

INTRODUCTION

DATE AND PLACE OF ORIGIN

In 2 Timothy Paul finds himself in a Roman prison. Onesiphorus had searched for Paul and found him in Rome (1:16–17). Paul instructed Timothy to get Mark and bring him as he came (4:11). This indicates a time in Rome other than the imprisonment related at the end of Acts since both Timothy and Mark were with Paul when he wrote Colossians (Col 1:1; 4:10; Phlm 24). Paul had recently been in Asia Minor and left his cloak at Troas (4:13), stayed with Erastus at Corinth, and left Trophimus sick at Miletus (4:20).

Though Paul was imprisoned in Caesarea for two years before being sent on to Rome (Acts 24:27), it is unlikely that he was writing from Caesarea since Trophimus and Timothy were both with him in Jerusalem when he was arrested. It seems more likely that Paul was released from the imprisonment at the end of Acts, was involved in missionary activities, and then was subsequently arrested once again (probably in Troas).¹ 2 Timothy would then have been written during that second Roman imprisonment. Paul describes his situation in terms that indicate that he is in prison facing the prospects of a speedy execution.

The date of 2 Timothy depends largely upon one's view of the authorship of the book, the place of origin of the book, and Eusebius' date of the martyrdom of Paul. Those who deny Pauline authorship of the book class it with the other Pastoral Epistles and date it in the second century. Since

¹See the discussion of 4:13.

Eusebius dates the martyrdom of Paul in A.D. 67, those who hold to Pauline authorship normally date the book in 66 or 67.

DESTINATION AND AUDIENCE

It appears from several references in 2 Timothy (2 Tim 1:18; 2:17; 4:9, 12, 14, 19; cf. 1 Tim 1:20; Acts 18:18-19, 24-26; 19:33-34) that Timothy is in Ephesus as Paul writes this book as he was when Paul wrote 1 Timothy (1 Tim 1:3). Again, as in 1 Timothy, while the book bears many personal notes intended for Timothy, Paul desires for this book to be read by the whole church.

THE CONTRIBUTION OF 2 TIMOTHY

The central message of 2 Timothy is Paul's desire for Timothy to suffer with him and endure hardship for the gospel. Timothy is to stand assured that God will provide him with strength (1:6-14; 2:1-13; 3:12; 4:5). Timothy is also urged to hold on to the apostolic message (1:13-14), to pass it on to others who can in turn share it with others (2:2), and to be careful to deal with it and the message of the Old Testament correctly (2:15; 3:10-17). Put simply, Timothy must fulfill his ministry (4:1-5); Paul is passing on the mantle to his young co-worker.

OUTLINE

- I. SALUTATION — 1:1-2**
- II. THANKSGIVING — 1:3-5**
- III. PAUL'S APPEAL FOR ENDURANCE
IN FACING SUFFERING — 1:6-2:13**
 - A. An Appeal for Loyalty in Facing Hardship — 1:6-14**
 - B. Examples of the Disloyal and the Loyal — 1:15-18**
 - C. Illustrations for Effective Ministry when
Facing Hardship — 2:1-7**
 - D. The Basis of Effective Ministry when
Facing Hardship — 2:8-13**
- IV. FALSE TEACHERS AND
SOUND DOCTRINES — 2:14-4:8**
 - A. Dealing with False Teachers — 2:14-19**
 - B. Preparing for Noble Work — 2:20-26**
 - C. The Character of the Last Days — 3:1-9**
 - D. Further Exhortations for Timothy to Endure — 3:10-17**
 - E. A Final Charge to Timothy — 4:1-8**
- V. PERSONAL INSTRUCTIONS — 4:9-18**
- VI. FINAL SALUTATIONS — 4:19-22**