

Church -Bible-School (CBS) und Online -Bible-School (OBS)

2nd Epistle to Timothy (Lesson 21)

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Dear Bible Scholars,
first of all, I would like to share something personal: For quite a while I have been caring for my wife 24/7 after a stroke. This has turned a lot of things upside down so that I was not able to continue the preparation of the bible study material as I would have wanted and as I should have. I hope you understand.

CONCERNING THE STUDIES

I **recommend** you to read through the respective book in the bible at first. Our manual is the bible. Then I suggest you to go through one or two pages of the material every day, which implies to also look up and read the given bible scriptures to become thoroughly acquainted with the subject. Another suggestion would be to use this material for regular devotion. If you would like to **obtain a degree (certificate) at the end of the seminar**, you need to answer the **test questions** at the end of each lesson and send or email it to us with your full name and address.

And now I pray you will experience lots of joy and spiritual profit during your bible study.

Pastor Joh. W. Matutis

General Information

on the 2nd Epistle to Timothy (Compare with the introduction to 1st Timothy)

The first Epistle to Timothy provides instruction **for the order during service** and the second gives practical advice what to do in case a church goes through a time of **disorder or apostasy**.

The **first Christians** were facing a **generation change**. The church of Jesus was and is always going through changes. At first it was passed on from Israel to the nations, and then starting during the Apostolic season it proceeded into the different ages of our time, always confronted with new environments. **External and internal threats** were challenging the Christians of **the second and third generation** - Question: „How should Christians live and act in such a world!?“ And also the **leaven** would spread throughout the whole dough of this world (Matth. 13.33).

The **first Christians were aware** that they have to mingle with the people, interact with their environment, be filled with the Holy Spirit, hear the Word of God and live a life pleasing to God, for only this way they could reach the world and fulfill the commission of Jesus (Mk 16.15).

The **generation change** was hard for the churches. They had gotten used to the apostle Paul, Peter and John, etc. They had established trust and church life went about its daily routine. But then a certain **Timothy**, a scholar of Paul was supposed to be in charge.

At first they had hoped that the Lord **would return during their life time. But then they had to get accustomed to living in the world.**

- How should a Christian live his life in such a world as this?
- How can a Christian prove himself?

These were just few of the questions. But there were also certain other problems. On one hand there were the afflictions because of persecution and on the other hand there were **new doctrines**, that some of the churches devoted themselves to.

It was not a surprise with **the general confusion that was going on**, that the external threats to the church were accompanied by internal struggles. **It was a time of severe change**. With all these new teachings (movements) **a whole new world order had to be understood** in order to give Jesus His proper place in it. The temptation was the extraordinarily high **level of education** that the advocates of these new doctrines possessed.

How should such intelligent speeches and the many convincing arguments be confronted by the usual, simple, Christian faith? The answer to this question seems to be a clear and simple one. Timothy was supposed to rely on no other source than the bible. That was the standard of all things. Then and today it is good to be reminded of that truth: With the Word of God we are well equipped for all challenges of this age.

Timothy was not supposed to teach any mystical systems and mindsets, but only the message of the bible. At this time back then that meant in the scriptures of the Old Testament was everything that he and the Christians needed. This is where they could find the word of God. Timothy had been acquainted with scripture since a young age; he grew up with it. The Old Testament lead to knowledge of God and also knowledge of people and self. There are the foundations for the proclamation of sin and law, salvation and grace, as well as practical help to live an orderly life. The written word (bible) is the God-given rule of God, which contains all of His will in the way He revealed it. It is the complete (Col 1,25) and perfect standard of the will and thoughts of God. In the letter to Timothy this is all summarized into the word teaching.

The kinds of teachings are summarized by these key words: reprove, correction, training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

Timothy was supposed to bring together and rightly divide, which means correctly understand and pass on, the material of the Old Testament and the message of the gospel.

He proclaimed all that through preaching and interpretation so that the believers could also practically apply what they had heard. No prior certain mindset or worldview had to be acquired first, so that the bible and its teaching could then find a place in that.

No fanciful myths to explain the world, no secret esoteric prior knowledge or some elaborate philosophical theory of the Word of God is necessary to provide a frame or foundation for understanding the bible. In the same way no method of exegesis is superior to scripture, as if only a certain method of interpretation would make the bible the bible. But how much more is the power, strength and might of God alive, strong and active in the Word of God (comp. Jer 23,29/ Rev 1,16). This spiritual power in the divine Word speaks to us, moves us in our inner being, so that this power changes us and brings us to the living faith in Jesus Christ (Rom10,17). The aim of true exegesis is primarily to teach the people from the word of God in order to lead them to God or to call them back to Him – back to the true divine home of the heavenly Spirit. Paul is convinced that the bible (here the OT) is sufficient, to know how to lead a life that pleases God. There all intentions of God are provided for us so that we can align our life to it.

The second letter to Timothy contains some very special characteristics. The first Christian churches outside of Palestine were severely threatened so that some fell away or strayed from the good fundamentals of God.

This letter seems to be the last writing of the apostle. The words in this letter helps make us feel how the conditions of the churches weighed him down (comp. Rev 2-3). Paul sees the decay of all that he has established and what he faithfully guarded. He had completely given himself to the church by adding to the church concerning the proclamation of the gospel. He had to watch how this fellowship of believers whom he had loved so much was wavering and growing increasingly weaker. His care was nurturing like that of a mother nursing her baby. He was caring for the churches as for a plant which now grew weaker in its condition and weaker in its testimony for the world. And now he had to watch how they distanced themselves from the divine source of power and were perishing.

What a painful experience! And thus he pours out his heart to his co-worker Timothy. But exactly this experience is common for a servant of God in all times and ages. It is visible how the power of God is revealed as a living testimony in all the earth, but it is also visible how the weak quickly fall away. How soon can a house, which is the dwelling of the Holy Spirit, perish and fall into disorder. How easy it is for Christians to become indifferent.

The apostle wrote this letter with a heavy heart. It is a small comfort to him that the churches he planted there still consisted of faithful people. He also mentioned men such as Timothy and Onesiphorus, who stood with him and for the proclaimed message of Jesus. Unfortunately we do not know exactly how many years lie between the first and second letter to Timothy but obviously a tremendous downfall had happened in the congregation of God. The different emphasis of the letters makes this quite evident.

In the first letter Timothy received instruction towards order for the church service and was rebuked for the disorder.

In the second letter we find the situation that there was still disorder but there was also an apostasy and in some areas the fundamentals of the faith were even challenged. Therefore general order is not mentioned anymore, but personal faithfulness was addressed.

Introduction

The apostle Paul wrote this letter to Timothy towards the end of his life (between 64-67 AD) during his **second imprisonment in Rome**. It basically represents the **spiritual inheritance of the apostle** to the following generation of believers, who were supposed to continue to fight the good fight in the face of temptations and apostasy. Therefore Paul emphasizes **his apostolic mission** to proclaim the Word of God and **exhorts Timothy** to defend, teach and proclaim the Word of God as an entrusted treasure.

In this letter the Spirit of God gives us a **prophetic outlook** on the downfall of Christianity during the last days and warns against the temptations the church will experience. To all who want to stay faithful to the Lord 2nd Timothy provides **important instructions for spiritually fruitful ministry**.

RECEIPIENTS

Paul calls the recipient „**my dear son Timothy**“. When Paul wrote this second letter Timothy still seemed to be in Ephesus.

2nd Timothy is also the **last letter of the apostle Paul** and at the same time it is **his legacy to Timothy** and he charges Timothy with the continuation of his ministry.

Accordingly the theme of the letter is: »***Be ready to suffer for my (Paul's) gospel as a warrior of Christ Jesus!***«

PURPOSE and GOAL

The last letter of Paul **is very personal**. He mentions **32 names of single persons**. The **sentences are short**, often interrupted and seem to be without agenda at times. The thoughts are agitated, full of vivid memories of the past and his concern for the future of the church. The chains of the past seem to weigh the down the apostle and he feels close to death.

Abandoned by scholars and friends (2Tim1,15; 4,10-11) he longs for his beloved co-worker and spiritual son Timothy. The urgent plea for **the coming of Timothy** was probably the purpose for this letter (2Tim 1,4; 4,9.13.21). But Paul is also **moved by his concern for Timothy**, the young pastor, and the church. Therefore the serious warnings against the false doctrines and the fascinating teachers (2Tim 3,1-9 ; 1,6-10).

