

Study of 2 Timothy

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Introductory to 2 Timothy

I. Background

We have no details of Paul's travels after his release from his first Roman imprisonment. Titus 3:12 indicates that he visited Nicopolis. He must have departed from there and gone to Troas, where, in a "quick exit," he had left his cloak, books, and parchments (2 Tim. 4:13) with his host, Carpus. How or where he was arrested again, we do not know. We do know that Nero had unleashed a terrible persecution against the Christians, and that Paul's second imprisonment was far different from his first (Acts 28). He was now a hated prisoner in a Roman prison, not an accused man in "his own hired house" awaiting trial. As we read this final letter from Paul's heart, we can sense his loneliness and heartache as he faced his trial and certain martyrdom. "Only Luke is with me," he writes, as he begs his son in the faith, Timothy, to come to him as quickly as possible.

If the Alexander mentioned in 2 Tim. 4:14 is the same as the man in Acts 19:33, then it is possible that Paul's arrest took place in or near Ephesus. When talking to the Ephesian elders, Paul mentioned "plottings of the Jews" (Acts 20:19), and it is possible that Alexander the coppersmith had something to do with these plots. Some students think that Alexander was associated with the guild of idol-makers and that he was unhappy at Paul's first escape from Ephesus.

Timothy was no longer the leader at Ephesus; Tychicus had been sent to take his place (4:12). Apparently Timothy was doing work as a traveling minister and evangelist in the area around Ephesus. Paul expected Timothy to come to Rome because he knew that Timothy would be in Troas (4:13) and Ephesus (1:16–18). These cities were on the road to Rome.

II. Purpose

The letter is intensely personal. Paul is alone at Rome, awaiting trial and certain death. He longs to see his son Timothy and to encourage him to take his place in the ministry of the Gospel. Paul sees apostasy and defeat all around him. Dr. Sidlow Baxter, in *Explore the Book*, points out that the "some" of 1 Timothy has become "all" in 2 Timothy. "Some have turned aside" (1:6); "some have made shipwreck" (1:19); "some have turned aside after Satan" (5:15); "some have been led astray" (6:10); "some have erred" (6:21)—this is the theme of his first letter. But in 2 Timothy we read: "all have turned away from me" (1:15); "all forsook me"! (4:16) The churches were turning from the faith, and Paul urged young Timothy to be true to his calling and fulfill his ministry. Woven into the exhortations in this letter are the personal sentiments and concerns of the great apostle. This letter is not a "swan song" of defeat; it is an anthem of victory!

If we follow the chapter divisions in our Bible, we see four appeals from Paul to Timothy to encourage him to be a faithful minister in spite of discouraging conditions. Chapter 1 is the pastoral appeal, in which Paul reminds Timothy of his calling to the ministry and of the responsibilities and privileges that go with it. Chapter 2 is the practical appeal, in which Paul seeks to solve some of the young minister's problems: his persecution for the sake of the Gospel, false teachers, and church difficulties. In chapter 3, Paul uses the prophetic appeal, explaining the course of events and the importance of holding fast to the Word. Finally, chapter 4 gives the personal appeal from the heart of the aged apostle, urging Timothy to remain true because he (Paul) would soon be executed. He did not want Timothy to become another Demas.

2 Timothy 1

As you read Paul's two letters to Timothy, you begin to understand the problems of this young minister. For one thing, he hesitated to face matters squarely and settle them according to the Word of God. There was "fear" (cowardice) in his life, perhaps the fear of man that "brings a snare" (Prov. 29:25). He faced the usual temptations of a young man and certainly did not feel adequate for the task. Paul shared with Timothy five wonderful encouragements to sustain him and help him stay with the task.

I. A Praying Friend (1:1–5)

Paul was facing martyrdom, yet he took time to pray for Timothy! If you will compare 1 Tim. 1:1 with 2 Tim. 1:1, you will see that Paul, facing death, was now thinking about the "promise of life in Christ Jesus"—and what a wonderful promise it is! He assures Timothy of his love and prayers and of his good remembrance of him night and day.

He reminds Timothy that there is much to be thankful for, in spite of the problems he was facing. He reminds him of his godly heritage and of the faith that God has given him, not only for salvation, but also for daily living and Christian service. We do not know if Timothy's loved ones were still living at this time; but if they were, they were certainly bearing him up in prayer. What a blessing it is to have praying friends! What an encouragement it is to pray for others and to help them along in their spiritual lives. See 1 Sam. 12:23.

