

**/Welcome To
BARAH MINISTRIES**

**Al Gleason
Guest Teacher**

Good morning!

Welcome to Barah Ministries...an intimate, local Christian Church with a worldwide impact. My name is Al Gleason, and I will be teaching today. Thank you, Pastor Rory Clark, for the opportunity to share God's word, as it is always a privilege and an honor when I get the opportunity to do so. To everyone who is studying with us, thank you for tuning in and listening to this bible lesson.

**/TODAY'S BIBLE LESSON
The Final Charge**

LESSON INTRODUCTION

I want you to picture a relay race. There are four runners, one baton, one finish line. The runners can be the fastest in the world, but if anyone drops the baton, the race is over. If you watch the summer Olympics, you know that the US 4x100 relay is always ranked number 1 or 2 going in, but they mess up the handoff more than times than not, so they rarely finish the race! The handoff matters as much as the running. Every relay coach drills this. The concept is simple, but it takes some practice to be excellent at it. You don't just hand the baton or just take it. The runner coming in has to keep his speed up. The runner going out has to accelerate at the right time so the baton meets her hand at full stride. The hand has to be open and the outgoing runner has to take the baton to make sure it doesn't drop. They run together inside a designated exchange zone. If they step outside it, they are disqualified. If they drop the baton, its a wrap. Winning the race is not about the runner crossing the line, but the baton crossing the line.

The letter we are about to study is a handoff. Paul, in chains, is at the end of his race. Despite his dire situation, he's not asking for a rescue or sympathy.

He's making sure the baton lands cleanly in Timothy's hand so he can take it from him and run with it. Second Timothy is the last letter Paul ever wrote. It's the last recorded words of the apostle who authored almost half of the New Testament. This letter is a handoff from one generation of leadership to the next, at the right time to ensure the gospel (the baton) continues to move through the race to cross the finish line.

Paul knew his execution was coming. He says it plainly in Chapter 4...

/SECOND TIMOTHY 4:6

For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come.

He wasn't quitting. He was finishing. And as he finishes, he writes one final letter to his protégé to make sure the gospel keeps running.

Today's lesson is the first in our study of Second Timothy. Before we open the letter itself, we are going to do what we always do when we start a new biblical book. We're going to ask ten questions. These ten questions give us the context we need to understand what we read. Without context, scripture can be twisted to mean whatever the reader wants it to mean. With context, the meaning is clear and the application becomes obvious.

Let's get the baton in our hands.

OPENING SONG INTRODUCTION

Paul is at the end. He's run his race, and he tells Timothy in chapter 4 verse 7...

/SECOND TIMOTHY 4:7

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith.

That's a man with a clear conscience. He's a man not afraid to die because he has done what he was put on this earth to do. We all want to finish like that, but finishing well doesn't start at the finish line. It starts now with every decision today, you are either preparing to finish well or preparing to fall

apart at the end. This next song, "Yet Not I But Through Christ In Me," is a declaration that the only One who gets us across the line is the One we trust to run with us the whole way. Let's worship as we enjoy the song "Yet Not I But Through Christ In Me," by CityAlight.

/MUSIC

OPENING SONG

Yet Not I But Through Christ In Me
CityAlight\

/OPENING PRAYER

Let us pray...\

Heavenly Father...we thank You for the opportunity to fellowship in Your presence once again. We thank You for the men You called to write the words we are about to study, and we thank You for preserving those words for us today.

As we open Second Timothy, give us ears to hear what Paul said to Timothy in his final hours, and let us understand what You are saying to us through that letter right now. Help us to receive every verse with humility. Help us to apply every lesson with courage. Refine our hearts so we are the kind of believers worthy of carrying the baton in our generation.

...we ask for these things through the power of God the Holy Spirit, in Christ's name... Amen.

/TODAY'S BIBLE LESSON

The Final Charge\

LESSON PART ONE

Second Timothy is what we call a Pastoral Epistle. There are three of them in the New Testament: First Timothy, Second Timothy, and Titus. They're called pastoral because they were written by Paul to individuals who were pastoring churches, not to entire congregations. They give us the practical

playbook for how a church is supposed to function and how a pastor is supposed to lead.

Here are the basic facts of the book:

/SECOND TIMOTHY

A Pastoral Epistle

4 Chapters

83 Verses

12 Lessons\

Second Timothy has 4 chapters and 83 verses. We will teach the entire book in twelve lessons.

