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Article 55: Second Timothy at a Glance

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SECOND TIMOTHY AT A GLANCE

This book, Paul's final epistle was written to instruct, encourage, exhort, warn, and reassure his favorite son in the faith, Timothy.

BOTTOM LINE SUMMARY

THE FINAL WORDS OF GOD'S FINEST WITNESS

Some believe Jesus may have had the apostle Paul in mind during the last part of his statement to the disciples in Matt. 11:11:

"I tell you the truth, Among them that are born of women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist: yet he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

FACTS REGARDING THE AUTHOR OF THIS BOOK

1. Who? **Paul**. He was also known as Saul of Tarsus (Acts 9:11). This relentless enemy of Christians (Acts 8:3; 22:5, 19; 26:11; Gal. 1:13) would, following his conversion (Acts 9:3-9), become the greatest missionary, church planter, soul winner, and theologian in church history, authoring nearly half of the New Testament books!
2. What? The books of Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon.
3. When and where? Written in 67 A.D. from Rome.
4. Why and to whom? Written to serve as Paul's final legacy. Addressed to the church at Ephesus.

KEY EVENTS

1. Paul speaks concerning his son (Timothy), and their Savior (Jesus)
2. Rules and responsibilities assigned to the pastor
3. Warnings about the coming great apostasy
4. Last will and testimony of Paul

KEY INDIVIDUALS

1. **Paul**, author of 2 Timothy and at least 12 other New Testament books, church planter, evangelist, missionary, and perhaps the greatest of all the apostles
2. **Timothy**, Paul's faithful and beloved associate, pastor of the Church at Ephesus, and recipient of two apostolic letters, First and Second Timothy
3. **Lois**, Timothy's godly grandmother
4. **Eunice**, Timothy's godly mother
5. **Phygellus and Hermogenes**, two professing believers who deserted Paul in Asia

6. **Onesiphorus**, faithful believer who ministered to Paul both in Ephesus and in Rome.
7. **Hymenaeus and Philetus**, two professing believers rebuked by Paul for their heretical views regarding the biblical doctrine of resurrection
8. **Jannes and Jambres**, two Old Testament Egyptian occultists who opposed Moses in his day, here referred to by Paul as examples of those who will oppose the truth in the last days
9. **Demas**, Paul's close associate who forsook him on the eve of his execution in Rome
10. **Luke**, beloved Gentile physician who authored the Gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts, who remained faithful to Paul during the Apostle's final days in a Roman prison
11. **John Mark**, nephew of Barnabas, and author of the Gospel of Mark, who forsook Paul during his first missionary journey, but now is urged by the imprisoned apostle to visit him

KEY PLACES

1. **Rome**: capital city of the mighty Roman Empire where the imprisoned Paul writes his final epistle just prior to his execution by Nero
2. **Thessalonica**: the city that Demas (Paul's friend) moved into when he deserted the imprisoned apostle in Rome

UNIQUE FEATURES

1. This epistle is his spiritual swan song, his dying shout of triumph.
2. Paul writes more about last day conditions in this epistle than in any other. (See 3:1-13; 4:1-4).
3. After being released from his first Roman imprisonment (Acts 28), Paul is once again arrested.
4. This arrest may have taken place suddenly in Troas, thus explaining why Paul left there without taking his cloak, parchments, or Old Testament scrolls (2 Tim. 4:13).
5. On July 19, A.D. 64, Rome was burned (probably by Nero) and the Christians were blamed. Christianity then became an illegal religion, and to evangelize was a crime punishable by death.
6. Paul was probably arrested again sometime after July of A.D. 64, and condemned to death.
7. During his second and final imprisonment he wrote 2 Timothy.
8. His second imprisonment was far different from the first.
 - He was then a political prisoner awaiting trial. He is now a condemned criminal, awaiting death.
 - Then he lived in his own hired house. Now he huddles in a cold, damp, dark dungeon.
 - During his first imprisonment he was visited by many. Now he is forsaken by all.