II. A Wonderful Gift (1:6–7)

One of Timothy's problems was cowardice, a timidity about facing problems and doing God's work. His youthfulness probably contributed to this (1 Tim. 4:12). Paul reminds Timothy that he was neglecting the gift God had given him (1 Tim. 4:14) and that he needed to stir it up, as a man would fan into flame the embers of a dying fire. Paul was not suggesting that Timothy was losing his salvation, for this is impossible, but that he was losing his zeal for the Lord and enthusiasm in the Lord's work.

Paul is writing about the Holy Spirit in v. 7. The Spirit does not generate fear in us (see Rom. 8:15), but rather power, love, and discipline (sound mind, self-control). Every Christian needs all three! The Holy Spirit is the power of our lives (Acts 1:8; Eph. 3:20–21; Phil. 4:13). Paul uses this word “power” in all of his letters except the one to Philemon. The Spirit also gives us love, for the fruit of the Spirit is love (Gal. 5:22). Our love for Christ, for the Word, for other believers, and for the lost, must come from the Spirit (Rom. 5:5). The Spirit also gives us discipline and self-control; as a result we are not easily captured by our feelings or circumstances. When the Spirit is in control, we will experience peace and poise, and fear and cowardice will vanish. Note Acts 4:1–22, especially v. 13.

III. A Holy Calling (1:8–11)

The people at Ephesus knew that Timothy was Paul’s friend and co-laborer, but Paul was now a Roman prisoner! “Don’t be ashamed of me or of the Gospel!” Paul admonished. “Our suffering is all a part of our heavenly calling as ministers.” When Christians suffer, they suffer with Christ (Phil. 3:10). The same power that saves us also strengthens us for the battle. Paul emphasized that our calling is by grace; we do not deserve to be saved. If God permits us to suffer, after giving us such a wonderful salvation, what right have we to complain or quit! “God has a purpose in mind,” Paul advised. “Let Him work out that purpose.”

God’s wonderful purpose in the Gospel was hidden in ages past but now it has been revealed. “Abolished” in v. 10 means “made of no effect, disarmed.” God did not eliminate death through the cross, because people still die. But He did disarm death—take the sting out of it—for the believer. Christ has brought life and immortality (the condition of never dying) to light. These doctrines are “in the shadows” in the OT, but we must beware of building a doctrine of immortality, death, or resurrection from OT passages alone. Many false cults use Job, Ecclesiastes, and some of Psalms to defend such strange doctrines as soul-sleep.

IV. A Faithful Savior (1:12–14)

What an encouragement it is to know that Christ is faithful and able to keep His own! “I know whom I have believed!” was Paul’s confidence—not “I hope” or “I think.” There are two ways of reading v. 12, and perhaps Paul meant both of them. Paul is saying that he knows he can trust Christ to keep him and his soul; but he is also saying that he knows Christ will enable him to keep what He has committed to him. It is possible to translate it, “He is able to keep that which He has committed to me.” Christ had committed the Gospel to Paul (1 Tim. 1:11), and Paul was sure that He would enable him to guard it and keep it safe (1 Tim. 6:20; 2 Tim. 4:7). Review 1 Tim. 1:1–11.

“Form” in v. 13 means “outline.” The church had an outline of sound (healthy) doctrine, and to digress from that outline was to sin. Timothy was to hold fast to that basic outline of doctrine through the power of the Spirit (v. 14). Verses 12 and 14 are parallel: Christ in glory is able to keep what we give to Him, and the Spirit on earth helps us to keep what Christ gives to us!

V. A Godly Example (1:15–18)

All in Asia had forsaken Paul (see also 4:16). The two men he names may have been members of the Ephesian church, men whom Timothy would know personally. But there was one man who had remained true—Onesiphorus (“one who brings profit or benefit”). This godly man was probably a deacon at Ephesus, for v. 18 can be translated “and in how many things he fully played the deacon” since the word “minister” can also mean “deacon” in the Gk.

This man came to Rome, sought Paul, and served him without fear or shame. “He was not ashamed of my chain!” (v. 16) What an example for Timothy to follow and for all of us to observe! Here was a deacon in the church showing more zeal, love, and courage than his pastor!

