

Bible Study # 68  
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Mr. John Ogwyn

Life and Letters of Paul Series—2 Timothy

This evening we are continuing our series on the Life and Letters of the Apostle Paul. In fact, we are virtually to the conclusion of it. We **are focusing in on the book of 2 Timothy this evening, which was the last book the Apostle Paul wrote.** We will have one other Bible study, which will serve as sort of a wrap-up to the material of Paul's life. We **are in this final period of Paul's life in this book of 2 Timothy.** Last Bible study we went through the books of 1 Timothy and Titus. We found that the Apostle Paul had been released from his Roman imprisonment. We found that the end of the book of Acts ends abruptly with Paul's release. We found the fact that he dwelt two whole years in his own rented house at Rome and that came to an end. At that point, the Biblical record of Paul's life ceased. The book of Acts did not continue.

The obvious reason is that there were details and things that God simply did not choose to have recorded for us. That could be the subject of an entirely different Bible study—a study about where the rest of the apostles went and why certain things dropped from the scenes after a certain period in New Testament history. There are some very interesting stories and background that tie into that.

Evidently, from what Paul had said in the book of Romans (put together with secular tradition that has continued down), he went to Spain. Paul said that he planned to go from Italy to Spain, and there is every reason to think that he did so. He specifically said that in the book of Romans (Romans 15:22-28) and secular history and tradition maintains he did that. From Spain, he went on up to Britain, which was the furthestmost outpost of the Roman Empire. He spent some time there, and then by the mid 60s, returned to the Mediterranean area. He returned to the area of Ephesus for a short period of time. Then he left Ephesus and went over to Macedonia. From there he wrote 1 Timothy and Titus. Then at some point after his writing of 1 Timothy and Titus, he was arrested and taken back to Rome.

The situation in Rome had drastically changed. The emperor Nero had made Christians the new scapegoats. They were being blamed for all the problems. Politicians have long made use of scapegoats. Unpopular minorities come in very

handy for that. You blame all the problems on them. The Christians served as the newest unpopular minority there in Rome. Nero had previously blamed it on the Jews. But since he had taken a young Jewish woman as his mistress, he was looking for a different scapegoat. The Christians were good ones on which to blame things.

The situation had really turned nasty since Paul had been there during his previous imprisonment. Some of the ones who had befriended Paul and had been impressed with him and the message he had brought had subsequently died, been demoted or had fallen out of favor. It was a different group of people even though only a few years had transpired.

2 Timothy was written fairly soon after the start of his second Roman imprisonment, perhaps during the summer of 67 A.D. In writing this final letter to Timothy, it was clear Paul realized this to be the final letter of his life. From a Church standpoint, it served as a summing up. He knew the situation had changed and that he would not leave Rome alive.

One of the major things that Paul did in the final period of his life, undoubtedly, involved the collecting together and the final editing of his own letters. We will see a reference to that in 2 Timothy. It is only logical that Paul would have been involved in doing that—who was the logical person to edit and put into final form the letters that he had written.

Peter was, at this point, in the process of compiling the first New Testament canon, which ultimately consisted of 22 books. The only others to be added were the five that John himself wrote. John and Peter were entrusted with the responsibility of sealing up the New Testament and giving it to us in the form that we have it—in the form that the Greek Church preserved it. Undoubtedly, the Greek Churches of Asia Minor (particularly Ephesus) were the repositories of the canon in the form that was put together. We will get into some of that at a later time.

One of the things that becomes obvious, as we read 2 Timothy, is the extent to which the New Testament Church was in a crisis condition. We read the story and are aware of how things worked out. But when you are in the process of living the story, you don't know what is going to work out, except through faith. When you are in the midst of it, it is hard to see it in perspective.

There are many things in our own lives that we can look back on and see in perspective. There are things in the history of God's work that we have lived through in our lifetime that we can

look back and see in perspective. Certainly, we can look at and see, in perspective, the events that transpired and are recorded in the Bible. Yet, in each of those cases in the process of going through it, that perspective is not so easily obtained.

Take, for example, the crisis the Church went through back in January, 1979. Most of you in the Church at the time remember the state of California's lawsuit against the Church—the receivership that was announced and all sorts of accusations and rumors flying every which way. There were those who panicked and decided, 'This thing is all over with. They are taking over; they are going to shut it down. It's over with.' There were some who immediately started trying to sort of protect themselves and ensure their future as they thought.