/THE TWELVE LESSONS

1. The Ten Questions

2. 2TI 1:1-7

3. 2TI 1:8-12

4. 2TI 1:13-18

5. 2TI 2:1-7

6. 2TI 2:8-13

7. 2TI 2:14-19

8. 2TI 2:20-26

9. 2TI 3:1-9

10. 2TI 3:10-17

11. 2TI 4:1-8

12. 2TI 4:9-22\

Today is Lesson 1, The Ten Questions. Every time we start a new book of the Bible, we begin by asking the same ten questions. These questions are the homework we do before we read the assignment. They give us the who, what, when, where, and why of the letter so that when we read what's inside, we can interpret it correctly.

Let's get to the questions.

/QUESTIONS TO BEGIN THE STUDY OF A BIBLICAL LETTER

1. Who wrote the letter we are about to study?\

The author is the Apostle Paul. He identifies himself in the very first verse:

/SECOND TIMOTHY 1:1

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, according to the promise of life in Christ Jesus,

Paul wrote thirteen of the twenty-seven books of the New Testament. He wrote Romans, both letters to the Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, both Thessalonian letters, both letters to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon. Some scholars believe he wrote Hebrews too, though the author of Hebrews is not named in the text. Either way, Paul is the most prolific human writer of the New Testament.

/QUESTIONS TO BEGIN THE STUDY OF A BIBLICAL LETTER

2. To whom is the letter directed?\

The letter is directed to Timothy. Paul calls him in verse 2...

/SECOND TIMOTHY 1:2

...to Timothy, my beloved son: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

Notice that Paul calls Timothy "my beloved son." Timothy wasn't Paul's biological son, he was Paul's spiritual son. Paul led Timothy to faith in Christ, mentored him, and raised him up as a leader. By the time Paul writes this letter, Timothy is a grown man pastoring a major church, and Paul still refers to him as a son. That indicates the depth of the relationship.

/QUESTIONS TO BEGIN THE STUDY OF A BIBLICAL LETTER

3. Where do the people who received the letter live?\

Timothy was in Ephesus when he received this letter. We know this from First Timothy 1:3, where Paul reminds Timothy that he had urged him to remain in Ephesus. There's no indication in Second Timothy that Timothy had moved.

Ephesus, as we covered when we studied First Timothy, was the New York City of the Roman world. It was a wealthy, influential commercial center on the western coast of what is now Turkey. It was home to the Temple of

Artemis, one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World, and a hub of paganism, idolatry, sexual immorality, and false teaching. Timothy was pastoring a church in a hard city.

/QUESTIONS TO BEGIN THE STUDY OF A BIBLICAL LETTER

4. What do we know about the author of the letter?\

We know a lot about Paul, more than almost any other person in the New Testament besides Jesus Himself. Paul was originally named Saul of Tarsus. He was a Jew, born in Tarsus in modern-day Turkey, and a Roman citizen by birth. He was trained as a Pharisee under one of the most respected rabbis of his day, a man named Gamaliel. By every measure, Saul was the model religious Jew of his generation: zealous for the law, well-educated, well-connected, and absolutely convinced that the followers of Jesus were heretics who needed to be stopped.

Before he was an apostle, Paul was the church's worst nightmare. He held the coats of the men who stoned Stephen to death in Acts 7. He went house to house, dragging Christians off to prison. He was on his way to Damascus to arrest more believers when the Lord Jesus Christ appeared to him in blinding light and confronted him directly. That moment is recorded in Acts 9 and is one of the most famous conversion stories in history.

After his conversion, Paul became the apostle to the Gentiles. He went on three major missionary journeys, planted churches across the Roman Empire, and trained the next generation of leaders, including Timothy and Titus. He was beaten, stoned, shipwrecked, and imprisoned multiple times for the gospel. By the time he writes Second Timothy, he's at the end of his life. He's been arrested again and is awaiting execution.

/QUESTIONS TO BEGIN THE STUDY OF A BIBLICAL LETTER

5. When did the author write the letter?\

Most scholars place the writing of Second Timothy between AD 66 and AD 67. This is during the reign of the Roman Emperor Nero, one of the most brutal persecutors of Christians in history. In AD 64, a great fire burned through Rome and destroyed a huge portion of the city. Nero was blamed for

the fire and, to deflect that blame, he turned around and blamed the Christians. From that point on, being a Christian in the Roman Empire was dangerous. Believers were rounded up, tortured, fed to lions, and burned alive as human torches to light Nero's gardens. Paul was caught up in this wave of persecution and was arrested for the second time.

Timothy receives this letter shortly before Paul is executed. The traditional account, recorded by the early church historian Eusebius, is that Paul was beheaded by Nero outside the city of Rome around AD 67 or 68. So Second Timothy is the last letter we have from Paul. It is, in effect, his last will and testament.

