

PREPARATION FOR LESSON: Read 2 Timothy 1 - 4**BACKGROUND**

Paul's letters to church **members** cover a period of 10 years from 51-60 AD. We have 9 of his letters in our Bibles. Paul's letters to church **leaders** cover the next 8 years, from 60-67 AD. We have 4 of them.

The first is to Philemon, pastor of the Colossian church. It was written during the final months of Paul's house arrest in Rome. Within a few months Paul was set free and once again began to work with the churches, from 60-61 AD. In 61-62 AD, he and Titus began a new work on the island of Crete. Mid-62 to early 63 found Paul in Ephesus dealing with church problems. Around April 63, he went to Macedonia to resolve another church problem. That fall, while still in Macedonia, he wrote Titus and Timothy. These were his next 2 pastoral letters. Paul and Titus spent the winter of 63-64 AD in western Greece (Nicopolis). From early church writings, it appears Paul then went to Spain and spent 2 years giving the gospel message and establishing local churches. (64-66 AD).

During these years, 2 historical events change everything. In July 64 AD a fire destroys part of Rome and Nero blames the Christians. Starting in Rome, believers are taken prisoners. For entertainment, Nero uses Christians at the coliseum to fight with lions. He burns them as torches to light his gardens.

In 66 AD, Jews in the land of Israel rebel and attack Roman armies thruout Israel. Nero quickly retaliates against the Jews. Soon it spreads thruout the empire so Christians and Jews are arrested by the hundreds. By this time Peter has moved from northern Turkey to Rome. In 67, Peter is taken prisoner. Because he is not a Roman citizen, he is crucified without any trial. About this same time Paul returns to Ephesus to be with Timothy. Within a short time he is arrested and accused of some political offense. He is sent to Rome. This time he is not given a rented house, but is placed in a Roman dungeon. At his first hearing he is tried as a political prisoner. No one from Ephesus comes to accuse or defend him and he is found not guilty. But instead of being released, he is now accused of being a Christian. At his 2nd trial, he is found guilty and condemned to death. Knowing he has only about six more months to live, Paul writes this last letter to Timothy in 67 AD. Timothy has been the head teacher in Ephesus for the last 4 years. Paul wants him to come to Rome and bring his (Paul's) coat and books. In case Timothy does not make it, he wants to give final written instruction to the young man he has mentored for 18 years.

(Timothy gets to Rome. After Paul's execution, Timothy is taken prisoner, but then released after a short time. Hebrews 13:23)

THEME Responsibilities of a Christian leader and what is really important**OUTLINE**

Timothy's personal life 1 - 2 How to be faithful

Timothy's ministry 2 - 4

In the present

In the future

DEVELOPED OUTLINE

Chapters 1-2 Timothy's personal life - He is commanded to...

- Keep using and developing his spiritual gifts. 1:6
Given the power to apply *tough love* in dealing with people and situations; self-discipline to make right choices.
- Not be ashamed of being connected with the gospel message and with Paul. 1:8
- Keep and guard the gospel message. 1:13
- Get his spiritual strength from God. 2:1
- Endure hardship and suffering with Paul and other Christian leaders. 2:3

Chapter 2 Timothy's ministry in the present - He is commanded to...

- Teach men and women the complete gospel so they can be qualified teachers. 2:2
- Teach the 4 groups of people in a church congregation. 2:11-14
- Keep learning in order to teach God's Word correctly. *Correctly handles means to cut straight so the pieces fit* 2:15
- Avoid foolish arguments; do not quarrel. 2:23-24
- Teach kindly; instruct gently 2:24



EXPLANATIONS

Chapter 2 Over the years, when Timothy gets discouraged, he is to think about 3 examples. vss. 3-6

A soldier, stays focused on priorities to please his commander-in-chief.

An athlete uses self discipline to win the prize.

A farmer works hard in order to enjoy the harvest.

• **Greek forms for “if ...”**

1st class - *if and it is true*

2nd class - *if and it is not true*

3rd class - *if and it may/may not be true*

4th class - *if and I wish it were true*

1st class sentences with *if ...* should be translated *since* because it is a condition that is true.

• **2:11-13** are all 1st class conditions talking about people within a local church congregation; there are...

Faithful believers

Suffering believers

Non-believers who refuse Jesus' payment all their life; like Judas

Wayward believers like Peter

• **The Hymn** describes the final results of the 4 groups vss. 2:11-13

Believers who have put their faith in Jesus have eternal life with Him.

Believers who suffer for their faith in Jesus will have additional rewards from Him.

Those who permanently reject Jesus will be separated from Him forever.

Believers who fail will be forgiven by Jesus.

Chapters 3-4 Timothy's ministry in the future

• **Scripture is the answer**

...for Timothy: it will keep him from being deceived. 3:15-16

...for the local church: it sets the boundaries of right and wrong; it gives us God's point of view. 3:16-17

It adjusts and equips us for what God gives us to do.

It corrects, rebukes and encourages us.

...eventually the majority will not want to hear it explained correctly 4:3

Itching ears means wanting to hear only what agrees with their ideas and makes them feel good.

• **Last days** - For many 1st generation Jews and Christians, the late '60s and early '70s AD were their last days.

Peter dies in 67 AD; Paul dies in 68 AD.

Things would not get better; there would be terrible times.

In 70 AD Rome invades Israel, burns the temple, destroys Jerusalem,

kills one million Jews and sends thousands into slavery.

People who claim to be religious will increase. But people who live by God's rules will decrease.

• **4:7** Paul compares his life with 2 major events in the Olympic games.

He thinks of it as a wrestling match: he has fought and won the match.

He thinks of it as a long relay race: he is the first on the relay team; he has run his lap.

In the end, not only he, but all the team will get the “gold medal”.

APPLICATION

We are part of the relay team, passing on the message of Jesus to others, not so much by what we say, but how we live.

Sometimes we forget, it is our everyday life that most presents the message of Jesus - how we act and react to the situations of life. This means we need spiritual strength from God on a daily basis. We need His wisdom.

We also need to study and learn God's Word so we can apply it to our lives. And so we know how to answer others who are seeking.

As we have God's strength; as we apply Scripture to our lives, people will see Jesus really *does* make a difference.