What we find when we go through 2 Timothy is a similar situation. You have to realize what's happening. By the time Paul wrote this, most of the original apostles were dead or in prison. Paul himself was now in prison. Peter probably knew that his days were numbered. Those who weren't in prison were already up in age, into their late 60s or early 70s. They were at a point in life, even if imprisonment didn't take place, that they knew the productive years they had left were very limited. Most of them were already dead.

The destruction of Jerusalem and the scattering of the New Testament Church was a short time away. Within three years, Jerusalem would be totally destroyed. Within two years, the New Testament Church would be gone from Jerusalem because it left at Pentecost before the destruction. The Church fled Pentecost of '69, prior to the destruction in the summer of '70.

We have a crisis situation. You couple that with the fact that various ones who, in some cases, had actually left the body of the Church and were teaching their own doctrine. Others were clinging to fellowship in the body of the Church but were introducing other various ideas. There were things that the apostles had been combating. Things were in a crisis situation.

There was a real crisis atmosphere and Paul perceived, through God's inspiration, that things were going to get a lot worse. **He writes the book of 2 Timothy, encouraging and instructing Timothy on how he was to function and carry himself during this time of impending and approaching crisis.** He realized that things were going to get considerably worse before they would get any better, and many of the others were going to live through things that he would not be around for. He had sought to

combat certain ideas and keep the Church on track during his lifetime. Now, his departure was at hand.

There were final admonitions that he had for Timothy. We will find in 2 Timothy that heresy was rampant, especially the idea concerning grace into license. This was something that was already being twisted out of context and misapplied. Church authority was being ignored. Many ministers, as well as many members, were just simply "checking out." They were "dropping by the wayside."

Paul exhorts Timothy, individually, in the midst of these troublesome times. There were difficulties and things that were being faced. He gave him instruction and advice as to how he was to function as a minister in the midst of a worsening crisis in the Church. Paul also gave him specific instruction on what he needed him, personally, to do in terms of specific service that needed to be rendered, particularly involving the manuscripts that, undoubtedly, had to do with the final canonization. Timothy had been left behind in the area of Asia Minor. We saw that in 1 Timothy.

Paul admonishes him in terms of holding on, of keeping the deposit of truth and handing it to others. This sort of exhortation is there. Already people were twisting and distorting the things that Paul himself had said.

2 Timothy 1:1-3, "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus, to Timothy, my beloved son: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord. I thank God, whom I serve with a pure conscience, as my forefathers did, as without ceasing I remember you in my prayers night and day..."

Verse 5, "when I call to remembrance the genuine faith that is in you, which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am persuaded is in you also."

It's interesting to note that Timothy grew up in a circumstance where one of his parents was in the Church and the other was not. Timothy's father was not at all favorable toward either the Jewish religion or Christianity. That is apparent by the fact that Timothy was not circumcised and could not participate in the life of the Jewish community until the time the family had already come into the Church and Paul was going to take him with him. Everyone knew that his mother was Jewish, but his father was Greek.

Understand what that did. That meant that Timothy had never been able to partake of the

Passover service, which was a center point of Jewish life. Timothy had never been able to partake of that because in Exodus, the instruction was given that only those who were circumcised could partake of the Passover (Exodus 12:43-49).

It's clear that Timothy's father wished Timothy to be imbued with a Greek and Roman pagan approach to life. He wanted him to have a pagan outlook, the outlook of the Greek and Roman world, as opposed to the outlook of his mother. We don't have any particular record of Timothy's father other than that clear implication. He is not mentioned, and we are not told whether he had died or had simply divorced Timothy's mother.

But at the time we pick up the story in Acts, Timothy is an older teenager of perhaps age 17 or so. His mother and grandmother had come into the Church. I think it should be an encouraging example for those in similar circumstances to realize that, even in the midst of difficult circumstances, Timothy's mother and grandmother had a tremendous impact and influence on his life. Paul mentions them specifically.

"When I call to remembrance the genuine faith that is in you, which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am persuaded is in you also." Their example had greatly influenced Timothy.

Then he reminds Timothy to stir up the gift of God.

Verse 6, "Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands." What gift is he referring to? Clearly it was the gift of the Holy Spirit—in context, that added measure of the Holy Spirit that came through ordination. But certainly, the principle would apply in any context of the Holy Spirit.

