

Who was Claudia in the Bible?

The only mention of Claudia in the Bible occurs in 2 Timothy 4:21. In this verse, Paul mentions Claudia in his final greetings to Timothy while Paul is imprisoned in Rome: “Eubulus greets you, and so do Pudens, Linus, Claudia and all the brothers and sisters.” The only facts that we can know for certain come from the context of her name in 2 Timothy 4. However, Claudia has intrigued biblical scholars, and many have sought to understand her brief role in Paul’s letter to Timothy.

Not many facts can be gathered about Claudia from 2 Timothy 4. We can deduce her geographic location and that she was a Christian woman, her heart was devoted to Paul, and she knew Timothy. Paul sends his letter from Rome, where he is awaiting trial under Emperor Nero. Because Paul mentions sending greetings from Claudia and other saints, we can assume that Claudia was in Rome with Paul at that time. We also know that Claudia was a Christian woman, close to her faith and fighting for Christ’s message, because of her relation to the other men whom Paul names. Eubulus, Pudens, and Linus, who became the first bishop of Rome after the apostles, are all mentioned with Claudia. Paul speaks of his isolation in verse 16, saying, “At my first defense, no one came to my support, but everyone deserted me.” It is apparent throughout the end of chapter 4 that Paul is disheartened by the loss of friends such as Demas (verse 10); only Luke is with him (verse 11). Paul does not mention many people by name, but, since Claudia is among those he names, we know that she remained devoted to Paul throughout his imprisonment. Timothy must have known Claudia as well, since she sends her greetings with the rest.

Biblical scholars have more assumptions about Claudia’s life than they have facts. Everything beyond the biblical context is uncertain, but the speculations about Claudia include the idea that she was a noble-born Roman, based on the fact that her name was

only given to aristocratic women in Rome. This is a fascinating speculation, because it leads us to wonder what earthly riches she must have given up to respond to the gospel and follow Christ. Historians also have conjectured that Claudia was married to Pudens, also mentioned by Paul in 2 Timothy 4:21. Other scholars believe that Claudia was Pilate's wife (see Matthew 27:19), but, again, this is conjecture. Regardless of her personal history or the identity of her spouse, Claudia must have been a remarkable woman, if she was close to Paul and was known for her loyalty to her Christian brothers.