CONTENT and DIVISION

Introduction: Address and greeting	(Ch. 1,1-2)
1. Exhortation to faithfulness	(Ch. 1,3-2,13)
Blessed memories of the apostle	(Ch. 1,3-5)
Awaken the gift of the evangelist	(Ch. 1,6-10)
Follow my example in suffering	(Ch. 1,11-14)
A faithful warrior: Onesiphorus	(Ch. 1,15-18)
Suffer as a good worker of Jesus Christ	(Ch. 2,1-13)
2. Instrution to fight against the false teachers	(Ch. 2,14-4,8)
Avoid unnecessary quarrels	(Ch. 2,14-18)
The unchanging foundation	(Ch. 2,19-21)
The right defense: Holy life	(Ch. 2,22-26)
Characteristics of the false doctrines and teachers	(Ch. 3,1-9)
But you . . . suffer like I did	(Ch. 3,10-13)
But you . . . hold fast to the holy Word	(Ch. 3,14-17)
But you . . . stay faithful to your ministry	(Ch. 4,1-5)
But I . . . have fought the good fight.	(Ch. 4,6-8)

Closing: Instructions, messages and greetings (Ch. 4,9-22)

Key word: Faithfulness

Key verse: „*And if a man also strive for masteries, yet he is not crowned, except he strive lawfully*“ (2Tim 2,5)

MISCELLANEOUS

Christology

Jesus, the incarnate	(Ch. 1,10)
Jesus, the offspring of David	(Ch. 2,8)
Jesus, the resurrected one	(Ch. 1,10; 2,8)
Jesus, the Saviour	(Ch.1,8.9)
Jesus, the Lord (many scriptures)	(Ch.1,16.18)
Jesus, the judge	(Ch. 4,1.8)
Jesus, the one who will return	(Ch. 4,8)
Jesus, the source of life	(Ch. 1,1)

The fruitful ministry

Calling to ministry	(Ch. 1,7)
Striving for holiness	(Ch. 2,19-21)
Joyful readiness to suffer	(Ch. 1,8; 2,3; 3,12; 4,5)
Faithful fight and diligent work	(Ch. 2,5-6)
Solid knowledge of the Word of God	(Ch. 3,14-17)
Strength through the grace of God	(Ch. 2,1)

Seven terms for a Christian

(Ch. 2)

1. child (son)	(Verse 1)	<u>Characteristic:</u> born again
2. warrior	(Verse 3)	<u>Characteristic:</u> suffering
3. athlete	(Verse 5)	<u>Characteristic:</u> practise
4. farmer	(Verse 6)	<u>Characteristic:</u> work
5. worker	(Verse 15)	<u>Characteristic:</u> skill
6. vessel	(Verse 21)	<u>Characteristic:</u> Usefulness
7. servant	(Verse 24)	<u>Characteristic:</u> Faithfulness

The central theme of the **first letter** to Timothy was the **conduct in the house of God** (1Tim 3,15), this was about the church order and church services. The apostle emphasizes again and again **solid and healthy doctrine**. It is the requirement for good and healthy conduct.

The **second letter** of the apostle to his disciple he also addresses another side of the life of a believer, which is the **private life and character** of a Christian.

DETAILED INTERPRETATION

Chapter 1

In the **beginning of his ministry** (Acts 14-19) Timothy was bold and courageous, even when there was strong **opposition**. But **then Christian faith was in a bad condition**, because the love of the believers grew cold and Paul, the greatest preacher of the gospel, was in prison and without hope to get out of prison. There is nothing more difficult to live through a movement that was on a rise, reached a peak and then saw a dramatic downfall. The courage of every believer was put to the test. .

The faith of Timothy and his courage were **severely challenged**, but the apostle called him to share in the sufferings for the gospel.

Timothy suffered from self-doubts, but he also suffered **from those who** pretended to be godly but were really „without love, quarrelsome, false, with bad character, enemies of the good, thoughtless and conceited“.

Therefore he needed some **encouragement and support**. This help comes from no lesser than the apostle Paul himself. Paul had known Timothy very well and for a long time.

We are all glad to participate in the blessings of the gospel. **When all goes well** all goes well and it is successful then everybody wants to join. But **to share in the sufferings** is something else. This can only be accomplished „**with the power of God**“. Here and in Col 1,11 **power is not associated to activities**, but with **passivity** – with suffering, self-denial and endurance.

Power in itself is a cold, impersonal thing. But in this chapter it gains a warm character through the verses 9 and 10. We know the God whose power this is referring to, as the initiator and source of our salvation and calling. These two always belong together because they prove the negative and positive aspect of it. **We are saved from evil to become called for something wonderful.** We are free from the misery and danger that sin brought us, so that we can come to the place of favor and blessing that the Lord had for us from the beginning.

God saves and calls always according to His holy purposes. That was the case when he rescued Israel from Egypt, because He had called them to come to the land that He had purposed for them. **Between the redemption** and call of Israel and **our salvation** and our call there is a great difference. After the **completed work of Jesus** (crucifixion, resurrection and ascension) all old-testament promises had been fulfilled to the remnant of Israel (Jes.10,21; Rom.9,27) The **only commission of the chosen ones of Israel**, was to bring forth the Saviour of the whole world. Then the age of the law and **Israel had ceased** and **the age of the grace and the church had begun.**

It was no longer about just one nation of this world, that was chosen by God on this earth to show forth the fundamentals of His reign and His ways of righteousness, love, wisdom, patience, mercy and power. He used the people of Israel until **He came to us Himself incarnate in Jesus.** This was the fulfillment of the call and commission of Israel. Through the apostle Paul the sending of Jesus and the kingdom of God was extended to all the ends of the earth.

The **gospel of Paul** was directed at **all people**, Jews or Gentiles **without differentiation.** For this is the revelation of the eternal will and power of God. It is about the condition of the people who are oppressed under the power death, who can be transformed into a new condition through the victorious work of Jesus and only depends on the power and eternal will of God.

Israel, as the chosen people were saved and protected from **enemies of flesh and blood** in this world. **We** are saved **from any spiritual enemy** personally. **They** were lead into the promised land and the earthly blessings of it. **We** are called to a heavenly relationship and the spiritual blessings.

(2Tim 1.1-5) The apostle **no longer** speaks of his own works but about a spiritual position according to **the Holy Spirit** (V 3) and about the grace of God. He also addresses his beloved son Timothy. He remembers his love and is **longing** to see him.

He also remembers the tears that Timothy probably shed when Paul was thrown into prison and about their separation on this occasion. Or maybe Timothy's tears were shed when he received the message of his imprisonment (Acts 16,1). What is expressed here is **the trust of a friend** who speaks to somebody whose heart he knows.

After the greeting the apostle tells Timothy in verse 3, that he remembers him in his prayers. In verses 4 and 5 he mentions some **praiseworthy characteristics** of Timothy. From verse 6 on he exhorts and **encourages** him to fear God.

Paul and Timothy both came from wealthy homes. Paul was able to say that he served God with clear conscience according to his ancestors. **He (Paul) acted uprightly** according to the light that he had, although he confesses at some other point, that his light once was so dim that he persecuted Christ with diligence.

Timothy belonged to the **third generation** who were distinguished by their steadfast faith. His faith was referred to as „**unfeigned**“. Real faith is necessary when there are times of tests and trials. Paul was also able to speak openly about his tears, which reveals to us that he was a man of deep **emotions** and spiritual practise.

Timothy had heard the truth from the mouth of Paul, for to him it was **first revealed.** Thereby Timothy was **entrusted with an eternal treasure**, which was supposed to be protected by the Holy Spirit who dwelled in him. But it could only be preserved if he would **hold fast to the sound words** that Paul delivered to him. We have not heard Paul speak personally but we get a „**picture of the solid words**“ in his inspired letters.

Paul remembers the **beginnings of Timothy.** Until then he never mentioned a word of that. But **Timothy's character had some weaknesses** (like all men do). It seems that he would shrink **from suffering** and felt **ashamed.** He was too sensitive to endure bad treatment, discouragement and all kinds of other troubles that came over him and which he feared.

(2Tim 1,5-18) He said to Timothy: „**Stir up your spiritual gift!**“ In the next verses Paul explains why and how. At first he mentions Timothy's **upbringing** by his mother and grand-mother, where he was born into **an interfaith marriage**. His father had been a Greek Gentile. Further he speaks about the spiritual gift and the grace he received through the **laying on of hands** by Paul (1Tim 4,14/ Hebr 6,2/ Acts 6,6;13,3). Since this day that the words of 1Tim 4,14 refer to, Timothy was given a permanent **divine gift** which enabled him for ministry.