The analogy he draws is to stirring fire. Most of us don't think in those terms. We turn on the butane, turn up the thermostat on central heat or we turn up the knob on our electric heater. But the reference Paul is making is an analogy drawn from a wood fire. The fire and flame die down and you have embers and coals. With a wood fire, every so often you have to stir it up. That's what Paul is describing.

The gift of God's Holy Spirit hasn't gone out, but the tendency is for it to become lukewarm. When the flames die down and gradually dies away, it has to be stirred up. What happens when you stir it up? Air and the oxygen get to it. Maybe you add some more fuel and it blazes up.

That's what happens to the gift of God within us. It has to be stirred up. More of God's Spirit has to get in there. It has to be stirred up. Paul admonished Timothy not to become lukewarm and lethargic but to stir up the gift of God's Spirit.

Verse 7, "For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind."

Verse 9, he continues to discuss the state of things, "[speaking of God] who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began..." God didn't call us because of what we are. He called us because of what He is.

Verse 10, "but has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel..." Here's another proof that you don't have an immortal soul. Jesus Christ brought life and immortality to life through the gospel. Only God has immortality (1 Timothy 6:16). Immortality is brought to light through the gospel. It is clearly preached that we can also have immortality as a gift from God brought to light through the gospel.

Verse 11, "to which I was appointed a preacher, an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles."

Verses 13-14, "Hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. That good thing which was committed to you, keep by the Holy Spirit who [which] dwells in us." It's an interesting play on words here when he talks about "that good thing which was committed to you." The term that is used for "commit" or "committed" is a term in the Greek language that had a technical meaning. It always implies the situation of one who has to take a long journey. He deposits his money and other valuables with a friend and trusts him to restore it on his return.

Back in those days, they didn't have banks and safety deposit boxes, credit cards, traveler's checks and all the things that we do. Many times they would deposit valuables with a trusted friend. Now, it better be a trusted friend because if you deposit very much with him, you can come back and he is long gone. This was a common thing that was done. If you went very far, it was a long journey because you walked or rode on a donkey or sailed in a boat. You didn't have to go very far for it to be a long journey. It

was not uncommon for it to last several weeks or even months.

Paul knew he was going to die. He used this term, this expression, referring to the truth of God having, in effect, been committed. 'The most valuable treasure I have, I am leaving on deposit with you, Timothy. I am committing it to you. It is your responsibility to [as he brings it out a little later] pass it on to other faithful men.'

That is the circumstance, the situation that was being dealt with. Timothy was going to have to contend and preserve the faith once delivered because there were already various ones who were trying to water down and distort. There were the beginnings of what was, in a couple of centuries, clearly recognizable as the Catholic Church. In fact, within a century, what was clearly recognizable as the Catholic Church was already on the stage. Paul had already mentioned it years earlier.

2 Thessalonians 2:7, he said, "For the mystery of lawlessness [KJV, "iniquity"] is already at work; ...." It was clearly at work and then gained quite a bit of ground by the time Paul wrote 2 Timothy.

Jude was writing at the same time Paul was writing 2 Timothy. In Jude's writing, he admonishes the brethren.

Jude 3, "...contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints." The 'faith once delivered' was in danger of slipping away at the time. This was in the period of the New Testament.

2 Timothy 1:15, "This you know, that all those in Asia have turned away from me, among whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes."

Verses 16-18, he beseeches God for mercy on the house of Onesiphorus who had shown Paul much kindness in times past.

We are going to see a little later that quite a number had forsaken him. They had left, headed out, saying, 'This thing is over with. It's about to fold up and I'm getting out while the getting is good.'

We will notice in chapter 4 that Paul mentions several ministers who had left and gone back where they came from. In times of crisis, there are those who panic and throw in the towel. There are those who say, 'I didn't realize there were going to be trials and troubles. I didn't realize that I wouldn't always be able to walk by sight.' There are others who walk by faith. In times of crisis, it is only with God's help that we can maintain a proper perspective.

We read the story and think, 'I'd sure hate to have my name mentioned in the Bible.' How would you like to be Phygellus or Hermogenes? The only time you get mentioned is when you "flaked out." The only thing anybody knows about you or remembers you for is the fact you turned away from Paul. That'd be kind of embarrassing. The only thing that any of us know about those two individuals is that they didn't do what they should have done. They didn't respond in a period of crisis the way they should have. It's an important thing to keep in mind.

