

## December 25 Answers

- 1) Paul's last recorded letter was written to **Timothy** from the prisons of **Rome**. His second imprisonment was very different than his first. Before, he had his own rented house with only one guard (cf. Acts 28:16, 30); now he was kept in close **confinement**. Before, he was surrounded by friends; now only **Luke** was with him (2 Tim 4:10–12). Before, he had hoped for freedom; now he expected to **die** (2 Tim 4:6). Notice, however, that although Paul spoke candidly about his difficulties, he was not depressed or discouraged. Instead, he was **trusting** in God and **relying** on His strength (2 Tim 4:16–18). Timothy was most likely at **Ephesus**, providing leadership and guidance to the church. Around two years earlier, much of Rome had **burned** to the ground, and **Nero** blamed the **Christians**. It was during this time of fear and doubt that Paul urged Timothy to “fan into **flame** the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands, for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of **power** and **love** and **self-control**” (2 Tim 1:6–7). This teaches us that we should never be **ashamed** of the gospel or of those who preach the good news. Instead, we should share in **suffering** as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. Paul went on to call Timothy to a life of dedicated **service** to God, and his words are meant for us as well. We, too, should **endure** to the end for the sake of the gospel (2 Tim 2:8–13). We, too, should **teach** sound doctrine and **avoid** useless quarrels (2 Tim 2:14–16). We should understand that **difficult** times will come, and with them will come **false** teachers (2 Tim 3:1–7). We should make it our goal to **follow** Paul's example and live a life of **love** and service to God.