

New Testament Epistles: 2 Timothy

¹¹ This is a faithful saying:

*For if we died with Him,
We shall also live with Him.*

*¹² If we endure,
We shall also reign with Him.*

*If we deny Him,
He also will deny us.*

*¹³ If we are faithless,
He remains faithful;
He cannot deny Himself.*

2 Timothy 2:11-13

- 1. Occasion / Historical Context:** Paul wrote this letter in Rome in 67 AD to Timothy in Ephesus (1:16-18; 2:9). Even though no one supported him in his trial, he was still able to make a powerful defence of the gospel (4:16). He sensed that his end was near and so asked Timothy to come with Mark to visit him in Rome (4:6-9,11,13,21). He was worried by the spread of the gnostic heresy in Asia Minor (1:15; 2:16-18).

This is also one of Paul's most personal letters, addressed to Timothy his young pastor / protégé and fellow companion in the Gospel. Paul writes this letter from prison in Rome and is in the middle of his court trial. He fears his own impending execution. And so he writes to Timothy to have him travel to Rome to come to Paul.

- 2. Date:** A.D. 67-68 – most scholars think it is written shortly before Paul's execution.
- 3. Author:** Paul, the apostle
- 4. Primary Theme:** Following Jesus means living under the cross, with all its trials and suffering, yet also living in his cross. Our suffering is not a sign of Jesus' absence, but as Paul declares, it is in our darkest hour when Jesus' light and life shine most clearly.
- 5. Purpose(s):**
 - To ask Timothy to visit him, before he was put to death (4:11)
 - To encourage Timothy to accept suffering like Paul as a minister of the gospel (4:5)
 - To urge Timothy to remain faithful to apostolic doctrine (1:13-14) and to ensure its faithful transmission (2:1-2)
 - To warn against the dangers of heresy (4:3-4)
- 6. Theological Themes:**
 - Gift of the Holy Spirit in ordination (1:6-7; see also 1 Tim.4:14)
 - Qualities of a good pastor (2:20-26)
 - Use by the pastor of the Old Testament and the words of Jesus for teaching (2:15; 3:14-17; 4:1-5)

- d. Faithfulness in transmitting apostolic teaching (1:13-14; 2:1-2; 4:1-
- e. Suffering for the gospel (1:8-12; see also 2:3,8-13; 3:10-13; 4:5,6-8)

7. Outline / Structure:

Introduction: 1:1-7

- a. Greeting (1:1-2)
- b. Thanksgiving for Timothy's faith (1:3-7)

Paul's instruction to Timothy: 1:8- 4:5

- c. Imitation of Paul's boldness in accepting suffering (1:8-12)
- d. Imitation of Paul's faithfulness in teaching (1:13-2:13)
- e. Treatment of heretics (2:14-26)
- f. Avoidance of libertines (3:1-9)
- g. Imitation of Paul's life as a teacher of the Scriptures (3:10-17)
- h. Persistence in preaching the Word of Christ (4:1-5)

Conclusion: 4:6-22

- i. Paul's confidence in the face of martyrdom (4:6-8)
- j. Personal matters (4:9-18)
- k. Final greetings and blessing (4:19-22)

8. Key Passages:

- a. 1:6-14
- b. 2:1-13
- c. 3:10-17
- d. 4:1-5

9. **Martin Luther on 2 Timothy:** "This epistle is a farewell letter, in which St. Paul exhorts Timothy to go on propagating the gospel, even as he has begun. This is quite necessary, since there are many who fall away; and false spirits and teachers keep springing up all around. Therefore, it is incumbent upon a bishop always to be alert and to work at the gospel. But he prophesies especially ... concerning the perilous time at the end of the world. It is then that a false spiritual life will lead all the world astray, with an outward show, under which every sort of wickedness and wrong will have its fling. Sad to say! we now see this prophecy of St. Paul all too amply fulfilled in our clergy."

