.

2. Paul wrote 1st Timothy just a short time before he wrote 2nd Timothy. In his second letter, Paul reminds Timothy of things he told him in the first letter. So, read 1st Timothy chapters 1, 4, and 6 to get a feel for what he told his friend and ministry partner in that letter, especially related to Theme #1 mentioned above: *Teach and maintain truth and sound doctrine while guarding against error*. Make notes below.

Respond to the Lord about what He’s shown you today.

DAY TWO STUDY

Today, you will get an overview of 2nd Timothy.

What does the Bible say? (This is the “Observation” step in the process of Bible Study.)

Ask the Lord Jesus to teach you through His Word.

3. Read 2nd Timothy. A copy of the letter is included in this study guide before Lesson One. You can mark repeated words and phrases as well as anything that grabs your attention. Pay attention to anything repeated from 1st Timothy. What did you notice?

What does it mean? (This is the “Interpretation” step in the process of Bible Study.)

Now, we will look at one theme in 2nd Timothy (common to Paul’s pastoral letters): *Teach and maintain truth and sound doctrine while guarding against error*. This theme really breaks down into positive versus negative aspects. You will see both in 2nd Timothy. We’ll look at the positive aspect today and the negative aspect tomorrow.

4. The **POSITIVE**: “teach and maintain truth and sound doctrine.” Read the following verses. What does Paul emphasize in each?

- 2 Timothy 1:8-10—

- 2 Timothy 1:13-14—

- 2 Timothy 2:2—

- 2 Timothy 2:15—

- 2 Timothy 3:14-15—

- 2 Timothy 3:16-17—

- 2 Timothy 4:2—

5. Once again, Paul emphasizes over and over a common message. In your own words, why is it necessary to teach and maintain truth and sound doctrine?

Respond to the Lord about what He's shown you today.

DAY THREE STUDY

Ask the Lord Jesus to teach you through His Word.

What does it mean? (This is the "Interpretation" step in the process of Bible Study.)

In the last section, you looked at the positive aspect of the theme, "teach and maintain truth and sound doctrine while guarding against error." In today's study, you will look at the negative part.

6. The **NEGATIVE**: "guard against error." Read the following verses to see what we are supposed to avoid when we encounter error and why.

- 2 Timothy 2:14 —

- 2 Timothy 2:16-18 —

- 2 Timothy 2:23 —

7. Read 2 Timothy 3:2-7 and 4:3-4. Where does error lead?

8. Once again, Paul emphasizes over and over a common message. In your own words, what is Paul teaching them to guard against...and why?

What application will you make to stay faithful to God? (This is the “Application” step in the process of Bible Study.)

9. If Paul made so many comments on the same subject (truth versus error), it should be taken seriously.
- What could happen to the local church...therefore you...if we do not seriously apply Paul’s message to stay faithful to God’s truth and guard against error?

 - What specific actions can you or do you take in your daily life to ensure that you don’t wander away from God’s truth?

What does it mean to “Stay Faithful?”

Jesus told a parable to His disciples in Matthew 25. A man entrusts some treasure to his servants while he goes away. When he comes back, he evaluates how faithful the servants were with the treasure. The master’s response to the two faithful servants is no doubt familiar to you,

“Well done, good and faithful slave! You have been faithful with a few things. I will put you in charge of many things. Enter into the joy of your master.” (Matthew 25:23)

The definition of faithful is “unwavering in belief, consistently loyal.” We all want those closest to us—spouse, family members, friends, co-workers—to remain faithful to us. What security we feel when we know their loyalty is consistent and unwavering! Faithfulness is an important character quality.

Our God is a faithful God. He is consistently loyal to those whom He loves and who place their trust in Him. God desires that we also be faithful to Him—to be unwavering in belief and consistently loyal to Him—throughout our spiritual walk. And, our God is the One Who protects and preserves that which He has entrusted to us—He enables us to live faithfully as we choose to do so.

