

Pastoral Epistles: 2 Timothy 1

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Session 8

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Abstract

This lecture by Dr. Robert W. Yarbrough offers an analytical exposition of 2 Timothy 1, setting Paul's final letter against the backdrop of his imminent martyrdom in a Roman dungeon. Yarbrough opens with the PMEEC framework—positioning the Epistles as the explanation of the gospel—and stresses a disciplined hermeneutic focused on objective observation. Through word-frequency analysis, he highlights God's sovereign initiative and grace, encouraging leaders to fan into flame their spiritual gifts and guard the sound deposit of truth through the Holy Spirit. Contrasting the desertion of Asian associates with the courageous loyalty of Onesiphorus, the lecture urges pastoral leaders to remain steadfast in gospel succession despite hardship.

Outline

I. Introduction and Hermeneutical Framework

A. Orientation to the Pastoral Epistles

1. Contextual continuity with the 1 Timothy lecture series
2. Framework for 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, and Titus as a cohesive unit

B. The PMEEC Acronym for Redemptive History

1. Preparation – Old Testament (77–78% of Scripture; foundational preparation)
2. Manifestation – Gospels (saving self-disclosure of God in Christ)
3. Expansion – Acts (outreach and establishment of churches across the Roman world)
4. Explanation – Epistles (explication of gospel practice and congregational leadership)
5. Consummation – Revelation (ultimate fulfillment and future hope)

C. Nature and Authority of Scripture

1. All Scripture as God-breathed (2 Timothy 3:16)
2. Close correlation between God's transcendent essence and His flawless revealed Word

II. Methodology and Key Word Analysis in 2 Timothy

A. Theological Method: Adolf Schlatter's Hermeneutic

1. Essay: The Significance of Method for Theological Work
2. Priority of objective observation ('seeing what is there') over subjective imposition
3. Avoiding political or contextual proof-texting and misapplication

B. Word Frequency Analysis in 2 Timothy

1. Preponderance of divine terms: Kurios / Lord (16x), Theos / God (13x), Christ Jesus (13x)
2. The verb didomi ('to give', 6x): Exclusively describes divine initiative (giving Spirit, grace, mercy, repentance, insight)
3. Frequency of key terms: faith, truth, work/deed (kalos vs. agathos), knowledge, grace, and love

C. Historical and Compositional Context

1. Written during Paul's second Roman imprisonment prior to execution (beheading)
2. Personal and interpersonal details supporting authentic Pauline authorship

III. Apostolic Greeting and Covenant Relationship (2 Timothy 1:1–5)**A. Paul's Apostolic Self-Understanding (vv. 1–2)**

1. Apostleship by the will of God and in keeping with the promise of life in Christ Jesus
2. The heavy burden and affliction of apostolic ministry (1 Cor 4:9–13, 2 Cor 4:7–12, 2 Cor 11:16–12:10)
3. Weight of eternal glory overriding momentary earthly suffering

B. Relational and Spiritual Bond with Timothy (vv. 3–5)

1. Paul's clear conscience and ancestral Jewish heritage amidst accusations of treason
2. Unceasing prayerfulness, gratitude, and emotional recollection of Timothy's tears
3. Heritage of unfeigned faith traced through Timothy's grandmother Lois and mother Eunice

IV. Exhortation to Steadfastness and the Soteriological Foundation (2 Timothy 1:6–14)**A. Rallying Timothy to Courageous Service (vv. 6–8)**

1. Exhortation to 'fan into flame' the spiritual gift (charisma) received through laying on of hands
2. The Spirit given by God: power, love, and self-discipline rather than timidity
3. Call to unashamedly join in suffering for the gospel by God's power

B. Doctrines of Salvation and Divine Purpose (vv. 9–10)

1. Salvation rooted in God's sovereign purpose and grace before time began, not human merit
2. Manifestation through Christ Jesus, who destroyed death and brought life and immortality to light

C. Guarding the Gospel Deposit (vv. 11–14)

1. Paul's appointment as herald, apostle, and teacher as the ground for his suffering

2. Confident assurance in God's ability to guard what has been entrusted until 'that Day'
3. Mandate to hold fast the pattern of sound teaching in faith, love, and through the indwelling Holy Spirit

V. Contrast of Disloyalty and Loyalty in Ministry (2 Timothy 1:15–18)

A. The Pain of Defection (v. 15)

1. Desertion by associates in the province of Asia (specifically Phygelus and Hermogenes)
2. Reality of personal let-downs and opposition in pastoral experience

B. The Refreshing Loyalty of Onesiphorus (vv. 16–18)

1. Courageous search for Paul in Rome without shame of Paul's chains
2. Prayer for mercy upon the household of Onesiphorus for his diligent service in Ephesus

C. Concluding Pastoral Applications

1. Tethering faith to Christ's sovereignty despite human desertion ('gates of hell shall not prevail')
2. Recognizing and praising God for encouraging believers and circumstances in ministry