/QUESTIONS TO BEGIN THE STUDY OF A BIBLICAL LETTER

6. Where was the author when he wrote the letter?\

Paul wrote Second Timothy from prison in Rome. But this is not the same imprisonment we read about at the end of the book of Acts. Paul's first Roman imprisonment, the one in Acts 28, was a relatively comfortable one. He lived in a rented house under house arrest, was allowed visitors, and was free to teach. After that imprisonment ended, Paul was released. He continued ministry, possibly traveling as far as Spain, and likely wrote First Timothy and Titus during this period of freedom.

His second imprisonment was different. This time he was in a Roman dungeon, in chains, with very few visitors. He describes the conditions himself in chapter 4. He's cold. He needs his cloak. He's lonely. Most of the people who started the journey with him have abandoned him. Listen to how he describes it:

/SECOND TIMOTHY 4:16

*At my first defense no one supported me, but all deserted me... *

This is not a sympathy plea. This is a man writing the most important letter of his life from the worst conditions of his life. And he writes it not to complain, but to charge the next generation.

That brings us to a good stopping point. We are halfway through the ten questions. Take a five-minute break, and when we come back, we'll cover

the second half of the questions and find out what God wants us to take away from Paul's final letter.

/FIVE-MINUTE BREAK

Goodness of God

CeCe Winans\

/TODAY'S BIBLE LESSON

The Final Charge\

OFFERING INTRODUCTION

Paul wrote this letter in chains. He had every reason to hold back, to hoard whatever strength he had left, to ask others to give to him. But Paul never operated that way. He gave when he had nothing, because he knew that the kingdom of God runs on generosity. When we give, we're not giving to a building or a budget. We're giving to a mission that started with men like Paul and continues today. Every act of generosity is a small handoff in the relay. Let's welcome Deacon Denny Goodall Jr. with another inspiring offering message.

/THE OFFERING

Deacon Denny Goodall Jr.\

/OFFERING VERSE

Thessalonians 1:2

We always give thanks to God for all of you, making mention of you in our prayers;

/OFFERING SONG

Goodness of God

CeCe Winans \

/TODAY'S BIBLE LESSON

The Final Charge\

LESSON PART TWO

Welcome back. Let's pick up where we left off and tackle the second half of the ten questions.

/QUESTIONS TO BEGIN THE STUDY OF A BIBLICAL LETTER

7. What was God's purpose in getting the author to write the letter?\

God's purpose was to make sure the gospel did not die when Paul did. Paul was the central human figure of the first-century missions movement. He planted the churches. He trained the leaders. He wrote the doctrine down. If the gospel was going to keep moving after his execution, somebody had to be ready to carry it, and that somebody was Timothy.

Like us, Timothy was called by God, but he had a problem. He was timid by nature. He was younger than many of the men he was leading, and he had health issues. Like we should do, he did it anyway. He was facing false teachers, internal conflict in the church, and rising persecution from outside the church. Paul needed Timothy to step up, and he did just that. When God calls us, we need to step up too.

So God moved Paul to write this letter for two reasons. First, to strengthen Timothy personally. To remind him who he was, whose he was, and what he was called to do. Second, to charge Timothy publicly with the continuation of the ministry. This is why the letter feels so personal and yet so universal at the same time. It's a love letter from a spiritual father to a spiritual son, and it's a battlefield commission from a dying general to his next-in-command.

/QUESTIONS TO BEGIN THE STUDY OF A BIBLICAL LETTER

8. What does God want the author to communicate to the letter's intended audience?\

Paul communicates several things to Timothy in this letter. Here are the major themes you'll see as we work through the book.

1. Fan into flame the gift of God. Don't shrink back.

/SECOND TIMOTHY 1:7

For God has not given us a spirit of cowardice (fear), but of power and love and discipline (or sound mind).\

2. Do not be ashamed of the gospel. Suffering for Christ is part of the job.

/SECOND TIMOTHY 1:8

Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord or of me His prisoner, but join with me in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God,\

3. Entrust what you have learned to faithful people who can teach others. Multiply yourself.

/SECOND TIMOTHY 2:2

The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful people who will be able to teach others also.\

4. Endure hardship. Be a soldier. Be an athlete. Be a farmer. All three of those metaphors show up in chapter 2, and all three of them are about doing hard work over a long stretch of time.