Note that v. 17 says that Onesiphorus *was* in Rome. Apparently he was no longer there and perhaps was on his way back to Ephesus. It may be that he carried this letter to Timothy. At any rate, Paul greets this deacon’s household in v. 16. To teach as some have that Onesiphorus was no longer living and that Paul’s words in v. 18 constitute a prayer for the dead is to twist the Scriptures. We have no evidence that he was deceased, and certainly Paul never taught believers to pray for the dead.

2 Timothy 2

Paul has reminded Timothy of his pastoral calling. Now Paul deals practically with the local church and the pastor’s special responsibilities. He presents several pictures of the local church, showing the various ministries God has for His people and their pastor. The local church is:

I. God’s Family (2:1)

“My son” suggests, of course, that Timothy had been born into God’s family by faith in Christ. As Paul wrote in 1 Cor. 4:15, he had “begotten” him through the Gospel. In Eph. 2:19, Paul calls the local church the “household of God.” The local church is not a sanctified country club; it is the family of God meeting together for fellowship, worship, and service. The only way to enter this family is by being born of the Spirit (John 3:1–6) and the Word (1 Peter 1:23).

II. God’s Treasury (2:2)

“Commit” means “deposit” and refers to the treasure of Gospel truth that Paul had committed to Timothy (1 Tim. 6:20) and which God had first committed to Paul (1 Tim. 1:11). This is why Paul calls the local church “the pillar and ground of the truth” in 1 Tim. 3:15. God has deposited with His people the truth of the Word of God. It is our responsibility to guard this treasure and pass it on to others. The task of the local church is not to preserve the truth, as in a museum; but to live it and to teach it to the

generations to come. Note that Timothy is to deposit the truth with “faithful men” and not just any believer. How important it is to be faithful to the Word!

III. God’s Army (2:3–4)

Timothy’s call to service is found in Acts 16:3—“him would Paul have to go forth with him.” The words “go forth” literally mean “to take to the field as a soldier.” This was Timothy’s enlistment. Every Christian is already a soldier in God’s army; it is just that some troops are loyal and some are not. We have been “enrolled” (chosen, v. 4) by Christ, the Captain of our salvation, and we must take our orders from Him.

Christians must learn how to endure hardship for Christ. Timothy was discouraged because of the persecution he was facing, but he should have expected opposition. The Christian life is not a playground; it is a battleground. We do not have the strength ourselves, but by His grace we can endure and stand against the wiles of the devil (Eph. 6:10ff). Furthermore, Christian soldiers must not entangle themselves with the world; their first loyalty is to Christ. Where would an army be if every soldier had part-time work that took him away from his military duties! Our main task is to please Him—not others, not ourselves.

IV. God’s Team (2:5)

There are in Paul’s letters more than two dozen references to athletics—boxing, wrestling, running, to name a few. The Greeks and Romans were enthusiastic athletes (and spectators), and in this verse, Paul used the Olympic Games as an illustration of the practical life of the believer. No matter how skilled the athletes were, they had to obey the rules of the game. If they won the race but broke the rules, they were disqualified. “Strive for masteries” means “contend in the games.” The local church is God’s team of runners, racing toward the goal He has set for them (see Phil. 3:12–14). It takes discipline, dedication, and direction for an athlete to be a winner, and it takes these same qualities to produce a winning Christian life. There must be teamwork in the local church. “Labored with me” in Phil. 4:3 literally means “were teammates with me.”

V. God’s Garden (2:6–7)

“Husbandman” means “farmer,” and the picture here is an agricultural one (see 1 Cor. 3:6–9). The church is a garden, and the seed is the Word of God. Various servants plant, water, and harvest the seed in due season. Timothy was not to be discouraged if the harvest failed to come immediately. It takes time, patience, and hard work to develop a fruitful garden. Like the faithful farmer, the pastor should share in the blessings God sends. “In due season we shall reap, if we faint not” (Gal. 6:9).

VI. Christ’s Body on Earth (2:8–13)

Paul reminds Timothy that he too was suffering, but that their suffering had a dual blessing in it: they were suffering for and with Christ, and their suffering was for the benefit of the church. Verses 11–13 may have been an early Christian hymn or

confession of faith. It emphasizes the believer's oneness with Christ: when He died, we died with Him as members of His body; we arose with Him; we shall reign with Him. Our unbelief will not cancel the faithfulness of God! "Are you not afraid you will slip through His fingers?" an unbeliever asked an old saint. "How can I?" she replied. "I am one of His fingers!"