(2Tim 1.6) **Timothy was supposed to kindle his gift**. At that time when Paul added **Timothy to the ministry** and ordained him, hands were laid on him and there had been **prophetic words concerning him**, words of knowledge [similar as in Paul's call to ministry (Acts 9,15)], that expressed the will of God (comp. 1Tim1,18; 4,14). But neither then nor today **does a spiritual gift automatically authorize a person's ministry**, but it requires a willingness of devoted work and the keeping alive of the God-given gift of grace through the continuous filling of the spirit and the live-giving word of God.

The **gift of grace** is one thing, its **full development** is another. And if God does not open the door for ministry then nothing would happen. Timothy had the **gift of an evangelist** (2Tim 4,5) and **the gift of a teacher** (1Tim 4,11,13-16;6,3/ 2Tim 2,2;3,10;4,2,3).

Then he also reminds Timothy of the **confirmation** by God and His power and of the signs which followed the believers. The endurance, so that they would not give up when trials and troubles come, that they would suffer evil and stay loving, patient and faithful through it all. .

The apostle **reminded** Timothy of everything that happened in the Province of Asia, how some „good“ people turned away from Paul and how the family of **Onesiphorus** stood by him during this critical season, when they sought and found him in prison. In all these explanations of the apostle we can see how important **interpersonal relationships** were to him.

(2Tim 1.7) Paul describes with few words what faith is about and what kind of spirit God has already given us. We should be fearless, strong, full and love and a sound mind. We can be all that when we turn to God.

But **Timothy probably imagined it to be different**. At first there is fire and the quickening of the Holy Spirit, but then the pure sobering experience during the work of the gospel. It was different, harder and not as easy as he thought to win people for God. So often **nothing happens**. He might have thought: “My sermons and preaching are not received, other fancy teachings and philosophies are drawing people stronger than that. It seems that he got **discouraged. Self-doubts** must have troubled him. But the worst challenge for him were those **who pretended to be godly** but who really were „without love, quarrelsome, of bad character, friends of the enemies, inconsiderate and prideful. Therefore he needed **such encouragement**.”

This encouragement came from no lesser but the apostle Paul himself. Paul had known Timothy well and for a long time. Consolation, encouragement, instruction and hope are very precious and uplifting for most of us, when we feel understood with all our history, our background, our strengths and weaknesses. **Real appreciation**, being there for somebody and a sensitive intuition what somebody needs who feels hopeless, guarantee that people who are frustrated and lonely will be encouraged and receive new strength.

Paul took the time to encourage the disheartened Timothy. First of all he notes that weak-spiritedness is not a gift of God or of the spirit. God does not set us on fire to let us down. God's method is "**thesis, anti-thesis and then synthesis**", which means at first there is a proclamation, a mission, a promise, a calling, eetc, and then follow opposition, contradictions, critique, doubts, etc. In the end this leads to the good, right and true.

Paul emphasizes strongly: **God gave us His Spirit**, His mind and His power. He is spirit, who overcomes all boundaries and chases out fear. **He gave us the Spirit of love** and of **peace and of a sound mind**.

Through the Spirit of God we gain distance from fear and pessimism. God's spirit is not a spirit of fear. **Timothy** urgently needed this fatherly consolation. In his surrounding there was much **superstition**, especially nourished by **Judaism**: „This or that is of the devil or of demons, these are consecrated to idols, etc...“. We have heard of similar things **in the church of Corinth**. This made Christians grow so insecure that they became overcautious, so that they threw out the baby with the bath water.

Timothy was supposed to know that Jesus is stronger than all demons and all that can discourage or scare us. He was supposed to ignore this confusion and not give heed to "**spirits of fear**". When these things are not taken so seriously then they leave almost on their own. God **reigns on His throne** and helps those who belong to him.

Fear is therefore not a gift of God.

At this time – we remember the **persecution of the believers** after the **fire of Rome in 64 AD** – it was very dangerous to appear in public as an evangelist or to teach a larger audience. Whether Timothy was **shy** or feared suffering, he had good reasons to be discouraged because Paul was in prison and had to expect death. The believers in the Province of Asia were probably not the only believers who had fallen from the faith Paul proclaimed to them (2Tim 1,15), but surely many others also fell prey **to false apostles** and deceitful workers (2Cor 11,13-15) and turned away from the gospel to which they were called by the grace of Christ (Gal 1,6).

(2Tim 1.8 -10) Since **Christianity** was a **minority in the Roman Empire** and were called a sect by the Jews and the gospel was persecuted on all sides in different ways (2Tim 3,12) , Paul encouraged Timothy to not be ashamed of being a Christian and to confess Christ. The apostle was sure that God was in control and that the true belief in Jesus was the only alternative to all religions and cults of that time. These had no eternal hope, no hope for resurrection. Based on these truths Timothy was supposed to be strong in spirit and of good courage. **"THEREFORE do not be ashamed ..."**, with this short, meaningful sentence the apostle continues to build him up. Timothy was supposed to serve God without doubting himself. External conditions (imprisonment of Paul, etc) should not weigh him down or become burdensome. All that is **external and visible** in this world and our life on earth is temporary and should not keep a believing Christian from serving God fervently. Through Jesus, according to the promise, we received an **„eternal, glorified nature (life)“**. Paul writes these uplifting words even though he was facing death. .

The last letter of the apostle Paul was written between 64-67 AD, during his second imprisonment in Rome and it was also his heritage to Timothy. He committed his ministry into his hands.

We know that **the gospel of Peter addressed** the Jews and that **of Paul the Gentiles** (nations) (Gal 2.8/ Rom 16,25). The apostle intensified his affirmation by reminding Timothy of the **revelations of the Holy Spirit** in the past (2Tim 1.9/ Heb 1,2).

After that Paul also speaks **about his own works and of his sufferings**. Instead of hiding them from Timothy he explains them in detail. He wanted Timothy to get **used to** expecting hard times and not to try to avoid them.

(2Tim 1.10-12) These verses **speak of the GRACE** that was given to him (Paul) as teacher and preacher to the Gentiles in Jesus (Tit 2,11/ 1Cor 1,4/ 1Tim 6,14). Therefore Paul is not **ashamed** to suffer for the gospel and to **endure everything** (2Tim 1,12), to preserve the entrusted the good, **the Christian doctrine** (1Tim 6,20). The preservation of the Christian faith and the apostolic tradition thereof are important themes of the Epistles (1Tim 4,6/ 2Tim 1.13/ Tit 1,9).

The **disciples of the apostle** were supposed to protect and keep the entrusted gospel in exactly the same way (Rev 2,25;3,11). Because of the overflowing grace of God (Gal 2,7-10) Timothy was supposed to be **without shame**.

Timothy was **an established** young man that Paul could **send to different churches** to remind them of the ways of Paul in Christ Jesus (1Cor 4,17). Timothy was going to maintain the good news this way (2Tim 1,14) and make sure that God's grace would not be narrowed.

Not by circumcision (Gal 2,7) nor by elements of Greek philosophy or by the tendency of the flesh to save the soul by their own works – such as rituals, keeping certain days of festivals or by good works.

Paul pointed Timothy to the **meaning of grace**. **The grace based on the merciful love of Jesus is the center of the gospel** of the apostle Paul. **All is grace**: our life, our election and calling, our redemption, justification and reconciliation, our position as a son and eternal life. **Perfect and complete grace**, without our help and without conditions or requirements.

The apostle does not say: **„What I have believed“**, but: **„Whom I have believed“**, and that is an important difference. The Christian is meant to trust and have a relationship with the **Christ**.

The apostle **connects all of redemption**, grace, the truth, etc with **Jesus Christ**, when he says, **“whom”** he has believed and trusted. According to Paul **it is all about** the man Jesus Christ. He was the **full revelation of God** (1Joh 4,17). **In Him (Jesus)** there is the life in which Paul participated, in Him was the power that sustained him. This power of Jesus preserved for him the heavenly inheritance of glory. It was for HIM that he ministered, worked, suffered and was even ready to die. He was a faithful witness of Jesus.

The grace is in Christ Jesus, because God the Father has not spared His own son but has given away Himself for us all through Him – how should He not also give us all blessings through this grace (Rom 8,32).

