

Bible Survey, part 14 – The New Testament The Epistles – 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus and Philemon “Finish Well”

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“Philemon” = a believer who lived in Colossae whom the Apostle Paul had led to Christ.



“Onesimus” = Philemon’s runaway slave who came to Rome and whom Paul led to Christ.

“I appeal to you for my son Onesimus, who became my [spiritual] son while I was in chains [in Rome].”
Philemon 1:10

“I am sending him . . . back to you even though I would love to keep him with me . . .” Philemon 1:12-13a

“Perhaps, the reason he ran away was so that you might have him back again for good – not as a slave . . . but as a dear brother in the Lord.” Philemon 1:15-16

“So, if you consider me a friend, please welcome him back as you would welcome me.” Philemon 1:17

“If he has done you any wrong or owes you anything, charge it to me. I, Paul . . . will pay it back to you; not to mention, of course, that you owe me your very life.” Philemon 1:18-19

“So, being confident of your obedience, I write this to you, knowing you will do even more than I ask.”
Philemon 1:21

“Forgive one another as the Lord forgave you.” Colossians 3:13b

“There was a certain disciple there [Lystra and Derbe] named Timothy, the son of a Jewish woman [who was a believer], but his father was a Gentile.” Acts 16:1



“He was well spoken of by all the believers in Lystra and Iconium.” Acts 16:2

“Paul wanted Timothy to go with him [i.e., on his second missionary journey] . . .” Acts 16:3

Church historians tell us that Timothy became the Bishop of Ephesus and was martyred by Emperor Domitian (A.D. 81-96).

“To Titus, my true son in our common faith . . .” Titus 1:4a

- Titus went with Paul and Barnabas to the Jerusalem Council in Acts 15 [Galatians 2:3].
- Titus was on the third missionary journey with Paul [2 Corinthians 8:16].
- Titus traveled with Paul after Paul’s release from prison in A.D. 62 and Paul left him on Crete to oversee the church there [Titus 1:5].



1 & 2 Timothy and Titus are commonly called the “**pastoral epistles**” because Paul wrote these two men regarding the “**pastoral care**” of their respective churches.

1 Timothy and Titus are “**chock-full**” of practical instructions for how to run the local church in a Christ-like way.

2 Timothy was Paul’s **last letter**, written in **A.D. 66** from jail in Rome.

- July 19, A.D. 64 = Rome burned
- Nero made Christians the “scapegoats”
- Anti-Christian persecution spread across the Empire for the first time
- Nero arrested both Peter and Paul
- In A.D. 66 – Nero killed them both

“ . . . the time of my departure is at hand.” 2 Timothy 4:6b

Paul's main purpose in writing 2 Timothy was to challenge Timothy to **faithfully carry on** for the Lord in Paul's absence.

As far as we know – 2 Timothy was the last time Timothy ever heard from Paul here on earth!

So What?

"The time of my departure is at hand. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith." 2 Timothy 4:6b-7

Paul: "I started the race well on the road to Damascus – and thirty years later, by God's grace, I'm **finishing the race well!"**

We can do a thousand things right – but make one really bad mistake – and that's all people remember us for.

This should be the prayer we all have: **that by God's grace we finish well!**

#1 – Stay vitally connected to the Word of God

"How shall a young man keep his way clean? By taking heed to it according to Your Word." Psalm 119:9

"Your Word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You." Psalm 119:11

"Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." Psalm 119:105

Spending serious time in God's Word results in our sinning less – and making better choices in life – that maximize our chances of finishing well.

#2 – Don't minimize how evil your human heart is

"The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked . . ." Jeremiah 17:9

To make matters worse – we all have this **amazing capacity** to justify what our evil hearts want to do!

"Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my thoughts. And see if there be any wicked way in me . . ." Psalm 139:23-24a

"Examine me, O LORD, and try me; test my mind and my heart." Psalm 26:2

God can expose to us the evil schemes of our hearts **BEFORE** they lead us into disaster – but **only if we're wanting and asking Him to do so!**

#3 – Don't overestimate ourselves

". . . Do not think more highly of yourself than you ought . . ." Romans 12:3

Do not begin to think that **"the rules are for everybody else."**

#4 – Think about the consequences before acting

"The wise man sees evil coming and gets out of the way; but the fool keeps going and suffers for it." Proverbs 22:3

One of the best ways to avoid self-destructive choices is to slow down and think about what this choice may mean . . . **BEFORE** doing it!

". . . nobody makes a fool out of God. For whatever a person sows, that is precisely what they will reap." Galatians 6:7

“Fallout Study” = “If I do this, what fallout COULD happen?”

“It’s just not worth it!”

“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.” 2 Timothy 4:7

#1 – Stay vitally connected to the Word of God

#2 – Don’t minimize how evil your human heart is

#3 – Don’t overestimate ourselves and begin thinking the rules are for everybody else

#4 – Think through the possible consequences of our choices before we make them