How would we like to be summed up that way when periods of crisis come? And they will come. You can't read the things Christ said in Matthew 24 and think that we will never have any crisis in the Church. We can't think we will always have smooth sailing in the Church and that things will always be really simple and easy. If you think that, you simply have not read the New Testament. What will the summation say about us? Will our names be mentioned like theirs or will we be mentioned in the way that Timothy is or some of the others.

2 Timothy 2:1-2, "You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also." Paul had mentioned earlier, 'Hold on to that which has been committed to you. You have to hold on and diligently look out for and commit to the truth – the same truth I taught you (not changed, not watered down, not turn aside from the right hand or the left)—the same thing I taught you in the presence of many witnesses. Pass it on to faithful men.'

It needed to be faithfully transmitted, not changed, turned around and all sorts of things. When you read early Church history, you realize how quickly so many things were taken out of context, misapplied and completely turned upside down.

Verses 3-5, "You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier. And also if anyone competes in athletics, he is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules."

Verse 7, "Consider what I say, and may the Lord give you understanding in all things." Paul did not want to amplify his explanation of these points, for whatever reason, but he alludes to several things. He basically stresses

the conditions of true service. It involves wholehearted devotion to the job. It involves loyalty to the rules and hard work. You have to endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. How do you do that? He warns him that if you go to war, you don't entangle yourself with the affairs of this life. The word "affairs" used here is the term for business (literally, negotiations, transactions) by which men earn their livelihood. It involved simply that the fulltime ministry was something that involved abstinence from secular trade.

You can't serve two masters (Luke 16:13). If Timothy was going to faithfully carry out his responsibility that Paul had given him in terms of the ministry, he couldn't be getting preoccupied with various secular trades. God made provision for the Levitical priesthood and later for the New Testament ministry and their livelihood.

Verse 5, "And also if anyone competes in athletics, he is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules." Paul said, 'Don't try to take shortcuts.'

Verse 6, "The hard-working farmer [KJV, "husbandman"] must be first to partake of the crops." It's the one who works hard that would be first partaker of the fruits. You have to work hard.

Verses 10-13, "Therefore I endure all things for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. This is a faithful saying: For if we died with Him, we shall also live with Him. If we endure, we shall also reign with Him. If we deny Him, He also will deny us. If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself." It doesn't matter whether we believe it or not; God's word endures and will prove sure.

Verse 14, "Remind them of these things, charging them before the Lord not to strive about words to no profit, to the ruin of the hearers." There were those who were striving "about words to no profit." People wanted to wrangle about all sorts of things and get out on all sorts of "twiggy" points. Paul admonished Timothy about that. The Jews, particularly, and many of the Gnostics would go into great complicated things that they would read into certain words.

One of the things about it, in the Greek and Hebrew language, every word has a numerical value. When we were kids in school, most of us learned Roman numerals. We learned that certain letters had numerical value to the Romans—"V" is five, "X" is ten, "I" is one, "L" is fifty—this sort of thing. The number system that we use (the so-called Arabic numerals) didn't become

common in the western world until the time of the Middle Ages.

In the ancient Greek and Roman world, the letters of the alphabet doubled for numbers. There was numeric value to those letters. That meant you could go through any word and figure a numeric value to it. For example, take the word "life": "L" is 50, "I" is one, "F" and "E" don't have numeric value—that equals 51. Some of these Gnostic sects would go through and make a great deal of figuring out the numeric value of certain words and attaching significance. If a word added up to 21, that made three times seven, etc. They would go off on all sorts of farfetched tangents and really completely miss the point. They would get so "buggy" trying to figure some hidden significance.

Paul is telling Timothy, 'You need to put people in remembrance; you need to remind them to stick to the "trunk of the tree" and not go charging off and getting all bogged down in a bunch of silly stuff.'

Verse 15, "Be diligent [KJV, "study"] to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." Really stick to it and properly apply the Bible.

Verses 16-17, "But shun profane and vain babblings, for they will increase to more ungodliness. And their message will spread like cancer. Hymenaeus and Philetus are of this sort..." It's just going to eat away and that's not good.

Verse 18, there were those who had erred or strayed concerning the truth and had come up with some crazy idea that the resurrection was past. Where did they get that? I don't know, but people have come up with crazy ideas down through the years. The thing is that other people are crazy enough to believe them, so I guess that makes the people who believe them even crazier than the guy that came up with the ideas.

