

PREVIEWING OUR STUDY OF 2 TIMOTHY

MATT PROCTOR

Chapter One: When You Feel Like Giving In (2 Timothy 1:1-2)

The race called the Christian life can be tough. Even when you start well, you can find yourself faltering before the race is over. You begin to doubt your ability to finish. Timothy was ministering to the church Paul started in Ephesus, but it was a tough assignment. Timothy was overwhelmed and felt like quitting. Like a coach, Paul gives a pep talk to Timothy that can encourage all of us to finish “the course marked out for us.”

Chapter Two: Remember Your Heritage (2 Timothy 1:3-5)

“Like father, like son.” Our family heritage influences each of us, and Timothy’s primary influences while growing up were his godly mother and grandmother. Paul encourages Timothy to remember that upbringing and show the same continuing faithfulness. While you may not have a Christian family heritage, you can take encouragement from those in Scripture, from examples throughout church history, and from your own congregational and personal mentors.

Chapter Three: Rely on the Spirit (2 Timothy 1:6-7)

Wouldn’t you like to have superhuman powers? Maybe flying and seeing through walls belong to the realm of fiction, but that doesn’t mean you can’t do more than you ever thought you could. Paul reminds Timothy, and thus reminds us, that we have access to the Holy Spirit’s supernatural power to strengthen us for the race.

Chapter Four: Meditate on the Gospel (2 Timothy 1:8-12)

The longer we are in the faith, the easier it can be to forget how amazing the Good News is! Paul reminds Timothy of the facts of the gospel—

the grace for our past, the hope for our future, and the power for our present. Meditating on God's great gift will inspire you to continue following God's great call.

Chapter Five: Guard the Truth (2 Timothy 1:13–2:2)

Guarding the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier is one of the highest honors a soldier can be given. According to Paul, Timothy's task of guarding the truth of the gospel was the highest of all duties. While Paul knew some who had betrayed the truth, he commends Onesiphorus for his sacrificial devotion and encourages Timothy to seek out others who would be able to pass the truth to still others, guarding it for generations to come.

Chapter Six: Expect Tough Times (2 Timothy 2:3-13)

Soldiers, athletes, and farmers have one thing in common. They know that what they are doing is not easy, but they also know it is worth it. Timothy can carry on through the tough times because God is with him and makes it all worthwhile.

Chapter Seven: Maintain Your Character (2 Timothy 2:14-26)

Previously Paul used three metaphors for dealing with difficult times. Now he uses three metaphors for dealing with difficult people while still maintaining a Christlike character. Like a trustworthy workman, Timothy must maintain his integrity. Like a noble instrument, Timothy must maintain his purity. Like a bondservant, Timothy must maintain his humility.

Chapter Eight: Choose Wise Examples (2 Timothy 3:1-13)

Wherever God's truth is being proclaimed, Satan also has his false teachers. As Paul admonishes Timothy, we are to look to the right teachers and be on guard against those who would lead us astray. Avoid imitation Christianity, and look instead for Christianity worth imitating.

Chapter Nine: Nourish Yourself on Scripture (2 Timothy 3:14-17)

The old saying that "you are what you eat" is true in a physical sense, but even more true in a mental and spiritual sense. Timothy had been fed as a child on the Holy Scriptures, and it was important for him to continue in them. If we nourish ourselves on the Word of Christ, we will begin to develop the character of Christ.

Chapter Ten: Speak God's Message (2 Timothy 4:1-8)

Paul's final words to Timothy are compelling and clear: Preach the Word, at all times and under all circumstances. Timothy must not fail

in this evangelistic task, because Paul is leaving and Christ is coming. The world is lost, the final judgment is soon, and Paul will no longer be around to preach. Timothy—and every Christian—is charged to be a messenger of the gospel.

Chapter Eleven: Cultivate Real Community (2 Timothy 4:9-15,19-22)

Even though Paul’s personal remarks at the end of his letter may seem irrelevant today, we can learn from them this lesson: the Christian life is never lived alone. Paul always sought out a “band of brothers” with whom he could share life. Timothy too must stay connected to fellow believers, for only in the church will he find a warm welcome, a second chance and a helping hand when things get tough.

Conclusion: Stay Close to Jesus (2 Timothy 4:16-18)

In the last recorded moments of Paul’s life, he gives a powerful testimony to Jesus’ faithful presence. Even in his darkest hour, Christ is with him. If we want to finish well like Paul, we must stay close to Jesus. Then we too can go out with a testimony on our lips and a song in our hearts. That’s finish-line faith!

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Previewing Our Study of 2 Timothy



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