10. Liturgical Use:

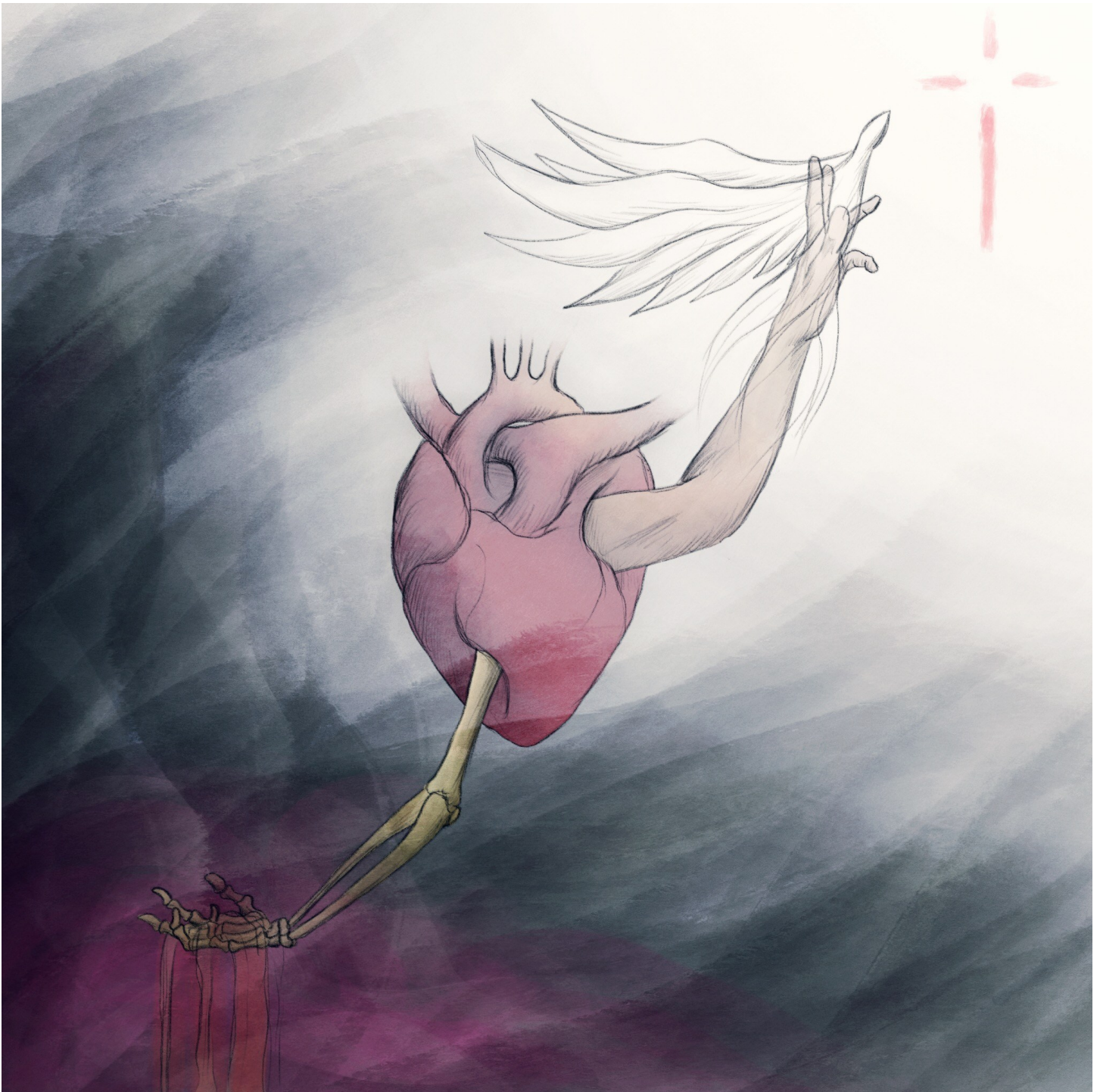
- a. 1:1-14 - Proper 22 C
- b. 2:1-13 – Proper 23 C
- c. 3:14-4:5 – Proper 24 C
- d. 4:6-18 – Proper 25 C
- e. 4:5-18 - Feast of St. Luke, St. Mark



2 Timothy 1:7-8, "For God gave us a spirit, not of fear, but of power and love and self control. Therefore...share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God..."

The power God gives us through union with Christ is power to suffer for the making known of His name in the gospel.

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2 Timothy 3:4, “[People will be] lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God.”

Our character—and eternal destiny—is revealed by what we love (want, pursue, treasure, enjoy, hunger and thirst for) most.

Am I controlled by love for the pleasure of _____ or the pleasure of knowing God in Christ?

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