VII. God's School (2:14–18)

Timothy was being attacked by false teachers, just as the church is attacked today. What are we to do? First, remind the people to stick to essentials and not to argue about empty words and philosophies. Second, be sure to rightly divide the Word, being diligent ("in study") to handle it carefully. "Rightly divide" implies "cutting through" the Word carefully, the way an engineer builds a highway, so that people understand God's program for the ages. Paul warns that false doctrine "eats like a cancer, or ulcer" (v. 17), and that the only remedy is the "healthy doctrine" (sound doctrine) of the Word of God. When you start listening to the old wives' fables or the false teachers, you may become spiritually sick. One lie can grow like a cancerous tumor and eat out the spiritual strength of the Christian or the local church. Every church should be a Bible school, where the Word of God is taught accurately.

VIII. God's House (2:19–26)

Paul describes the local church as a house with a solid foundation and containing vessels of different kinds. The OT Jews often put Bible verses on their houses (see Deut. 11:20), and it was not uncommon for Gentiles to write mottoes on their houses too. God's house has two affirmations on it, one that is God-ward and one that is man-ward (v. 19). God knows His own, and His own ought to be known to others by their godly lives. Each Christian is a vessel in the great house, but some vessels are defiled and cannot be used. Timothy is warned to purge (cleanse) himself from the dishonorable vessels, lest they defile him. This is the biblical doctrine of separation (2 Cor. 6:14–7:1). Believers should be set-apart vessels unto honor, suitable ("meet") for Christ's use. Fleeing youthful lusts, and following that which is spiritual, would help Timothy be a prepared vessel that Christ could use for His glory.

Verses 23–26 explain how to deal with problems in God's house ("household") so that there might not be strife and contention.

2 Timothy 3

Paul now looks down through the years and with the eyes of the prophet tells us what to expect. This chapter is his prophetic appeal to Timothy, his charge in the light of the future of the church.

I. An Explanation of the Future (3:1–9)

“The last days” is a period of time that actually began with the life and ministry of Christ on earth (Heb. 1:1–2). However, the NT indicates that “the last days” refers particularly to the state of the church before the coming of Christ. These shall be “perilous” times, that is, “difficult, hard to deal with.” This is the same word used in Matt. 8:28 to describe the Gadarene demoniac. Because people will believe the “doctrines of demons” (1 Tim. 4:1ff), this world will become a “demonic graveyard” just as in Gadara. We are in those days now!

Self-love will be the hallmark of the last days. This self-love will lead to a grasping attitude and a boastful spirit. “Boasters” really means “swaggerers.” True affection will almost disappear; unnatural affection will prevail. “Incontinent” means “intemperate”; “fierce” means “savage,” and savage conduct is certainly evident today. “Heady” means “reckless”; and we surely live in a reckless age, whether you look at the speed of travel, the waste of money, or the carelessness of human lives.

Verses 5–8 indicate that there will be plenty of religion in the last days, but it will be a mere imitation, a form of godliness without the life-changing power of God. The departing from the faith that Paul predicted in 2 Thes. 2 is upon us today, yet there is still plenty of religion! The Bible continues to be a national best-seller, yet the crime rate increases and problems multiply. True Christians are in the minority. These false teachers of Paul’s day preyed especially upon women who were loaded with sins and led astray by their lusts, women who were “ever learning” but who never really came to an understanding of the truth.

Paul compared the apostate teachers to the Egyptian magicians Jannes and Jambres, who opposed Moses by imitating what he did (Ex. 7:11ff). Satan is an imitator, and his imitation gospel and church will spread in the last days. But just as Moses overcame these imitators by the power of God coming in great judgment, so Christ will ultimately overcome these latter-day deceivers. “From such turn away!” warns Paul (v. 5). Timothy was not to get involved with Christ-denying deceivers, even if it meant being branded as a “crank.”

II. An Example from the Past (3:10–13)

If Jannes and Jambres were ministers of Satan’s work, then Paul is our best example of a worker for the Lord. He hid nothing. See Acts 20:17ff. Paul names the cities in the area near Timothy’s home, because Timothy would be familiar with them. Timothy knew Paul’s doctrine (teaching); his manner of life (conduct); the purpose that motivated his life (see Acts 20:24; 2 Tim. 4:7); the faith that sustained him in trial; the long-suffering, love, and endurance that he showed, even when persecuted; and the wonderful way God took care of him through it all. Paul had been a divine object lesson to young Timothy, and we ought to be examples to others.