Grace is not only that of Jesus Christ, but that grace that is rooted in Him and established in His cross, which can only be experienced in the fellowship with Him. In Jesus alone we are **God's elect**, sanctified and beloved. The members of the body of Christ are blessed with the **fullness of the riches of this grace**. Apostle Paul was commissioned to proclaim what these **riches of Christ are to the nations** (Col 1,27). Only in Christ, through the living faith and by grace alone we are blessed with these spiritual blessings in the midst of heavenly beings (Eph 1,13). **There is no condemnation** for those in Christ Jesus (Rom 8,1). And should sin increase in the life of a believer then God's grace still overflows (Rom 5,20). **We are and remain the sanctified children of the Almighty** and made perfect in the eyes of God (Eph 1,4). In Christ we have redemption by His blood, forgiveness of all offenses according to the riches of **His grace** that overflows in us (Eph 1,7,8).

(**2Tim 1.13-15**) Timothy was supposed to defend this gospel without compromise and proclaim it further. Paul knew that after his death there would be "**wolves**" that would come (Acts 20,29,30), who would not continue to build on the foundation he laid (1Cor 3,10/ 1Tim 6,3/ 2Tim 4,3).

In the **verses 15-18** we find the situation that the **majority of Christians had turned away from the apostle** so that the affection and faithfulness of some was even more precious to him. How much had the times changed since Paul had started his ministry!

If we compare this letter with the letters to the Thessalonians and the one to the Ephesians we see that it referred to the same people to whom Paul once preached. Ephesus was the capital of the area that is here called „Province of Asia“. But all had **deserted him**. We should not assume that they gave up their **Christian confession**, but their faith had **become very weak**.

They did not **want to be associated with a man who fell in disgrace** with the authorities, was despised, persecuted and imprisoned. They did not want to be associated with a man whose efforts brought shame and trouble on himself. They **withdrew from him** and left him alone with his responsibilities. A **sad result of spiritual** decrease!

The apostle Paul was entrusted with the gospel to the nations. He fought and suffered for it. Now he wanted Timothy to accomplish this **mission and call**.

(**2Tim 1.15-18**) **Only the family of Onesiphorus stood by Paul**. These were not "**ashamed**" of the gospel of Paul. **Onesiphorus** is a shining example and role model in the face of the overall situation in Minor Asia. He even travelled to Rome. He sought the apostle in prison (2Tim 2,9), found him, visited and comforted him. **Paul praised** this courage, hospitality and goodness, while other Christians from Asia Minor had deserted him. Paul is also referring to **prior services** that Onesiphorus provided in Ephesus and that seem to be known by Timothy.

Since Paul speaks of **Onesiphorus in the past tense** it is possible that he had already died at this point. But we do not know this for certain.

Two times Paul asked **the Lord for mercy** for Onesiphorus; one time its referring to the **present** and his house – that includes his family and perhaps all members of the household and the slaves as well as the home group – and then relating to the future referring to the day of Christ for Onesiphorus.

The mercy for the present could relate to the maturity in faith and merciful guidance for him and his house. **It stands out**, that Paul does not pray for Onesiphorus himself. It may be that he already died because of his faith, and how much more did the family now need the mercies of God.

Chapter 2

It is about the purpose and meaning of the sufferings of the apostle (a messenger of God). He was supposed to forward the good news of Jesus to a fallen world. The apostle believes that in Timothy he has found a **messenger of the gospel of salvation**. Therefore he encourages him to be steadfast, courageous and unwavering.

In this letter Paul approaches a different topic. He **teaches and exhorts Timothy** with regard to the passing on of truth to others. It's not about authority, offices or gifts. It is also not referring to **elders** but rather what remains when there are no more elders that can be appointed. He speaks about a condition of disorder in the house of God in the churches, instead of dealing with **the public blamelessness of the house of God** as in the first letter.

(2Tim 2.2) „This entrust to faithful people!“ What Timothy and Paul have heard and learned (2Tim 1.10), were **ancient Christian truths** that Jesus and the Holy Spirit revealed to the apostles and the first church. He was supposed to entrust this truth to faithful people. All of them were supposed to be **faithful and trustworthy**. There we find the Greek word that could also be translated »**having faith**«, because **faith and faithfulness** are the same word in Greek. It should be such people who submit to the word of God in faith and obedience, keep it faithfully and are also able to teach others.

(2Tim 2.3) Suffering; be ready and prepare for that, because in this age the attitude of humanity is that they are enemies of God (Rom 8,7). A „**faithful warrior**“ is ready for suffering and does not avoid conflict cowardly. He is faithful and obedient to the assignments of the Lord (2Cor 10,3-5). The apostle describes further the **character that Timothy must have** to continue the work in spite of the conditions and problems that the church was facing.

As a good „**soldier of God**“ he would have to suffer the opposition, affliction and sufferings of Christ and be careful not only to get caught up in the daily routine of life.

A soldier in service must be free from all hinderance so that he can please the one who called him to the service. In addition Timothy should freely, out of love for Jesus, fight according to the **rules like an athlete in a competition**, according to the heavenly will of the Lord. He should also work to enjoy the fruits of his labor. These are the **practical conditions of the heavenly service** for all who wants to engage in it. **A servant had** to be steadfast and detached from the world. Fighting and working were requirements to be able to expect fruits. A **real warrior of Jesus** Christ will not be caught up in endless business and worries about salaries or wages (2Tim 2,4).

(2Tim 2.5) The image of the athlete. The servant of God is like an **athlete** who is fighting for an eternal crown of victory (Phil 1,27; 4,3). He fights according to **set rules**. That also applies to the proclamation of the gospel. But who proclaims **a different gospel** than that of Paul (the gospel of the good news of Jesus) will already be cursed here on earth (see Gal 1,6-9). And **those who do not build on this solid ground**, that **Paul** has laid (1Cor 3,10-15).

(2Tim 2.6.7) The image of the farmer – the **labouring farmer** should *always* receive the first portion of his harvest. The one who works should always **profit first. And after he has tasted of the fruits himself** it will be his joy to share with others.

Paul mentions three criterions of a real servant of God – with a certain progression:

- As a **warrior** they should humbly and gratefully suffer evil,
- as an **athlete** they should exhaust all of their strength,
- and as **farmers** they should give all their efforts.

(2Tim 2.8) According to my gospel. What does that mean? Paul had laid a foundation for the world mission (1Cor 3,10,11) – after **the rejection of Jesus** by the Jews all **people** from all races and people could be saved. **The elect of God** are now all people and not only the Jews alone. His message was: „God saves all who receive Jesus.“ There is now no **particular salvation** for the Jews anymore (Acts 4,12).

The apostle then returns to the first but foundational **basics of truth** and **the afflictions of ministry**:

The **truth of the gospel** is divided into **two parts**:

- **Firstly** there is the **fulfillment of the promises** and
- **secondly** the power of God in the resurrection (2Tim 2,8).

These truly are the two **key elements of the truth**:

- the faithfulness of God concerning His promises (revealed mainly in **reference to the Jews**) and
- the creative, living power of God which was revealed in **the resurrection**, and puts the seal of God on the person and the work of Jesus Christ.

For this **second truth**, the work of reconciliation, the apostle suffered in his work. Without the devoted ministry of Paul salvation may have never reached the Gentiles to such an extent (comp. Acts 11,1,18;13,46-48).

(2Tim 2.8a) Remember Jesus Christ who was raised from the dead. This is a typical verse for Easter. A treasure of faith. Christians should always be reminded of the resurrection of Jesus. This is a **central point of faith**. „Remember...!“ **This sounds like an invitation to keep Jesus and his work alive in our spirit, mind or memory.**

In the **resurrection accounts** of the gospels we read how dramatic the experience of the resurrection of Jesus was. Men and women **were captured by it with body and soul** and had to deal with all kinds of **different emotions**. Horror, shaking, trembling, fear and ecstasy came over the women when they saw the angel at the grave (Mk 16,1-8). The hearts of disciples on their way to Emmaus were burning with sadness (Lk 24,32). **Paulus** explains his experience like that of a rapture it always seemed to capture the whole person.

To be a witness of the resurrection of Jesus was moving and intense. This **supernatural event** moved a person deep on the inside and changed the thinking and mindset of a person. People reacted with a mix of overflowing and excited accounts: „**We saw the Lord**“ ... or bewildered stammering ... or some just became speechless because it took their breath away. It was a mighty shaking experience: **Death was no longer a final instance!**

The power of death was overcome. It seemed to interfere with time – for who would be thought of as death in the future or those who had already died would suddenly be alive. Through the resurrection of Jesus we realised that **death is an illusion**. But who would be able to quickly grasp what that would mean. God brought a dimension into our human life which is outrageous to us, because it disrupts what seems logical to us: **It is a revolutionary reversal of times** – no longer life and death, and there was hope to live again with God. And since God the Father had also raised Jesus from the dead the resurrected one was alive again.