9. This is the most personal letter; in Romans we see Paul the theologian; in 1 Corinthians, Paul the counselor; in 2 Corinthians, Paul the preacher; in Galatians, Paul the defender; in 1 Timothy and Titus, Paul the statesman; but here in 2 Timothy, Paul the man.
10. The letter is rich in personal allusions. Paul mentions 23 men, women, friends, and foes.
11. He also lists (by name) more enemies of the gospel in this epistle. These are:
 - Phygellus and Hermogenes (1:15)
 - Hymenaeus and Philetus (2:17)
 - Jannes and Jambres (3:8)
 - Alexander the coppersmith (4:14)
12. Dr. J. Vernon McGee writes: "In 2 Timothy Paul speaks of the ultimate outcome of gospel preaching. The final fruition will not be the total conversion of mankind, nor will it usher in the Millennium. On the contrary, there will come about an apostasy which will well-nigh blot out 'the faith' from the earth. This is in complete harmony with the startling word of Christ, 'When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?' This is not in keeping, of course, with a social gospel which expects to transform the world by tinkering with the social system. These vain optimists have no patience with the doleful words of 2 Timothy. Nevertheless, the cold and hard facts of history and the events of the present have demonstrated the accuracy of Paul" (*Second Timothy*, p. 196.)
13. At least six analogies depicting the Christian life are given here in this book. The believer is likened to a soldier (2:3), athlete (2:5), farmer (2:6), student (2:15), vessel (2:21), and servant (2:24).
14. Tradition says Paul was imprisoned in Rome's Mamertine Prison, which had only two cells, one below the other, with Paul occupying the lower cell.
15. This epistle has much to say about the Word of God:
 - Its message is never in chains, though the messenger may be (2:9)
 - It is to be proclaimed (4:2)
 - It is to be studied (2:15a)
 - It is to be correctly interpreted (2:15b)
 - It has been personally given by God (3:16a)
 - It is profitable for (1) doctrine, (2) reproof, (3) correction, and (4) instruction in righteousness (3:16b).
 - It will perfect the believer's character and service for God (3:17)
 - It is to be passed on to others (2:2)
 - It will be abandoned and opposed by its enemies in the last days (3:7, 8; 4:3, 4)
16. Paul refers to himself by more titles in 2 Timothy than in any other epistle. He says he is:
 - An apostle (1:1)
 - A prisoner (1:8; 2:9)
 - A preacher (1:11a)
 - A teacher of Gentiles (1:11b)
 - A role model (2:2; 3:10)
 - A convicted evil doer (2:9)
 - A martyr (4:6a)

- A departing pilgrim (4:6b)
 - A victorious fighter (4:8)
17. In fact in three short verses Paul offers a three-fold summary of his entire ministry:
 - Regarding the past
"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith"(4:7).
 - Regarding the present
"For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand"(4:6).
 - Regarding the future
"Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing"(4:8).
 18. He once may have believed he would partake of the rapture (1 Thess. 4:17), but now realizes this would not be the case (4:6).
 19. He had previously presented his body to live for Christ (Rom. 12:1). He now presents it to die for Christ (4:6).
 20. His dying words echo those once said by Stephen:
 - Stephen's words:
"And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep"(Acts 7:60).
 - Paul's words:
"At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge"(2 Tim. 4:16).
- Among the names mentioned in this epistle, two stand out in contrast to each other:
- John Mark, who had once forsaken Paul but now was ministering for God (compare Acts 13:13; 15:37, 38 with 2 Tim. 4:11).
 - Demas, who had once ministered for God (Col. 4:14; Philem. 24) but now had forsaken Paul (2 Tim. 4:10).

COMPARISON WITH OTHER BIBLE BOOKS

1. **2 Thessalonians; 1 Timothy 4; 2 Peter; Jude:**

All these, like Second Timothy deal with apostasy

2. **Deuteronomy; Joshua 23, 24; 2 Peter:**

These books record the final words of their authors, as does Second Timothy.

TITLES FOR AND TYPES OF JESUS

1. Jesus Christ (1:1a)
2. Christ Jesus (1:1b)
3. Christ Jesus our Lord (1:2)
4. Our Savior (1:10)
5. The seed of David (2:8)

6. The Master (2:21)
7. The Lord Jesus Christ (4:1)
8. The righteous Judge (4:8)