



Letters to a Pastor
The Church at Ephesus
2 Timothy
WestWay Christian Church

“This letter is from Paul, chosen by the will of God to be an apostle of Christ Jesus. I have been sent to tell others about the life he has promised through faith in Christ Jesus”-

2 Timothy 1:1.

Series Study Guide

This Series on the The Church at Ephesus is in three parts. Part 1 (The Wife of Christ) was in Fall 2019 and covered Acts 18:19-20:38, Revelation 2:1-7, and Paul's letter to the Ephesians. Part 2 (Letters to a Pastor) is our Winter/Spring 2020 series, and will cover Paul's two letters to Timothy. Part 3 will be our Summer 2020 series, and will cover 1, 2, and 3 John.

This Study Guide will discuss the larger themes found in 2 Timothy from a general perspective and is designed to be done with others. Paul wrote two letters to Timothy so that Timothy would be equipped to lead the church in Ephesus. This guide is designed to help you dig deeper into the scripture for a given week. It's meant to be a starting point for discussion and conversation about God's heart for his people, first as the church, then as individuals.

Additionally, each week you'll find sermon-specific thoughts and questions available online at westwaychurch.com/live/ and at [YouTube.com/WestWayChristianChurch](https://www.youtube.com/WestWayChristianChurch).

Background on Ephesus: Ephesus was a port city and major urban center of trade between Asia Minor and Italy. Ephesus was home to a 25,000 seat amphitheater and the Temple of Artemis, one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. In this Temple, Artemis was served by a eunuch priest and assisted by virgin women.

Ephesus was ruled by a council made up of 100 aristocrats who governed the city as a favor to the Romans. They owned much of the land and major industries and were very wealthy. Most of the people lived out their roles, whether free or slave. Occasionally riots or strikes took place and the Romans were always close enough to end them quickly.

There were many temples dedicated to the gods and goddesses of Greece, Rome, Egypt and beyond. The religion of the people was often mixed together, accepting what they liked from some, while rejecting what they did not from others. Temple worship and participation was not daily, and the people lived for the many festivals, processions, games the different religions used to get attention to their particular belief system.

Background on Timothy's role in Ephesus: According to 1 Timothy 1:3, Paul left Timothy in Ephesus while he went on to Macedonia (there is uncertainty of the date of this). When he realized he might not return, Paul wrote 1 Timothy to explain more fully Timothy's role as pastor. It was written 12-14 years after the events of Acts 18, 19&20 (when the church was founded) and 3-5 years after Paul's letter to the church, what we call Ephesians. 2 Timothy was written a few years after that. Each of these letters were written by Paul while he was imprisoned.

- 49-52 AD- Paul meets Timothy in Lystra- Acts 16:1-5
- 53-57 AD- Paul in Ephesus- Acts 18-20
- 60 AD- Paul writes letter to the Church at Ephesus- Ephesians.
- 63-65 AD- Paul writes first letter to Timothy.
- 66-67 AD- Paul writes second letter to Timothy- this was Paul's final letter. Tradition says that he was beheaded in Rome.

Letters to a Pastor

Here are a few things to keep in mind as you read, study, and discuss:

- The Bible was not written in English, we are reading a translation from the original Greek. Some of the words chosen by the translators may not necessarily express everything the original authors meant to express.
- If you've ever wondered, "Why is the Bible hard to understand?"...remember that Paul had no idea that this letter, or any of his letters for that matter, would be read by us. It was written almost 2000 years ago.
- Unlike Paul's letter to the Ephesians, 1&2 Timothy were written to an individual at a certain time and place. The immediate context is Timothy as pastor to the church at Ephesus. As such, not everything is meant for the church universal.

As you read through the texts, the following five questions can help you apply God's Word to your life. When you study a passage ask yourself:

1. How can this passage increase my knowledge of God?
2. Is there a sin for me to avoid?
3. Is there a promise for me to trust?
4. Is there an example for me to follow?
5. Is there a command for me to obey?