It is not only about a **a hope for resurrection** after death – but it is about much more. It is about **life with resurrection power** (Phil 3,10) – before and after death.

This promise changes the quality of life. Now it says

- **Follow the role model of Jesus!** Many people who were bent inward and outwards, were raised in the presence of Jesus. He enabled them to live uprightly and with confidence. Jesus took time for people who were in need, hungry or over-challenged. With the bread of life and His fellowship He strengthened them. People were enabled by Jesus to make their own way and to be considerate of one another.
- **Follow the role model of Jesus** – also in His anger towards cold and hardened hearts of the people. Nothing is holy to them and they have declared mammon their God. They wanted to turn every aspect of life into a business and only regarded men as „homo oeconomic“.
- **Follow the role model of Jesus** as the Christ: In His actions God's resurrection power was among us. He took away the power of death. Instead He brought to light the gospel of the resurrection, the real and eternal life (2Tim 1,10).

That was the **birth of hope**. Easter was the birthday party of hope! **The life in Christ** is out of **reach for death** because when He died and rose again He became the source of life for others. This life was already promised before the creation of this world (Tit 1,2) and was brought to light through the gospel of love (2Tim 1,10).

We will see His fruits in the times to come. Therefore life is referred to as a **promise** because all that is „**in Christ Jesus**“ will survive all storms and crisis of this world and remain for eternity.

(2Tim 2.9) The word of God is not in chains. Paul is referring to his chains and his imprisonment. He is a prisoner of **Rome**, but in reality he was a **prisoner of the Lord** (Eph 4,1). And though he may be in chains, he was also a messenger of the gospel still (Eph 6,20). And this **word of the gospel cannot be hindered**. Paul puts the word of God and his gospel on the same level. The Word, as God has revealed it through the good news of Paul (Tit 1,3), is not in chains (comp. Is 55.11).

“... **The word of God is not in chains**.“ That means it freely comes to the people, touches and changes them and moves them towards the right direction. Paul saw with a prophetic eye how a world-wide **movement of divine truth** would be started and how **the Roman Empire** and its boundaries would not be able to restrain it.

For the apostle Paul it was clear that true Christianity is a **“spiritual movement”**, that breaks through all barriers of culture. This knowledge was supposed to comfort and encourage Timothy.

For Paul it was evident that the work of the Holy Spirit cannot be suppressed, prevented or stopped by anything in this world. **The powers** of this world may have the power to **bind people** and throw them in prison and to **kill**, but the **darkness cannot prevent or overcome the light of God**. This is what history has proven up to this day. **God's redemptive power** is unleashed through Jesus, the Holy Spirit and his **faithful witnesses** (such as Paul).

(**2Tim 2.10**) Paul told his students: „**I endure all things for the elects' sake**.“ He is referring to the **redeemed of all races** – Jews and all other nations. **Christians** (of all ages) **owe it to** the determined steadfastness of the apostle Paul that the **Gentiles could partake in salvation**. Only think of the **Apostolic Council** (compare Acts 15.1-35/ Gal 2,6/ 1Cor 8-10/ Rom 14). Paul also had revelations concerning salvation and redemption that the prophets of the Old Testament (Dan 2,18-19) could only guess (Rom 16,25-26/ 1Cor 2.7,10/ Eph 3,5,9/ Col 1,26;2,2-3).

The **calling of the Gentiles to salvation** and then eventually **the restoration of all things** in Christ, the head of all = those were and are **the contents of the gospel of the apostle Paul** (Col 1,23;4,3/ Eph 1,9-10;3.3-12;6,19;5,32/ 1Cor 4,1;13,2;14,2;15,151/ 2Thes 2,7/ 1Tim 3,9,16).

Timothy was supposed to continue to minister with full energy **towards the fulfillment of the divine will of God**. The good news of Jesus Christ of Nazareth was supposed to be accessible to all tribes and nations of all races and cultures (Mk 16,15). **God wants** all people to find help and find true revelation of the truth (1Tim 2,4).

To reach **“the elect”** (of all nations) Paul and all who labored with him often had to suffer terrible things **inwardly and outwardly**, such as persecution, martyrdom, condemnation, scorn and mockery. But they did it for selfless love for the **“lost”**, who could not grasp their spiritual condition. For that they had to fight against all worldly teachings so that they could come against the apostasy of the fellowship and the unfaithfulness in the churches. They also had to care for their own soul. They **“suffer for the sake of the elect.”**

(**2Tim 2.11-13**) **This refers to a fragment of an old Christian hymn** (as also in 1Tim 1,17;3,16;6,15-16). This **doxology** (praise) is often used in the Epistles.

(**2Tim 2.14-26**) **About the handling of the word of God** or the fight against false teachings. Because the **enemy of God** (Satan) realizes that the work and salvation of God cannot **be stopped by persecution** and demonstration of power, he now tries to stop it with **threats to the inner being and temptations**. In order to reach the believers through quarrels about words and confusion of their faith by unholy, vain arguments, he tempts the believers with foolish questions concerning minor issues. Behind all of these **debates** there is often **dogmatism**, which reveals a foul thought life (1Tim 6,5). There is a certain motivation at work to convince a listener of a new thesis and to change that person and win them over. **But all these fights lead to nothing**.

Every servant of the Lord must avoid fights by all measures. **Conflicts** are hard to avoid, but who wants to be faithful to his Lord should **not fight**, which means we should not be quarrelsome. We should never forget that we **represent the Lord**, but are always a servant. Therefore the gentleness of Jesus should mark Timothy's heart for a position of servanthood. When we read the first part of the chapter we noticed illustrations that were used to show **the different characteristics of a believer**.

He is „**soldier, athlete, farmer, worker and a vessel**“. We are reminded again that **he is just a servant**. Not only that but also a **servant of the Lord**, and therefore he must take heed to also represent the Lord in character.

(**2Tim 2.15**) **Quarrel about words** to argue what is truth or not can only be avoided when we know how to rightly handle the holy Word of truth. This also requires the right heart attitude of submission under the heavenly word of love, the strong living faith and not endless speculations or the ability to think logically. A special skill is also the right **dividing of the Word of God**, because not all **is for us**. Some things were primarily written for the patriarchs, the people of Israel, for single persons or for special times. On the other hand some parts are mainly for us and our time, for the church or the time of the apostle or the last days.

The right division of scripture is a spiritual discipline because every biblical truth must be linked to the right time in history concerning salvation and the order of God (Eph 1,22.23). Every truth must also – as with everything in life – be put into **right context** and applied at the right point. In order to **understand the word of God correctly** a person needs the Holy Spirit in their heart (Rom 16.25,26) and spiritual maturity.

(**2Tim 2.16-18**) We must separate from false teachers, false people, sectarians, and people who practise idle talk. They will not bring peace and increase in wickedness. Their deceptive words will keep destroying like cancer, to attack fragile and unprepared people in their spirit. Paul warned of any engagement with idle talk. All things on earth will continue to develop and so would false teachings.

(**2Tim 2.19**) **The solid ground of God stands** (it stands and will not move) and **bears the seal of God**. The Lord Jesus **knows those who are His** and who belongs to Him and who doesn't (Mt 7,21).

When somebody acknowledges Jesus he **cannot be unrighteous any longer. He must separate himself from unrighteousness!**“ He must no longer **act like** the world and the wicked people in it. He must not reject the poor and weak or leave them **to their fate**. Therefore God charges that His servants should care for the widows and orphans, the poor and the sick. Jesus is our role model, as He Himself cared for His mother while He hung at the cross (Joh 19,27).

(2Tim 2.20-21) "vessels for honor and dishonor". We are similar to a vessel, because whatever we are filled with determines their usefulness. The **"great house"** is the local church that had already grown.

In the church there are different ministries (tasks / assignments) that have to be taken care of and their works will be tested by God with fire (comp. Cor.3,10-15). **Negative people** (heretics, blabbers, etc) **in the church** should be avoided and we should **distance** ourselves from them. In certain cases we need **to separate** from them and especially not invite them **to minister** in the church or encourage them to do that.

(2Tim 2.22) The **"sanctifying" character** of a believer: **Flee and die** ... for righteousness, faith, love, and peace with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart. Timothy was also to avoid the **foolish debating questions**, in which there are no instructions or revelations. They only **produce** vain disputes and conflicts.

