

## 2 TIMOTHY

(See note #1 in 1 Timothy for Jerome Murphy-O'Connor's thoughts on who wrote this letter. All comments here are derived from James Dunn in NIB unless otherwise stated.)

- 1) 1:3 -- This phrase emphasizes Paul's conviction that the religion of his parents had sought to serve God in good faith, and his ministry was in direct continuity with it.
- 2) 1:5 -- Tradition has it that both Lois and Eunice were Christians in Lystra before Paul visited there. But Dunn does not believe that they *were* Christians because there hadn't been time for three generations of Christians. He believes they were pious Jews. (JBD: But couldn't they have become Christians at the same time as Timothy or only a few years earlier than Timothy? )
- 3) 1:8 --Probably his last imprisonment in Rome, and therefore this is his very last epistle, in 67 AD.
- 4) 1:9-10 -- A succinct summary of the gospel as seen and preached by Paul. The concept of "works" has broadened from "works of the Law" to any works by which we attempt to secure our own righteousness. Salvation was clearly given us through Christ from "the beginning of time," that is, eternally planned.
- 5) 1:14 -- The "spirit" does not appear much in the Pastorals. But the adaptation of the role of the indwelling Spirit to that of enabling Timothy to guard the "good treasure" (in NRSV, "rich trust") is distinctive to the Pastorals, indicative of a community trying to live out of the spiritual resources of the past.
- 6) 1:15 -- Certainly hyperbole, but the sense of betrayal is very strong. Nothing is known about Hermogenes or Phygelus, but they do appear in the apocryphal "novel," Acts of Paul and Thecla.
- 7) 2:2 -- "The nearest we have in the NT to an idea of apostolic succession -- or, better, gospel succession." Not only from Paul to Timothy, but from Timothy to faithful people who will teach others.
- 8) 2:8-13 -- This exhortation is unique in the Pauline letters, a form that echoes what looks like an already established confessional formula cited in Rom 1:3-4
- 9) 2:12b-13 -- Jesus says in Matt 10:33, "but whoever denies me before others, I will deny before my heavenly father." "One of Jesus' most disturbing sayings," lines 12b and 13 seeming to contradict each other. Dunn: "The lines serve different purposes: the first to warn the casual and to stiffen the resolve of the frightened, the second to comfort the broken and to give renewed hope to the despairing." (JBD: Very unsatisfactory!)
- 10) 2:18 -- See 1 Tim 1:20 and note #6 for explanation.
- 11) 2:19 -- Prompted by Isa 28:16, a commonly recited text, as in Rom 9:33, 1 Peter 2:6, Matt 2:42, Eph 2:20. The "inscription" (or "seal") is from Numb 16:5, where Moses says to Korah, Dathan and Abiram that God knows who are his own; and later all three are swallowed up in an earthquake.
- 12) 3:8 -- Jannes and Jambres may have been Pharaoh's magicians, but no one by that name is mentioned in Ex 7 where Moses tried to impress Pharaoh with his "magic" tricks.
- 13) 3:10-17 -- Paul's mission work is sandwiched between references to Exodus and the affirmation of the role of scripture, the implication being that the traditions of Paul now carry the authority of scripture similar to both Hebrew writings and the Gospels. /// The writings available to Timothy were the Torah, the Prophets, and the Writings. This passage is the

most explicit statement in the Bible of what Scripture is **for**: they **instruct** us in the route to salvation through faith in Jesus Christ.

- 14) 4:1 -- Jesus' kingdom: very rare references in the NT (Matt 13:41, 25:31, Col 1:13). It is usually **God's** kingdom.
- 15) 4:6 -- M-O'C: Paul was tried twice, released after the first trial (See 4:17), re-arrested, tried and killed. V. 4:6, should be translated, "For my part, I am already spent, and the time of my release is at hand." And, he believes that Paul **did go** to Spain, in the interim between his two imprisonments. The mission was a total failure, which explains why Paul never mentions it, and also explains the apparent hostility of the Romans toward him when he was in prison.
- 16) 4:9-18 -- These could very well be Paul's last words ever. They give the impression of having been written under pressure of circumstances and time. /// Demas appears in Col. 4:14 and Phlm 24. Cirescens only here. Titus, in Dalmatia -- present-day Croatia. /// Mark's return to favor "provides a pleasing sequel to the bruising break recalled in Acts 15:36-40." /// Next to Timothy and Titus, Tychicus was probably the next most prominent of Paul's associates (Col 4:7, Eph 6:21). /// Carpus unknown. /// Alexander not the same as in 1 Tim 1:20, because here he is an opponent. May be a mixed memory of the silversmith Demetrius in Acts 19.
- 17) 4:20 -- Erastus: an inscription in Corinth shows an Erastus as a prominent citizen. But whether this is the same man as here and in Acts 19:22 and Rom 16:23 is not certain. /// In Acts 20:40 and 21:29, Trophimus is from Ephesus and triggered a riot against Paul. /// Irenaeus makes Linus Peter's successor in the church in Rome.