There are a number of resources that have been used in prep for this guide and series. Here are just a few:

Brauch, Manfred T. (1989). *Hard Sayings of Paul*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

Crabtree, J. (2009). *The Complete New Testament Resource for Youth Workers (Vol. 1)*. El Cajon, CA: Youth Specialties.

Guthrie, D. (2009). *The Pastoral Epistles: an Introduction and Commentary*. Nottingham: Inter-Varsity Press.

Hawthorne, G. F., Martin, R. P., & Reid, D. G. (2015). *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters A Compendium of Contemporary Biblical Scholarship*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

Jesus-Centered Bible. (2015). Carol Stream, IL: Lifetree.

Wiersbe, W.W. (1981). *Be Faithful: It's Always Too Soon to Quit: NT Commentary, 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon*. Colorado Springs, CO: David C Cook.

Wiersbe, W. W. (2010). *1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon: It's Always Too Soon to Quit!* Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook.

Letters to a Pastor

This study guide will follow our Spring 2020 message series on the Church at Ephesus, Paul's second letter to Timothy.

Each week, usually by Sunday afternoon, you'll find the message online at westwaychurch.com/media.

April 19 2020- 2 Timothy 1-4

April 26 2020- 2 Timothy 1

May 3 2020- 2 Timothy 2

May 10 2020- 2 Timothy 3

May 17 2020- 2 Timothy 4

April 19 2020- 2 Timothy 1-4

Primary Verses: "This letter is from Paul, chosen by the will of God to be an apostle of Christ Jesus. I have been sent to tell others about the life he has promised through faith in Christ Jesus"- 2 Timothy 1:1.

Conversation Starter: Watch and discuss the 2 Timothy video from The Bible Project. You'll find it here: bibleproject.com/explore/2-timothy/. If you had the opportunity to write a letter at the end of your life to someone, what would you say?

Read 2 Timothy.

Grab a pen and some paper and take notes. Here are a few options that might help:

- As you read, write what you think is the most important verse from each chapter, and why you picked the one you did.

- As you read, summarize each chapter in just 3-5 sentences.

- As you read, do the following for each chapter:
 - Make a list of sins to avoid.
 - Make a list of promises to claim.
 - Are there any examples to follow? Write them down.
 - Are there any commands to obey? Write them down.
 - What does this chapter tell you about God that you can apply to your daily life?

After reading and studying 2 Timothy, what are you personally excited to learn about during this study? How do you think our church body at WestWay will learn and grow through this study?

As a group, ask God to speak to you through this series, that you'd desire to be more like Jesus as a result of it.

April 26 2020- 2 Timothy 1

Primary Verse: “This is why I remind you to fan into flames the spiritual gift God gave you when I laid my hands on you”- 2 Timothy 1:6

Conversation Starter: Talk about the ways others have helped you grow in your faith. How have you learned and grown since then?

Read 2 Timothy 1. Take a moment and write down any questions you might have or things you don't understand.

After reading, spend some time discussing the following:

Why does Paul “remind” Timothy to fan into flames what God had given him?

What is the difference between “a spirit of fear and timidity” and a spirit “of power, love and self-discipline”? What is Timothy being called to with the latter of those spirits? How does this latter spirit help Timothy not be ashamed to tell others about Jesus?

Why is Paul in prison?

What is the key to Timothy's success as a minister?

How are you “fanning into flames” what God has given you? What role do others play? What role does the church have in this?

How is the “spirit of power, love, and self-discipline” given you by God making a difference in your life and in the way you talk about him?

When are you ashamed to tell others about Jesus?

Can others “hold on” (1:13) and “carefully guard” (v14) what God has given to you?

How can you ensure you are an owner, and not a renter, of your faith?

Spend time in prayer for the body at WestWay. Pray that we seek to take responsibility for what God has entrusted us with. Pray that we would accept the consequences of our faith in Christ.

May 3 2020- 2 Timothy 2

Primary Verse: “Always remember that Jesus Christ, a descendent of King David, was raised from the dead. This is the Good News I preach” 2 Timothy 2:8.