As a servant of God his job is to bring God's truth, peace and love, because the **truth of God is not** a matter of **human intellect**, but the revelation of the things concerning God and His counsel. Christians came to Jesus and became born again through the active power of the Holy Spirit in the heart and mind, and not by vain speech and discussions (Joh 8,43).

Satan uses these debates to confuse the people who are seeking. He **mixes** Judaism, Atheism, Spirituality, Esoterism, New Age, etc with Christianity, to divert and lead them away from the divine revealed truth in **Jesus**.

What was Timothy supposed to flee from!? ... From **youthful passions and** desires. But he should run to righteousness, love and peace. **Young people** are often curious, everything is tempting, they want to try all things and explore and experience. They strive for power, honor and riches and they want to do **all things better** and different than the old folks. These balls of energy want to reform everything. The term passions is therefore not referring to the natural desire **for the other sex** and it's not a **challenge** to celibacy.

(2Tim 2.23,24) Timothy was supposed to be a servant (slave) of Christ. Jesus should be his Lord. He should not waste his time with **undisciplined** people and their questions. **Foolish questions** testify of lack of discipline and low spiritual education. Asking questions just to ask, starting disputes and provocations must be rejected by a servant of God. Because if somebody **rejects the healthy doctrine of the apostles and the servants of the Word of God**, also rejects obedience to God and does not respect God and his servants. Such a mind is not renewed by the Holy Spirit (1Tim 6,3-5).

(2Tim 2.24-26) How a true servant of God should be:

- He should be **gentle** and friendly in his dealing with other people and those believers that are entrusted to him (1Thes 2,7-8).
- He should care for them like a mother cares for her children.
- He should be **teachable** and also be able to teach. He should be **a good teacher** who knows more than his students. A spiritual mature scholar who is clear on what he is teaching.
- He should provide **clear and practical answers to his students** (1Tim 4,6/ Col 3.16).
- Through his **spiritual and mental maturity** he should be able to raise a believer **as a Christian with authority**.
- He should be able to bring the **rebellious ones** to repentance.

We know from scripture that the **latter is not always possible** but sometimes God grants grace (Ez 3,17-20; 33,6-7).

Chapter 3

In Chapter 3 we see how and why spiritual confusion grows among believers. **But Timothy should remain faithful** to the things entrusted to him (1Tim 4,13). The entrusted faith should be protected (2Tim 1.14-17/ 2Pt 1,21/ Tit 2,11-15).

Timothy should **just persevere in the things** that he had learned and what he was **fully convinced** of, because **he knew** who he learned from. **This is a very important point**. The apostle knew really well that God who brought these glorious truths to man, revealed His grace as a **proof to the very man** that he had learned from (1Cor 11.23).

(2Tim 3.1-9) Warning of the dangers of the last days. The early church already lived **with expectation of the last days**, which means they expected the coming of Christ any moment. In that they also adopted **Jewish mindsets and images**

The Jews divided **world time** in the present and future age. Between the **bad present time** and the **future of the salvation of the Lord**, they believed the so-called "**Day of the Lord**" would come **when God finally would interfere personally** and destroy the world to build a new one.

"**This day of the Lord**" would be announced by a time of misery, so they believed, a time **when evil would start their last big strike** and the world would be shaken physically and morally in its foundations. These would be very difficult, terrible and dangerous conditions. The **onslaught of evil** would be so mighty, forceful and deceitful that the existence of the church of Jesus would be threatened severely, before **the satanic evil** would ultimately be overthrown by Jesus (Mt 16,18/ Rev 20,7). All kingdoms and systems of this spirit of this age will pass and then there will be a new beginning for the kingdom of God on earth.

Our behavior in that present dangerous period of time is described in **2Tim 3**.

(2Tim 3,1) Paul speaks of **difficult times**. The good and the bad both have to grow to maturity until the Last Days (Mt 13,29). Paul prophesies how the **influence of the enemy** will grow, how the teachings of faith would become more and more watered down and doubted. The true believers would continue to be battled and persecuted. He assumed that what happened to him personally (persecution) and to the churches (resistance) would also happen to all Christians (Joh 15,20).

First handn Paul experienced the watering down of the gospel and the moral decay. Without Christ only a shadow of godliness would remain.

The selfish **impostors sneak** into the houses and churches and tempt the believers of Christ away from the gospel of the church. The tempted ones become **unsteady, weak and unable souls** who would be **tempted to rebellion, pride and unkindness**.

These „**people**“, that the apostle talks about (2Tim 3.1-5) **are not** people of the world, he is referring to so-called „**Christians**“ - apparent believers. He is talking **about carnal behavior**, and from these we should radically „**turn away**“.

Timothy should stay away from **people with such character** and he should not involve himself with them, because they are already destined to fail or given to judgement by God. Their claims and performance are not blessed by God. Only the good, the true and real remains and will stand. **The smallest light is still brighter than the darkest darkness**. Since the apostle knows that he can also look to the glorious and victorious **end** with the kingdom of God with much expectation.

Paul shows Timothy what can protect a believer from temptations and false teachings, by abiding in the truth that he has learned and remembering from whom he had learned.

The **message of the New Testament** can be traced back through the apostles of God to Jesus. In addition the New Testament also agrees with the **prophesies of the Old Testament** in reference to the Messiah Jesus. And thus the Old Testament seamlessly flows into the New Testament. In the New Testament we see mainly the **apostle of Jesus**, including Paul, who pass on the heavenly message of Jesus. They were all called to this ministry by Jesus personally. Through this **personal calling** of Jesus they were also **divine authorities**. The scriptures are **the remaining rule** (OT and NT) according to which every spoken word must be judged. In short: The scriptures are inspired. The **false teachers**, etc could not build on **such a divine calling by Jesus**.

If we stick to what we learned here in the At and NT (logos) then we will continue to grow in divine knowledge of the rhema, the revealed word of God. **Logos and rhema**, the written and the living word of God cannot be separated from another because they **complement each other** and are necessary for salvation (Rom 10.8-18). Jesus said: „*If you did not believe the words of Moses, will you believe me?*“ (Joh 5.47).

Scirpture is the basic rule that remains **according to which every spoken word must be discerned**. The word of God is the **sword of the spirit** (Eph 6,14-17). It refers symbolically to a **dagger**, which is only **useful to a skilled warrior in close combat**. The word of God convicts us, or makes us **resistant against Satan's skilled attempts to deceive**. To experience that **right bible knowledge** is necessary (Col 3,16). All else **tempts** and confuses us. The word of God „**corrects**“, exposes (Eph 6,17) and brings to awareness our own wrong actions. It reveals things to us in a wholesome way (Heb 4,12-13).

The bible, especially the NT, precisely and thoroughly pierces the thoughts, soul and heart of every believer (Joh 3,20). The message of the bible „**rebukes**“, that means it shapes us into the original condition how God has created and purposed us (1Petr 2,1-2).

The **written word** (logos) is the foundation and always has the highest authority. Everything must align with it. **Therefore Satan had to be silent**, when the Jesus answered him with the word of the Lord. If somebody does not surrender to the word of the Lord he rebels against God. Until **the revelation of God was finished in Christ Jesus** there was room **for several authorities (apostles)**. Therefore Jesus said: „It is written“. But now, after the **revelation of God is completed** there is nothing that must be added to the logos (Rev 22.19). The **rhema-word** is only **the interpretation** (practical application) of logos. There cannot be new teachings other than those that were given. The **ministers of the word** only share and interpret the word of God correctly.

Timothy had been reading the holy scriptures from childhood on, and these perfect scriptures of God, as he read them as a child, protect him by their divine authority from deceit and gave him the truths necessary for teaching.

Timothy would be safe if he remained with what and from whom he had **learned**, what he had **understood** and **experienced**. The true Christian faith always rests on reliable and **proven witnesses** and testimonies, **proven and inspired documents** and the confirmation of the Holy Spirit.

We stick with what we learned because we know from whom we learned. This is a simple and very important principle of apostolic and biblical faith.

(**2Tim 3.2**) Here he uses the word »**people**«, so that we are tempted to think of people in general. But in verse 8 he terms them **reprobate concerning the faith**. These people are believers.