Verse 19, Paul gives the bottom line, "Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: 'The Lord knows those who are His,' and 'Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity.'" The bottom line is that you don't fool God. The foundation stands sure. The Lord knows those who are His. God knows who's who and what's what. Sometimes people have gotten all worried because they thought "so-and-so" was getting by with something. God knows those who are His, and those who names the name of Christ had better depart from iniquity—had better leave behind lawlessness. We can't live in sin. We

can't make sin our habitual practice. We have to depart from, turn away from disregard for the law of God. Turn away from lawlessness.

Verse 20, "But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay, some for honor and some for dishonor." In a great big house, you have fancy china and gold and silver vessels; you also have some old scrub pots, cracked bowls that you put the dog scraps in or whatever. He is using the analogy of the Church being a great house. Take note of the fact that there are vessels to honor and vessels to dishonor. Everybody and everything is not always what they claim to be. This is what Paul is saying.

Verse 21, "Therefore if anyone cleanses himself from the latter, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work." We will be something that Christ will use, but we have to be purged from lawlessness. We have to be cleaned up.

Verses 22-24, "Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart. But avoid foolish and ignorant disputes, knowing that they generate strife. And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient..." There is a way to deal with people. He admonishes Timothy in that regard—be gentle, be able to teach, be patient.

Verse 25, "in humility correcting those who are in opposition [KJV, "those that oppose themselves"], if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth..." The people who were becoming entangled in these things were, in reality, opposing themselves. They were hurting themselves. There were those who claimed to be part of the Church and were not living godly lives. They simply were not God's. God knows His own. We see that.

2 Timothy 3:1-2, "But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, ..." Dangerous times will come; they are times that involve a preoccupation with self.

It's interesting. One of the commentaries brings out the main thought that love of self will lead to neglect of the duty to others and God and eventually to active wrongdoing, too. The true center of life has changed. Self has taken the place of God. So, all sense of the duty to others, whether to man or God, disappears. That's a very apt description, a very apt statement. I think that is very characteristic of our society, of the latter 20<sup>th</sup> century western world. The true center of

life has changed. The self has taken the place of God; therefore, a sense of duty to other people and to God disappears. People become wrapped up and absorbed in what is convenient to them. We are, perhaps, in the most convenience-oriented society in the history of mankind. He describes this sort of thing.

Verses 2-3, continuing, "...lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving [KJV, "without natural affection"], ..." I can't help but believe that, in some ways, this is a clear reference to the abortion controversies that exist today and the emphasis on that because clearly the most natural affection that there is, is the love of a mother for her young. That exists even in the animal world. That is natural. That is nature. That is, certainly, an example of natural affection. Certainly, it can apply to other things as well, but I think it is certainly descriptive of that.

Verses 3-5, "...unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!"

In this nation, we like to pride ourselves for being a godly nation. We like to think of ourselves (the United States) as a religious people. We have churches all over, and over 85 percent of the people will tell you that they believe in God. In fact, in a recent Gallup poll carried in *U.S. News & World Report*, the majority of the people even admit to believing in the devil. The majority of people claimed to believe in hell, but none of them thought they were going there. They must figure that is reserved for somebody else.

They have "a form of godliness," but the real key is that they are lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God. If people had a choice between going to some sporting activity or church on a particular weekend, which would they go to? They are lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God. "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." They don't want God ruling in their lives. They claim to believe in God.

James 2:19, "You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble!" If all you do is believe in God, you're not even "one step up" on the devil. At that point, you are where Satan is. If all that someone has going for him is that he believes in God, he is not even "one up" on the devil. It is a form of godliness, but it denies the power and authority

of it. This is the sort of thing that entangles people and gets them messed up.

2 Timothy 3:6 describes various ones.

2 Timothy 3:7, “always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.”

Verses 8-9 liken them to Pharaoh’s court magicians who withstood Moses. It says their folly is ultimately going to be manifest.

Verses 10-11, “But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance, persecutions, afflictions, which happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra—what persecutions I endure. And out of them all the Lord delivered me.” He said, ‘You know the things I went through and God delivered me.’

Verses 12-14, “Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. But as for you, continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them...”