Conversation Starter: Talk about some hard things you’ve gone through in your life. Have you passed along what you learned to others? What has that looked like?

Read 2 Timothy 2. Take a moment and write down any questions you might have or things you don’t understand.

After reading, spend some time discussing the following:

Why does Paul tell Timothy to pass along the truths he learned from Paul to others?

Paul tells Timothy to “endure suffering” then uses the example of soldier, athlete, and farmer. Talk about the ways each of those three people suffer and what that might mean for you.

Why do you think Paul tells Timothy here to “remember Jesus Christ”?

In verses 15-26, Paul gives a number of instructions- write as many as you can. How is Timothy’s obedience to these connected to suffering?

In what ways have you suffered the consequences of your faith?

What specifically are you doing to be strong in God’s grace (as opposed to your own power)? How are these things different?

Re-read 2 Timothy 20-21. What kind of utensil are you? Are you simply living life or are you being used as God designed you?

Spend time in prayer for the body at WestWay. Pray that we would be a church that is willing to suffer the consequences of what we claim to believe. Pray that we would remember Jesus above all things and that this remembrance would lead us to work hard, run from sin, and run to righteousness.

May 10 2020- 2 Timothy 3

Primary Verse: “You should know this, Timothy, that in the last days there will be very difficult times”- 2 Timothy 3.

Conversation Starter: Talk about a time when you know there were difficult moments ahead. How do you prepare for them? Did knowing help? Why? How?

Read 2 Timothy 3. Take a moment and write down any questions you might have or things you don't understand.

After reading, spend some time discussing the following:

Much of 2 Timothy 3 is about Paul telling Timothy who to listen to. How do you discern which voices to allow into your own life? How would you tell a younger Christian how to know which voices to listen to?

Notice the transition in 3:10. How is Paul differentiating himself from the false teachers? Why should Timothy listen to Paul?

Read 3:16 carefully; it describes the *potential* of influence in our lives.

- In order to teach us what is true, we must be willing to accept that we have difficulty knowing the difference between what is true and what is false. Are you?
- In order to make us realize what's wrong in our lives, we must be correctable. Are you?
- In order to correct us when we are wrong, we must be rebukable. Are you?
- In order to teach us to do what is right, we must be trainable. Are you?
- In order to prepare us and equip us to do every good work, we must be preparable, equipable, and willing to do whatever God asks of us. Are you?

Spend time in prayer for the body at WestWay. Ask God what we would be filled with the desire to listen to the voices that matter. Ask God to grant us the desire to submit ourselves to the wisdom found in the Bible.

May 17 2020- 2 Timothy 4

Primary Verse: “Preach the word of God. Be prepared, whether the time is favorable or not. Patiently correct, rebuke, and encourage your people with good teaching” - 2 Timothy 4:2.

Conversation Starter: Let’s go back to the first lesson in this study; If you had the opportunity to write a letter at the end of your life to someone, what would you say? If you could *receive* a letter from someone at the end of their life, who would it be and why?

Read 2 Timothy 4. Take a moment and write down any questions you might have or things you don’t understand.

After reading, spend some time discussing the following:

In 4:1&2, Paul writes, “I solemnly urge you in the presence of God and Christ Jesus who will someday judge the living and the sea when he comes to set up his kingdom: Preach the word...” Obviously, Paul has a high value on scripture and the word of God. Why?

Paul then describes a time coming in which people will seek their own will and desires. What instruction does Paul give in 4:3 to Timothy and why? How does this connect with everything else we’ve read and talked about throughout this entire series?

How would you describe Paul’s mindset at this point in his life? What emotions do you see and experience in his words?

How might you live out these instructions? What does it look like for YOU to preach? Are you prepared? Which of these phrases: “patiently correct,” “rebuke,” and “encourage” are you most comfortable with? Which are you the least uncomfortable with?

Spend time in prayer for the body at WestWay. Ask God to convict us of the times when we’ve been hesitant to be faithful to proclaiming God’s word to others. Ask Him to give us the desire to meet real needs in the lives of people.