(**2Tim 3.5**) Paul suggests to Timothy: »**Have nothing to do with them**.« We already know from Rom 16,17 that we should avoid such brothers who **teach differently** than Jesus and the apostle Paul and cause division and temptation. In 2Thess 3,6 we read: »*In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we command you, brothers, to keep away from every brother who is idle and does not live according to the teaching you received from us.*« In 2Tim 2,21 we are instructed to **cleanse ourselves**. Away from the sinful (carnal and selfish) vessels of dishonor in the house of God. Of course we should try to exhort the rebellious and discipline them with gentleness and to intercede for them, if God would not give them a change of heart (2Tim 2,25).

„The **people** (this refers to believers) will be **lovers of themselves**“, this is the first point of this list. The second says „**lovers of God**“. The list ends with: „**lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God**“. The faithful believers should avoid such selfish, greedy people and be consequent about it. **Six times** this chapter mentions the terms: **avoid, separate from, cleanse from, flee, reject** and **turn from**, which is a request for **separation**.

(**2Tim 3.8**) **They oppose ... like Jannes and Jambres oppose Moses** (Exod 7,11,22;8,7). **Jannes and Jambres** were Egyptian magicians of pharaoh who opposed Moses. They could keep up with the miracles that Moses and Aaron performed, but only at the beginning (Exod 7,11;8,9,11), but not until the end.

Apparently they were the leaders of the magicians who influenced the courts of pharaoh and opposed Moses by working miracles with the help of demons (or psychological techniques, etc.). The one who is born by the flesh will follow the one who is of the flesh (Gal 4,29).

Therefore the **piety who originated from the law of Moses** and Judaism did not cause much rebellion, while the „**blessedness that comes through Jesus**“, was opposed on all sides. Timothy had experienced this **everywhere** during his missionary ministry.

(**2Tim 3.10**) Paul says to Timothy: »**You, however, know all about my teaching, my way of life, my purpose, faith, patience, love and endurance ...**«, and in Vers 14: »*But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of because you know from who you learned it.* **The bad conditions** already became apparent during Timothy's life time. When the Holy Spirit was poured out **the Last Days had begun** (Acts.2,17; Hebr. 1.2; Jam.5.3) which will last until the return of Jesus and will reach its peak shortly before His second coming.

(**2Tim 3.10-17**) Timothy brought the **ideal requirements for the ministry of an evangelist**. He grew up with the word of God in the scriptures of the bible. That was his **faith foundation**. Then the apostle Paul became his **role model** and **mentor**. He worked with him faithfully, fought and suffered with him.

He did not only follow his teachings but also followed him **physically**, walked with him through thick and thin. But he also followed him spiritually, carefully keeping to his doctrines. But even beyond that, following somebody *spiritually* does not only mean to understand but also to be like the one you follow. **With these words Paul describes what a true disciple is**. Because it is about unshakeable faithfulness of a true companion, but also the understanding of a student and the obedience of a follower.

Paul mentions a list of things in which Timothy followed him. We also find out what the duties of an apostle were, which characteristics he needed to have and what kinds of experiences he made. The **duty of an apostle** was obviously **teaching**. But nobody can teach others **what he himself does not know**. Therefore the one who wants to instruct others in Christian faith must also know **Jesus Christ**. Every real living doctrine of faith also is born **of real life experiences with faith**.

The **Christian life and doctrine** is not **just about knowledge** of certain things but much more than that. True leaders understand a way to train people **how they should live**. The **spiritual teacher** must also ask himself what **the believers need most** when they are on their own in their daily lives.

(**2Tim 3.12**) »*But all who want to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.*« This is referring to **the believers from Judaism** who accept Jesus as Messiah and the anointed of God. Only in **the New Testament** (NT) we find out about the **life and teaching of Jesus**. The scripture is useful for **the exposure** of guilt. Whose guilt? **Guilt** because the Jews rejected Jesus, opposed Him and even crucified Him (Acts 2,36;4,10).

The Pentateuch (the first 5 books of the Old Testament) claims at least **680 times**, that its content is by divine inspiration. In the historical books this claim is made **418 times** and **195 times** in the biblical wisdom literary (such as Job, Ecclesiastes, Proverbs, etc.) and **1307 times** in the prophetic books. The New Testament directly refers to the OT at least 300 times and indirectly at least **1000 times**. Almost in every case it is a given or implicitly explained that this is the Word of God.

The book of Hebrews starts with the words: »*In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways. Just like the prophets spoke to our forefathers; he spoke to us through his Son in the last days*« (Heb 1,1-2). The writer referred to **both testaments**: God speaking **through the prophets**« represents the Old Testament and speaking »**through the Son**« refers to the new.

Many writers of the New Testament confirm that they **wrote down God's word**. Paul reminds the believers in Corinth of a truth that he surely already told them many times while he was with them: This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truth in spiritual words « (1Cor 2,13; vgl.16). In his next letter he defended his intentions (2Tim 3,16-17) and his authority: »Unlike so many, we do not peddle the word of God for profit. On the contrary, in Christ we speak before God with sincerity, like men sent from God« (2Cor 2,17).

Paul assured the churches in Galatia: »I want to let you know, my brothers, that the gospel I preach is not of man, I have neither received nor learned it from man but through a revelation of Jesus Christ.... Who has called me from the womb and called me by His grace. Who was well pleased to reveal His son to Him so that I can preach the gospel among the Gentiles« (Gal 1,11-12.15-16/ Col 1,25-27/ 1Thess 2,13). Not **all Christians** are persecuted and killed but only those who want to live a „**blissful**“ life with and in Jesus Christ (see Rev.13.10).

Chapter 4

Paul first speaks about the **apostasy of the church** which already started then and would get worse in the future. For the **present time** he exhorted Timothy: „**Preach the word** in and out of season...., there will be a time when people will not suffer sound doctrine, but turn aside to myths “

(**2Tim 4.1.2**) **The healthy, pure doctrine** (of ancient Christianity) **will not be suffered in the Last Days**. They will gather teachers to say what they want to hear (2Tim 4,2-3). They will turn their ears from the truth and turn aside **to myths, and tales**.“ (2Tim 4.3-4) The term: “**for rebuke**“ means that His word helps us to correct things in our lives. It is some kind of **error correction**. When Paul quotes **for perfection**, that means that we should reach full maturity and develop mature character.

The more the apostolic power would decrease, the more Christianity would slide back. In this letter something else is evident, namely that believers will be **held responsible by God** and they have to stand before Him. Timothy was supposed to continue his labor with patience, diligence and zeal no matter what may come.

He should continue his ministry carefully, suffer tribulations and seek the lost (weak and weary) souls to care for them. This is a strong evidence of living faith, when the heart is heavy because of the unfaithfulness of those who are supposed to live the life of a Christian and even care for those who do not know Him yet. These exhortations of the apostles were timely, because the **power of the apostle** was getting weaker and he would soon be gone (2Tim 4,6).

The apostle **does not speak about the fellowship** or the Father's house, but only about God, the appearance of Jesus Christ and the kingdom of God. All that is connected to the responsibilities and duties of a servant will be summarized under the eternal rule and judgment of God. Every single person will have to face **God on their own**.

There are **no references made** to the church or the local fellowship. The family of God will not be judged as one, because the church is the **bride of the lamb**.

The **day of judgment of God** will deal with **single persons**, because everyone will have to appear before God with their own heart and will be judged accordingly.

The apostle is using the fact **that he will depart from this world soon** as a motivation to encourage Timothy to continue his ministry. He knew exactly that God had already provided the foundation but he had to take the „**staff**“ and continue the „**race**“ for him.

The basis was already there but Timothy's commitment was crucial. Timothy had to see to it to keep building and actively **use his gifts** and how to hold his ground against the negative movements. The apostle finished his work. Now the faithfulness and devotion of Timothy was required. **He should never give up on the precious work of true faith that was already started**.

Everyone must see to himself how he fights and what he makes of his life.

(2Tim 4.10) Paul felt **lonely**. Therefore he asked Timothy to visit him soon, because **Demas had left him**. He departed for **worldly, material reasons**; but he had not **fallen** from faith altogether. It had just all become too burdensome for him (Demas).

Paul also brought himself to ask Timothy to bring **Mark with him**. It is strange that Paul would long to see **Mark** because he once rejected his ministry because this man had been afraid of the dangers of Christian ministry **and had returned** to Jerusalem (2Tim 4,11/ Acts 12,12;15,37-39). Mark wrote the gospel (after the account of Peter) and was a co-worker of Peter and a good translator. Mark was a useful to build a bridge between Peter (Jerusalem) and him (Paul).