Persecution is not something that Christians should deliberately encourage, but if they live godly lives, persecution will come automatically (see 1 Peter 4:12–19). “Yes, and all who desire to live godly” (NKJV) is the best translation of v. 12. When our will is dedicated to God, then Satan will attack us. You can be sure that during these last days,

it will be more and more difficult to live for Christ. As never before, we need Christians who will, like Paul, live for Christ completely.

III. An Exhortation for the Present (3:14–17)

Since these satanic seducers are going to continue, what should the Christian do? Continue to be faithful to the Word of God. The only answer to Satan's lies is God's truth. If every local church would get back to the Word of God, and if every pastor and Sunday School teacher would teach the Word of God, Satan's disciples would be defeated.

Timothy's relationship to the Bible is outlined in these verses. It began when he was a child and learned the OT Scriptures from his mother and grandmother. They did not merely teach him the facts of the Bible; they gave him assurance and spiritual understanding. Timothy knew for himself the truth of the Word; he did not depend on others to defend the Word for him. This Word imparted faith to him (Rom. 10:17), and this faith in Christ brought salvation.

Verses 16–17 are a great testimony to the divine origin and character of the Bible. Some say, "The Bible only contains the word of God," or "The Bible is inspired the way Shakespeare is inspired." But Paul would not agree with these statements. The Bible is the inspired Word of God. The word "inspired" means "God-breathed—filled with the breath of God." The Spirit of God enabled men of God to write the Word of God (see 2 Peter 1:20–21), for the Spirit of God is the "breath" of God (John 3:1–8; Ezek. 37:1–14). While men like Shakespeare may have had literary inspiration of a high quality, they did not write the very words of God. "All Scripture" means that every word of God is inspired.

What is the purpose of the Bible? Of course, salvation is the first purpose (v. 15), but Christian living is also included. The Word is profitable for teaching (doctrine), conviction (reproof), setting right (correction), and discipline (instruction). It enables the child of God to become a man or woman of God, matured in the things of the Lord. "Perfect" (v. 17) does not mean sinless; it means "mature." And "thoroughly furnished" means "fully equipped" (vv. 16–17). So, the Bible transforms the child of v. 15 into a mature person in Christ; it equips the saints to be servants. It is fine for Christians to take study courses and learn methods of ministry, but the best way for them to equip themselves to serve God is to study and practice the Word of God. Study books tell us how, but the Bible gives us the motivation and power to live what we learn.

It is interesting to compare the uses of the Bible with the order of the epistles: doctrine—Romans; reproof—1 and 2 Corinthians; correction—Galatians; instruction in righteousness—Ephesians and Colossians.

The great need among churches and Christians today is to return to the Bible. If the churches do not get back to God's Word, the satanic deceivers will take over and millions of lost sinners will go to hell because they were led astray by religious lies.

2 Timothy 4

This chapter records the final message from the inspired pen of Paul. Shortly after dictating these words, Paul was martyred for the cause of Christ. It is no surprise, then, that we find in this chapter an intense personal appeal for Timothy's faithfulness to the Lord and to his beloved Paul. There are four "charges" or admonitions in this chapter that should be heeded by all believers.

I. Preach the Word! (4:1–4)

Paul closed the previous chapter by exhorting Timothy to continue in the Word in his own personal life; now he exhorts him to share that Word with others. We must first receive before we can transmit. So important was the preaching of the Word to Paul and to the ministry of the church that he gave Timothy a charge—a "military command"—to keep on preaching the Word. And Paul called upon Christ to witness his charge to Timothy, reminding Timothy that Christ would one day return and test his ministry.

"Preach the Word" (v. 2) implies knowing the Word, rightly dividing it and making it understandable and applicable to the lives of the people. The great Bible expositor G. Campbell Morgan once said, "Our first business is to impart knowledge, and then our purpose must be to lead those whom we teach to obedience." He also said, "Preaching is not the proclamation of a theory, or the discussion of a doubt ... Preaching is the proclamation of the Word, the truth as the truth has been revealed."