5. Be a workman approved by God who handles the word of truth correctly.

/SECOND TIMOTHY 2:15

Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, an unashamed workman, accurately handling the word of truth.\

6. The last days will be brutal. Know what you're up against and don't be surprised by it.

/SECOND TIMOTHY 3:1

But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come.\

7. The scriptures are sufficient. They will equip you for everything.

/SECOND TIMOTHY 3:16

All Scripture is inspired by God and beneficial for teaching, for rebuke, for correction, for training in righteousness,\

8. Preach the word. In season and out of season. Whether it's popular or not.

/SECOND TIMOTHY 4:2

Preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; correct, rebuke, and exhort, with great patience and instruction.\

9. Finish the race. Don't quit. Don't drift. Don't fade out.

/SECOND TIMOTHY 4:7

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith.\

/QUESTIONS TO BEGIN THE STUDY OF A BIBLICAL LETTER

9. What is the central message of the letter?\

If I had to put the message of Second Timothy in one sentence, it would be this: Be faithful to the end. Guard the gospel, suffer for the gospel, preach the gospel, and hand the gospel off to the next generation, no matter what it costs you.

1 Timothy was more instructional, but in Paul's second letter to Timothy, he's writing a charge. He's saying to Timothy, and to every believer who reads these words afterward, "I ran my leg. Now you run yours. Don't drop the baton."

Think about how heavy that is. Paul has nothing left to give but words. He's in a dungeon, cold, and deserted. Despite this, what he writes shows no doubt. He is clear and confident when he says...

/SECOND TIMOTHY 1:12

...for I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day.\

That's the heart of the letter. Paul knows Who he believed. He doesn't just know about Jesus, he knows Jesus. Because he knows Him, he knows the gospel will keep running even when he stops.

/QUESTIONS TO BEGIN THE STUDY OF A BIBLICAL LETTER

10. What relevance does the letter have to our lives today?\

This part hits close to home. Paul tells Timothy that in the last days, difficult times will come. Then he describes those days in chapter 3. Listen to the description and tell me if it sounds familiar:

/SECOND TIMOTHY 3:2

For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, slanderers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy,

/SECOND TIMOTHY 3:3

...unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good,

/SECOND TIMOTHY 3:4

...traitors, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God,

/SECOND TIMOTHY 3:5

...holding to a form of godliness although they have denied its power; avoid such people as these.

I'm not going to spell out the application. You know what's happening in our culture. You see it every day. The description Paul gave to Timothy fits our generation like a tailored suit from the Clothier. If Paul's words mattered to Timothy in Ephesus, and they did, they matter twice as much to us today.

Second Timothy is relevant to us in at least five ways.

One. It tells us what to do when the culture turns hostile. Don't be ashamed. Don't soften the message. Don't trade truth for applause.

Two. It tells us how to suffer. Suffering for the gospel is not punishment, it is participation. You suffer with Christ. You suffer for Christ. You don't go through it alone.

Three. It tells us what to read. The scriptures are sufficient. You don't need a guru, a self-help book, or a politician to figure out how to live. You need the word of God.

Four. It tells us how to lead. Pass the baton. Pour into faithful people and multiply yourself. The kingdom does not move forward through superstars

alone. It moves forward through faithful people teaching the next set of faithful people.

Five. It tells us how to finish. Most people don't think about how they're going to finish. They think about how they're going to start. They think about today. They think about the next quarter. Paul thought about the finish line. He wanted to be able to say, at the end, "I have fought the good fight. I have finished the course. I have kept the faith." That should be the goal of every believer listening.

One last observation before we move on. Paul didn't write this letter as a man who had it all figured out. He wrote it as a man who had been tested, broken, beaten, and refined for over thirty years. The Paul who wrote Second Timothy is a different man than the Saul who started in Acts. Decades of obedience produced the kind of confidence you hear in this letter. Don't expect to have that confidence after one season of trying. Expect to build it over a lifetime of faithfulness.

The baton is in your hand. Now run.

/THE GOSPEL MESSAGE

The Good News of Jesus Christ's Salvation Offer to the Human Race\

The closing moments of this lesson could be the ten most important minutes of your life. You'll be introduced to the good news concerning how you can spend all eternity in heaven when you close your eyes in this life. We want you to know that...

/GOD WANTS YOU!

He Wants You to Make the Most Important Decision of Your Life\

...and what He wants for you is that you make the most important decision of your life.

God wants a RELATIONSHIP with you! The Lord's half-brother says in James, Chapter 4, Verse 8...

/JAMES 4:8

Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.\

The enemy of God, Satan, wants you to be part of a RELIGION. Religion is Satan's strategy against the human race and it is designed to make you indifferent or antagonistic to God. It works! The Bible describes religion in Second Timothy, Chapter 3, Verse 5 as...

/SECOND TIMOTHY 3:5

...a superficial form of godliness (a counterfeit to Christianity) ... that denies godliness' divine power...\

You have a choice...relationship or religion...what's your choice?