It is amazing how trials and tribulations can bring brothers and co-workers of the Kingdom back together and **into reconciliation!**

(2Tim 4.13) „**Bring my cloak and the scrolls ... what I left in Troas**.“ „**Cloak and scrolls**“ surely refers to the thora (the OT). It was the Hebrew Old Testament (Acts 8,27,28). Paul must have owned a number of scrolls, a small library of parchments of the OT. It was very special at that time to own a scroll (comp. Acts 13,15;15,21/ 2Cor 3,15). But even though Paul **owned several** for his personal use, he could not carry all of them when he traveled. He obviously left some with his friend Carpus in Troas. When this request reached Timothy **he was probably still in Ephesus** (1Tim 1,3). To travel from Ephesus to Rome via Troas was about **1600 Kilometer**. Paul therefore asked Timothy to: „Do your best to get here before winter.“ (2Tim 4,21)

Paul also asked Timothy for some very **practical things**. He was supposed to bring the **cloak** he left with Carpos **in Troas**. This is not referring to any kind of coat, but the Thora (the 5 books of Moses), that were usually wrapped in a **cloak**. That can be seen in the context with „... **and the scrolls, especially the parchments** ...“ The latter probably referred to Paul's journals and notes.

Paul continues: „**Alexander, the metalworker** did me a great deal of harm. The Lord will repay him for what he has done. **You should be on your guard against him**, because he is strongly opposed to our message.“ (2Tim 4.14,15) It seems to **be the same Alexander that** was mentioned in 1Tim 1,19,20.

Of the **14 inspired letters** of Paul the 2nd Epistle to Timothy was **the last**. His serious request to bring the scrolls, especially the parchments is mentioned towards the end of the letter.

It was one of **his last requests** we have in written account. This is how **seriously** he took the word of God.

He also greets the brothers that were with Timothy and asked him to come before winter. We also see that Paul had to leave **Trophimus** sick in Miletus and could **not heal him**. Paul was not trying to hide the fact **that his heart was broken** because he saw how things around him got worse. But he still stood fast on the grace of God.

The Ephesian **Trophimus** was one of the men who were traveling with Paul from Greece to Jerusalem (Acts 20,4). He **was the man** that the Jews saw in the city when he was with Paul. They claimed Paul had taken him into the synagogue, which caused a riot where they tried to kill Paul (Acts 21,27-31).

The fact that Paul left **Trophimus** sick in Milet shows that the power to work miracles, which was given to the apostles could only be **exercised for the ministry of the Lord**, but not according to their own personal interests or wishes or personal affections.

(2Tim 4) The encouragement: „Proclaim the word!“ says: „Preach the word!“ In **Chapter three** the apostle **points to 3 seasons** (chapters) of the last days and challenges us to **persevere**. He appears like a witness in court and says: „**I testify** ... I confirm ...“, and thereby calls Timothy to keep a sound mind. He should do **the work of an evangelical herald**“ (Eph 4,7,11), who **enters new territories**, because at that time there was still much land to conquer. The great commission had not yet been fulfilled.

(2Tim 4) »I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race and kept the faith.« This refers **to three aspects of faith**. He did what he **was able to do as a human being**, and God had to do the rest (comp. Gal 2.16,20,21/ Phil 3,8-10/ 2Tim 1,14).

(2Tim 4.9.10) „Demas left me ... and went to Thessalonica, Crescens went to Galatia, Titus went to Dalmatia. Only Luke is with me ...“

It was especially painful for Paul, that **Demas** left him because he followed the trend of this age. He left the apostle even though he had been a companion and co-worker of Paul (Col 4,14/ Phlm 24). We do not know much more about **Crescens**. **Titus**, however, was a co-worker of Paul of many years. 14 years after the calling of Paul he went to Jerusalem with him (Gal 2,1). He had been looking after the church in Corinth and reported to Paul (2Cor 2,13;7,13;8,16). The Epistle to **Titus** was directed at him. The beloved physician Luke (Col 4,14) was the author of the account about the ministry of Jesus on earth (Gospel of Luke) and the author of the Book of Acts. He accompanied Paul on many of his journeys, also when they were travelling to Rome.

Mark, the cousin of Barnabas (Col 4,10), was once **„useless“** for Paul, and therefore he did not take him along for the **second mission journey**. Mark had also distanced himself from Paul and Barnabas during the first journey in Pamphylia and did not continue the mission work with them (Acts 13,13;15,38). And now we can rejoice with Paul, that Mark had become a co-worker of Paul again (Phlm 24).

Tychicus from the province Asia Minor accompanied Paul on his return trip of his third mission journey from Greece to Jerusalem (Acts 20,4). Later he delivered the Epistles to the Ephesians and the Colossians from Rome to each place (Ephesus and Colosse, Eph 6,21/ Col 4,7) He also delivered the Epistle to Philemon together with his slave Onesimus who had run away from him (Col 4,9).

(2Tim 4.16.17) „... nobody stood by me ... they all left me ...“ This is a **typical experience** for real believers. **But the Lord stood by him instead**. It is a tough experience that believers have to go through over and over again.

In the **end of the Epistle** we find several instructions, reports and of course greetings and blessings. 2nd Timothy was written in the Roman prison about AD 67 (2Tim 1,8. 16;4,6–13). These are the last recorded words of the apostle Paul (2 Tim 4,6–) and it is a very personal letter. In these 4 chapters **25 single persons are mentioned by name**.

(2Tim 4.19-21) Greetings and reports: *»Greet Priscilla and Aquila and the household of Onesiphorus. Erastus stayed in Corinth. Trophimus I left sick in Miletus. Do your best to get here before winter. Eubulus greets you, and so do Pudens, Linus, Claudia and all the brothers.«* We do not have any further information **about the people mentioned here**.

Paul had stayed with **Aquila and his wife Priscilla** while he was in Corinth for a year and a half. Both men had the same profession: they were tentmakers (Acts 18,2,18,26). Later Aquila and Priscilla lived in Ephesus, and then in Rome. They hosted a church at their home (Rom 16,3/ 1Cor 16,19).

Onesiphorus had refreshed Paul several times during his imprisonment (Ch. 1,16). Erastus was working for the government at Corinth and had travelled with Paul for some time (Rom 16,23/ Acts 19,22). As miserable as the situation in Asia Minor was – **there were still some men who stood with Paul**, such as **Onesiphorus** (2Tim 2,9). Onesiphorus also travelled to Rome.

He did not spare any effort to find out where **Paul was held prisoner**. He was not ashamed of the chains of Paul – even though it was a risk (a scandal, etc.) to show alliance to a criminal in chains like a preacher or apostle. He had refreshed Paul many times, surely not only with food and drink, but also with his courage and assurance of encouraging words of good faith.

(2Tim 4.22) With a grace greeting (he proclaims the peace of God over the readers of this letter **in his final blessing**) he closes his **last letter**. He could not do anything else, except let the **grace of God** continue to be in control. It would have to continue to guide and lead them. Paul was assured that this grace of Jesus which he proclaimed would continue to be revealed and touch the people (Tit 2,11). And it is **the spirit that dwells on the inside of us** who indeed grants us this grace.

In **1st Timothy Paul expressed his gratefulness for his own salvation** and for the fact that God considered him worthy to be an apostle (1Tim 1,12). Here he gives thanks **for the salvation of Timothy** and for his ministry in which he served. After a short reference to the faith traditions Paul addresses Timothy's upbringing (2Tim 1,5).

Paulus knew that his fate **before the Roman court** was determined and thus he was ready to die. Yet **he did not see this as a victory of Rome** but rather a redemption of the Lord. Despite all of the bad things he experienced he trusted that God would save him into His heavenly kingdom!

And thus Paul could even praise God **in the face of death**: "To Him be the glory forever and ever! Amen!" (Eph 3,21/ 2Petr 3,18).

Test questions:

1. What is the overall message of 2nd Timothy?
2. Where should Timothy remain rooted in?
3. For which reasons was he supposed to do that?
4. Which practical advice did Paul give Timothy?
5. Why was the generation change so difficult for the first Christians?
6. Who and what is Christ in 2nd Timothy?
7. What are the terms used for Christians in this Epistle?
8. What does Christianity owe to the apostle Paul?
9. Why did Paul entrust his ministry to Timothy?
10. How many and which people are mentioned by name in 2nd Timothy?
11. Which people was Timothy supposed to avoid and why?

Please send the answers to pastor@matutis.de or to **GBS PO box 650665, D-13306 Berlin**

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Next lesson – Epistle to Titus

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My prayers are with you.

Pastor Joh.W.Matutis

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