‘Remember what you learned and where you learned it.’ This was Paul’s admonishment to Timothy and certainly would be God’s admonishment to us. What did you learn and where did you learn it? Very important! You hold on, continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of. You have proven it. You know it. Don’t be fickle in your faith and your understanding. Hold on to the “trunk of the tree” and remember where you learned that precious knowledge.

Verses 15-17, “and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

From childhood, Timothy had known the Holy Scriptures. What Scriptures had he known? Was he conversant with the New Testament when he was a child? Did he grow up memorizing John 3:16? No, it wasn’t written until 30 years after 2 Timothy was written. He hadn’t even read it at the time Paul was writing this, much less having known it as a child. The only Scripture that existed in Timothy’s childhood was the Old Testament. This doesn’t in any way take authority from the New Testament, but the point that I am making is that various ones want to disparage the authority of the Old Testament.

They say, ‘That’s back in the Old Testament; that doesn’t really count.’ Paul thought it did. Paul is the one that they all thought did away with the Old Testament.

There is an interesting article in the last issue of the *U.S. News & World Report*. There’s a little section on the Apostle Paul. One of the things they claim is that Paul did away with all the requirements of the law. They say he changed the Church. They say Christ started it out, but it never would have grown very much if Paul hadn’t come along and did away with the law. Once he did that, things started growing, and it was one of the great moments in history. Well, Paul didn’t know that. He told Timothy, “the Holy Scriptures which you have known from childhood.” In other words, the Old Testament, the law, “is able to make you wise for salvation.” That would shock a lot of people. A lot of Protestants don’t think you can learn anything about salvation from the Old Testament.

In Acts 8:26-38, what did Philip preach out of to the Ethiopian eunuch? –The book of Isaiah, the Old Testament. He was able to teach him enough about salvation out of the book of Isaiah that he baptized him. The Holy Scriptures certainly includes the New Testament, but in context here, it is specifically referring to the Old Testament that “is able to make you wise for salvation.” They are able to reveal God’s plan.

“All Scripture...” includes the Scripture Timothy had known from childhood and clearly focuses on the Old Testament and certainly includes the New Testament as well. “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God.” It is God-breathed. “Inspiration” clearly means “God-breathed.” And it is profitable for doctrine. It says so right here.

2 Timothy 3:16-17, “...is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.” God’s word is God-breathed. It is inspired by God and for our benefit.

2 Timothy 4:1, “I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His Kingdom...” When is the time of judgment? It is at the return of Christ. He didn’t say we would go off to heaven when we die. The time of judgment will be when Jesus Christ returns.

Verses 2-3, he charged Timothy, “Preach the word [stick to the Book]! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching [doctrine]. For the time will come when they will not

endure sound doctrine, ..." Paul could already see the "handwriting on the wall." He told Timothy, 'Look, don't be surprised. The time is going to come when you are going to find people who do not want to endure sound doctrine.'

Verse 3, continuing, "...but according to their own desires [lust], because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers..." They are going to have itching ears. They are going to want somebody who is going to "tickle their fancy" and say what they want to hear.

Verses 4-7, "and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables. But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry. For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith." He said, 'It is over with for me.'

Verse 8, "Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing." When did Paul think he was going to receive his reward? Was he expecting to die and go to heaven? No. He said, 'I have fought a good fight. I know there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord is going to give me on that Day.' Which day? Well, 'not to me only, but to all of them that love His appearing.' -To those whose hope is anchored on the return of Jesus Christ and on the establishment of the Kingdom of God. He told Timothy, 'Look, it's over with for me. I have finished mine; you have to hang in there and finish yours.'

That is an echo of what God's servants have said down through the centuries. That's the admonition as one generation passes and the other carries on. That's what Paul admonished Timothy. That certainly was the equivalent of the admonition that Mr. Herbert Armstrong gave to us at the end of his life. 'I have finished my fight. I've endured. Now it's for the rest of you to continue.' That's always been the continuing story of God's people. As God's servants of one generation pass from the scene, then it is the responsibility of others to carry on. Timothy had to carry on.

Verses 9-11, he told Timothy, "Be diligent to come to me quickly; for Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world, and has departed for Thessalonica—Crescens for Galatia, Titus for Dalmatia. Only Luke is with me. Get

Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for ministry."