"Be instant" means "be ready, be urgent"; and this should be the minister's attitude whether service is convenient or inconvenient. Compare v. 2 with 3:16–17 and you will see that the preacher's duties parallel the purposes for which the Word was given. The minister of the Word does not reprove, rebuke (warn), and exhort with his own words, but with the inspired Word of God.

Why must we Christians proclaim the Word of God? "Because the time will come" (v. 3) when people will not want the Word of God—and that time is upon us! Many church attenders do not want "healthy" (sound) doctrine; instead, they want religious entertainment from Christian performers who will tickle their ears. We have a love for novelty in the churches today. Too often the person who simply opens the Bible and teaches it is ignored, while the shallow religious entertainer becomes a celebrity. Verse 4 indicates that "itching ears" soon become "deaf ears" as people turn away from the truth and believe man-made fables.

II. Fulfill Your Ministry! (4:5–8)

Paul was about to finish his course, but Timothy's life and ministry still lay before him. "Make full proof" means "fulfill, accomplish the purpose." How wonderful it is that God has a specific ministry for each of His children (Eph. 2:10). Our task is to find His will and do it as long as we live. This involves watching, enduring, and working.

Paul's argument is clear: he is now about to leave the scene, and somebody must take his place. Young people in our churches need to be reminded that they are the

future in the church. Paul declares, “I am ready to be poured out like a drink-offering, and the time is at hand for loosing the anchor and setting sail, for taking down the tent and moving on” (literal translation). Paul has no regrets as he faces eternity: he had been a good soldier, a faithful runner, a faithful steward of the treasure of the Gospel. He looked forward to receiving his reward from the Lord. What was it that kept Paul going during more than thirty years of toil and suffering? He loved Christ’s appearing! “The love of Christ constrains us!” (2 Cor. 5:14, NKJV) And all the saints who love His appearing will also be faithful, as Paul was, to serve Him now, and will, with Paul, receive their reward.

Next to losing one’s soul and going to hell, the greatest tragedy of life would be to come to the brink of eternity and discover we had missed God’s will and wasted our lives on fruitless, transient things.

III. Come Quickly to Rome! (4:9–18)

Why was Timothy to hurry? Demas had forsaken Paul (Col. 4:14; Phile. 24); Crescens and Titus were away ministering; Tychicus had been sent to Ephesus; and only Dr. Luke was with him. As he waited patiently for the Lord to call him home, Paul yearned for the Christian companionship of his son in the faith. In v. 21 Paul urged him to “come before winter” because the shipping season would soon end; it was likely that Paul would be dead if Timothy waited too long.

We first met Dr. Luke in Acts 16:10. It was at this point that Luke joined Paul’s party. He was a Gentile and was the author of the Gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts. Luke is mentioned with Demas in Col. 4:14 and Phile. 24, and the contrast is clear: Demas was unfaithful while Luke was faithful to Christ and Paul.

John Mark had been rejected by Paul in Acts 15:37ff but now was accepted. Mark had proved himself in his ministry with Barnabas. Paul was willing to forgive and forget, the mark of a great man. The word “profitable” in 4:11 is the same as “meet” in 2:21. Mark proved himself “suitable” for the Master’s use.

Paul asked for the cloak he had left at Troas; winter was coming, and he would need it in his Roman prison. The “books” were probably some of his own writings; the “parchments” would be his copies of the OT Scriptures. While awaiting trial, Paul would spend his time studying the Word. What an example to follow!

He warned Timothy about Alexander (1 Tim. 1:20; Acts 19:33), who withstood his words (see 3:8). At Paul’s first defense (answer), no believer stood with him; but the Lord was still with him, and that is all that mattered! This had always been his encouragement in difficult times (Acts 18:7–11; 23:11; 27:19–25).

IV. Greet My Friends! (4:19–22)

Though facing certain death, Paul still thought about others. How like Christ when He was hanging on the cross. Paul fulfilled the pastoral requirement given in Titus 1:8—he was “a lover of good men.” We have met Priscilla (Prisca) and Aquila before (see Acts 18:2, 18, etc.). For Erastus, see Acts 19:22; Trophimus is mentioned in Acts 20:4 and 21:29. The fact that Paul did not heal Trophimus indicates that not all saints are to be healed and that the absence of healing does not necessarily prove a lack of spirituality.

“Grace be with you!” says Paul, and closes his part of the NT writings. “Grace” was the key word in his ministry. May it be the key word in our lives as well.