Religion can't get you to heaven! Religions propose that if you don't do everything their "god" expects, the god will be disappointed. Regardless of your best efforts to follow religious rituals, the religion does not GUARANTEE you will get to heaven.

In Matthew, Chapter 23, Verses 27 and 28, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself expresses His disdain for religion...

/MATTHEW 23:27

"Woe to you (religious) scribes and Pharisees...you hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs...which on the outside appear beautiful...but inside they are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness."\
"

/MATTHEW 23:28

"Outwardly you appear righteous to men, but inwardly you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness (you are unrighteous unbelievers)."

The Bible is a gift from God that introduces you to the possibility of a relationship with the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Hebrews, Chapter 4, Verse 12 describes the power of Scripture...

/HEBREWS 4:12

For the word of God is alive and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword...and it's piercing...even as far as the division of soul and spirit...of both joints and marrow...and it is a critic of the thoughts and intents of the heart.\

God's plan is to teach you the truth about how to have a relationship with Him through the Bible. Satan's plan is to teach you lies that obscure the truth of the Bible.

What happens when you close your eyes in this life? If you have a relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, counting on Him to save you, good things happen. If you are counting on religion to save you, bad things happen.

The Bible makes it clear that salvation is a gift that we receive through faith. Let's read a few scriptures that illustrate this...Ephesians, Chapter 2, Verses 8 and 9...

/EPHESIANS 2:8

For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God...\

/EPHESIANS 2:9

...not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.\

Titus, Chapter 3, Verse 5...

/TITUS 3:5

He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit,\

Romans, Chapter 3, Verses 23 and 24...

/ROMANS 3:23

...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God...\

/ROMANS 3:24

...being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus...\

No matter how much work you do, you can't work your way into heaven and be able to brag.

The requirement to get saved is simple. Acts, Chapter 16, Verse 31...

/ACTS 16:31

They said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved by God, you and everyone in your household who also believes." \

Romans, Chapter 10, Verses 9 and 10...

/ROMANS 10:9

...if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God the Father raised Him from the dead, you will be saved... \

/ROMANS 10:10

...for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. \

It is as simple as making a decision and having faith that God will do the rest. We cannot do it on our own.

When you die it is heaven or the Lake of Fire for all eternity. You get to make the choice where you spend eternity. Relationship or religion? What's your choice?

God wants a relationship with you because He doesn't want ANYONE to spend eternity in the Lake of Fire. Second Peter, Chapter 3, Verse 9 says...

/SECOND PETER 3:9

The Lord is not slow about His promise of salvation as some accuse Him of... instead, He is patient toward unbelievers...not wishing for any of you to perish (in the Lake of Fire) ... but for all of you to come to repentance (a change of mind about having a relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ). \

/THE GOSPEL MESSAGE

The Good News of Jesus Christ's Salvation Offer to the Human Race \

CLOSING SONG INTRODUCTION

Paul finished his race. Most people don't. They start out strong, run for a while, and somewhere along the way they get tired, distracted, or discouraged, and they drift. The difference between a runner who finishes

and a runner who fades is rarely talent. It's consistency. It's a thousand small obedient steps in the same direction over a long time. The next song, "Even If," by MercyMe, is a reminder that the goal isn't comfort. The goal is faithfulness. Even if the prison is cold. Even if the friends are gone. Even if the cost is everything. God is still God, and He is still worth it. Let's worship as we enjoy the song "Even If."

/MUSIC

CLOSING SONG

Let's Sing the Lord's Praises

Even If

MercyMe\

/CLOSING PRAYER

Let us pray...\

Heavenly Father...

...we thank You for the apostle Paul, for his faithfulness in life and in death, and for the words You moved him to write from a Roman dungeon almost two thousand years ago. We thank You that those words are alive today. We thank You for Timothy, who received them and ran with them. And we thank You for every faithful believer down through the centuries who received the baton and passed it forward, so that we could hold it today.

Father, make us faithful. Make us bold. Make us willing to suffer for the name of Jesus when the moment calls for it. Help us to fan into flame the gift You have given each of us. Help us to entrust what we have learned to faithful people who will teach others also. And when our time comes, let us be able to say with Paul, "I have fought the good fight. I have finished the course. I have kept the faith."

...we ask these things through the power of God the Holy Spirit, in Christ's name...Amen.

/GOT BIBLICAL QUESTIONS?

Ask the Pastor

pastor@barahministries.com\

/WANT US TO PRAY FOR SOMEONE?

Send your request to pastor@barahministries.com\

/KEEP ON STUDYING THE WORD OF GOD DAILY!

Thanks for watching!

Thanks for listening!

www.barahministries.com\