Various ones had left. Even Titus is mentioned here as having left. Evidently, they thought it looked like the "ship was sinking." 'We had better get out of here quickly. Maybe they will throw me in jail next.' What's going to be our response when trials and persecutions come? How are we going to respond? He said, 'Luke is the only one here with me.'

He said (KJV), "Take Mark and bring him with you, for he is profitable to me for the ministry." A commentary brings out that this literally could be for a personal service. He needed Mark to do something or to perform a service. There is not a definite article in the Greek, "he is profitable to me for the ministry" or, literally, "for service."

Verses 12-13, "And Tychicus I have sent to Ephesus. Bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas when you come—and the books, especially the parchments." What is he referring to? Two different words are used here. The commentary brings out that the "books" would refer to papyrus letters, possibly copies of his correspondence. What is called the "parchment" is a term that probably refers to the scrolls of the Scripture. The term that is used for "parchment" is a term in the Greek language referring to a writing material made from the skins of animals. Vellum comes from the membrane (the skin) of the animals.

Membranous was a parchment type of thing. It was much more expensive writing material and was only used for things of permanent value, things that would endure for centuries. It was harder to work with. It was harder to make a good copy on it, but it had an enduring quality. Vellum was expensive and only used for things of great permanent value. It was what the Scriptures were kept on. Papyrus was used for normal letters, correspondence and everyday business.

Paul wants two sets of things brought. What it amounts to is that Mark was Peter's assistant. We find in 1 Peter 5:13 that Mark was normally with Peter. Timothy was told to bring Mark. Paul needed him to do something. He gave him instructions to go to Troas. He was sending someone else to Ephesus. He told Timothy to bring the parchments and the scrolls. He needed Mark to do something for a service. This is, undoubtedly, a reference to the fact that Paul, at the end of his life, was going to put his manuscripts in final form. He was going to send the final and official copy of his manuscripts by Mark to Peter. Peter had, undoubtedly,



been in correspondence with Paul. They had communicated the fact that as their departure was at hand (the passing from the scene of the original apostles), there was need to provide the Church with an official canon of Scripture.

There were many false gospels, false letters and things that were written. There were things that were taken out of context. Already, these sorts of things were beginning to surface and would get more so. As the first generation was passing, it became apparent that an official canon needed to be provided for the Church—an official canon as to what represented authoritative teaching and what did not.

Peter and Paul had, undoubtedly, communicated on the subject. Peter had communicated with Paul the need to get copies from him, an official copy that would be included in this. This was Paul's part in sending it via Mark to Peter to put in final form.

That's why in 2 Peter 1:12-15 (which was written perhaps within the year after Paul had written 2 Timothy), Peter says that he was ensuring that after his death, the Church would be able to call to remembrance the things that he had said and the truth of God.

He makes reference in 2 Peter 1:19 to preserving for the Church a complete and accurate record, a "sure word of prophecy" (KJV). He said that he and John were the ones who had that sure word of prophecy. Peter was responsible for that first canonization. About 30 years later, John added the final finishing touches, primarily by adding his own five books.

Paul concludes and admonished Timothy.

2 Timothy 4:21, "Do your utmost to come before winter." He was admonishing him to hurry up and get there. There were things that needed to be done. According to tradition, Paul was executed the following spring; he was executed in the spring of 68 A.D. Peter was perhaps executed in the summer or fall of 68 A.D. Peter and Paul finished the job that God had given them to do.

Next Bible study we will go into information on the battles against heresies in the New Testament period. It will be sort of a wrap-up and a tying together of several of the things that surfaced in our study of Paul's epistles—things that we did not have time to go into in great depth. We will go back and tie it together and bring in several of these things.

It is important as we go through and study to realize that God's Word is a living Book. The stories, the examples and the illustrations are there for our benefit. As we read it, we need to

put ourselves in the place of the individuals who were living it and to realize that as we also encounter trials and tests, we will come up against adversities. We will come up and find ourselves in the midst of things. How are we going to make it? The same way they did—by walking with God, by walking in faith, by committing our lives into the hands of Him who judges righteously, by turning it over to God, by focusing in on the truth of God and on what God has given us to do, by focusing on what God has revealed to us, by holding on, persevering, enduring to the end, being faithful, putting one foot in front of another and following where God leads in the paths of righteousness. As we focus in and get a perspective, as we look and see the things that other men and women of God contended with, we realize our part in learning from their examples and dealing in a faithful way the tests and trials that will come upon us.