Focus on the Meaning: In this epistle, Paul emphasized the importance of faithfulness: God's faithfulness, Paul's faithfulness, Timothy's need to remain faithful, and the faithfulness or unfaithfulness of Paul's fellow workers and other servants of Christ. Paul was counting on God being faithful and providing what He had promised, namely, eternal life in Christ. (*Dr. Constable's Notes on 2 Timothy 2017 Edition*, p. 7)

Through this study of 2nd Timothy, you will learn how to make the choice to live faithfully to God every day for the rest of your life. And, He will help you to do that.

Respond to the Lord about what He's shown you today.

Recommended: Listen to "Staying Faithful to God's Truth" at melanienewton.com/podcasts after doing this lesson to reinforce what you have learned. Use the listener guide on the next page.

Staying Faithful to God's Truth

TEACH AND MAINTAIN TRUTH; GUARD AGAINST ERROR.

- Any opinion or belief that contradicts established biblical truth can cause an infection in the Body of Christ. A spiritual infection is usually fed by looking to the wrong places to get your heart needs satisfied. The results are disappointment, fear, resentment, and many other negative thoughts and behaviors. Or, it can be fed by a poor understanding of biblical truth. Women who never recognize and grasp biblical truth will be taken captive by whatever flashy teachings that come along and live unsatisfied, unstable lives. We see this in our world today.
- The answer to all spiritual infections is the truth that has been given to us in the Bible, especially in the New Testament. The writings of the New Testament are the work of the Holy Spirit revealing himself to the apostles and other disciples of Jesus. The historical reliability of the Scriptures is an important issue, and they (the Scriptures) can be investigated to show that the biblical records are trustworthy.
- Grasping truth has three parts: First, you dwell in the truth of God you can know. Next, you humbly accept what you don't know or understand. And then, you discern any teaching that you read or hear through the complete revelation of God's Word.

DWELL IN TRUTH YOU CAN KNOW.

- To dwell in truth is to make your home there. That means God's truth dominates your thoughts and attitudes, governs your life, and satisfies your heart.
- God gives us plenty of truth in the Bible that we can know and trust. 66 books, 1189 chapters!
- God wants us to know the truth He has revealed to us, to make our home in that truth.
Ephesians 1:17-19

HUMBLY ACCEPT WHAT YOU DON'T KNOW OR UNDERSTAND.

- Some things we read in the Bible we don't understand now but might in the future. There is much we can know now. But, there are things we'll never know or understand.
Deuteronomy 29:29
- We can do our best to try to understand what is written. When you run across something that you can't seem to understand from a Bible passage, make the choice to humbly accept what you don't know or understand.

DISCERN ALL TEACHING THROUGH THE COMPLETE REVELATION OF GOD’S WORD.**1. Evaluate what you read and hear by comparing it with the whole Bible.**

- Read any verse in the context of the passage where it is found—the paragraph, the chapter, and the book.
- Examine the original words to see what the writer meant and what the audience likely understood.
- Look at other verses with similar content to let the Bible interpret itself. And, you should always ask the Holy Spirit for understanding.

2. Avoid the “look-imagine-see dragon” when viewing any verse.

The “look-imagine-see” dragon shows up this way: someone *looks* at a verse or passage, *imagines* what they want it to say, then in their mind *sees* what they have imagined through twisting word meanings and interpretations. Once it starts, it’s like a fiery dragon burning truth in its path. Cultural influence on Bible study feeds this dragon.

- Tame the “look-imagine-see dragon” by considering the Bible as sufficient on its own, not needing to be “improved.”
- Tame the “look-imagine-see dragon” by basing your faith on what **is** in God’s Word, not something you’ve just heard about it and not something you’re imagining to be there.
- Tame the “look-imagine-see dragon” by following the inductive process for Bible Study—observation, interpretation, and application. Then, you can dwell in truth you can know.

The way to stay faithful to God’s truth and guard against error is to dwell in truth you can know, humbly accept what you don’t know or understand, and discern all teaching through the complete revelation of God’s Word.

We’ll never know all there is to know about God. There will always be some mystery about Him. But, there’s plenty enough revealed in the Bible to satisfy your desire to **know him truthfully** and to know how to live your life in Christ truthfully.

Let Jesus satisfy your heart with His faithfulness. Then, make the choice to stay faithful to Him for the rest of your life.