

Paul's Second Letter to Timothy
Lesson 1
Guard What Has Been Entrusted

2 Tim. 1: 1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, according to the promise of life in Christ Jesus, **2** to Timothy, my beloved son: Grace, mercy *and* peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

As in the first letter to Timothy, Paul begins this letter in much the same way he begins every other letter. This is the final letter that Paul will write. We will not hear from Paul again. It is sometime between A.D. 64–68. Paul is back in prison and awaiting his execution. He is in a Roman jail. Despite Paul's own future, he encourages Timothy towards the hope that is in Christ. The intro shows that Paul is still focused on the "will of God" and the "promise of life in Christ Jesus." He will not stray from these two important principles in his faith.

2 Tim. 1: 3 I thank God, whom I serve with a clear conscience the way my forefathers did, as I constantly remember you in my prayers night and day, **4** longing to see you, even as I recall your tears, so that I may be filled with joy.

As we grow older our memories are filled with people whom we have met. They are people we love dearly and long to be near. Their presence would bring great joy. Circumstances however cause separation and the reality of being with those people in fellowship is very doubtful. If you are a person who keeps a list of people that you pray for each day then you understand what Paul is saying here. As you pray for old friends, past memories will flood your soul and often you will recall with tears specific moments that bring both joy and sadness. For Paul it was all joy when he thought of Timothy. The point Paul is making here is "Did you do it with a 'clear conscience.'" Did you serve God with a "clear conscience?" When your last day arrives here on earth can they place a sign in your coffin that states "I did it! I have finished the race. I have won the victory! I did it with a clear conscience!"

2 Tim. 1: 5 For I am mindful of the sincere faith within you, which first dwelt in your grandmother Lois, and your mother Eunice, and I am sure that *it is* in you as well.

Our heritage is important. Lois and Eunice left an important heritage in the life of Timothy. Their faith may not have been as sound in understanding as Timothy's but they laid the foundation for him. They plowed the field of faith and laid the road making it much easier for Timothy to follow, labor, and believe.

2 Tim. 1: 6 And for this reason I remind you to kindle afresh the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands.

Here again Paul mentions the gift that was given through the laying on of hands. We saw this back in 1st Timothy. Timothy was selected to be an evangelist in the church and he was set aside by the other leadership for that purpose. Paul the apostle laid his hands on him, designating him with the authority to carry out the office in the church. This authority is a gift of God. Many have had this privilege but only a few have used it rightly. Many forget the gift and abuse the authority. Paul wants Timothy not to forget the gift and he wants him to kindle it afresh in his mind. For me, I am reminded of this everyday. Opportunities come in the life of a minister that can lure us away

from God's purpose for our lives. We can fail to keep our eyes focused on the labor He has set for us to do and we can long to line our pockets with the mammon of the world. Yet, when we keep our eyes focused on Him and His plan for your lives, He provides for our future each day. We are responsible to manage it and store it away for our later years. It doesn't come all at once in huge amounts for the minister. It comes a little here and a little there throughout our lives.

2 Tim. 1: ⁷For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline. ⁸Therefore 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, ⁹who has saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity, ¹⁰but now has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, ¹¹for which I was appointed a preacher and an apostle and a teacher.

"For God did not give us a spirit of timidity" or cowardice. Paul is urging Timothy to use the authority he has received boldly. God governs his ministers through the spirit of power, which is different than the spirit of timidity. But Paul adds the words "love and discipline". The power of the office is not to be fanatical or recklessly. But it is to be tempered by love and discipline that is a calm and constant edification. Love and discipline are graces from the Lord that should be evident in our ministry for Him. When love and discipline accompany a minister's life they can serve without shame. Even with Paul in prison, Paul is showing love and discipline and Timothy should not be ashamed of Paul's plight. Paul is blessed in his imprisonment and awaits the great testimony that he will give even in his last moment of life on earth. This is not a byproduct of works, but it is the central point of our calling. The greatness of the blessing of the calling in our salvation and as a minister is to serve with power, love, and discipline. True life is not seen in this world. True life is seen in the immortality of eternal life with our Savior Christ Jesus.

2 Tim. 1: ¹²For this reason I also suffer these things, but I am not ashamed; 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. ¹³Retain the standard of sound words which you have heard from me, in the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. ¹⁴Guard, through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, the treasure which has been entrusted to *you*.

Here we see the word "entrusted." It seems to be the purpose of this letter to Timothy. In the last few verses Paul has mentioned the gift that has been given Timothy and how he is to faithfully keep that gift fresh. Timothy was entrusted with the gift of being set aside as an evangelist. Paul then mentions the suffering and not being ashamed of the service for the Lord. Paul has given his life to the Lord and has trusted Him for every need, especially the salvation of his soul and Paul trusts the Lord to guard that salvation until the day he sees Him face to face. Paul's life is in the hands of the Lord and he has lived his life according to the word of the Lord and the faith and love which is only found in Christ Jesus. Paul had the Holy Spirit within him and the Holy Spirit was entrusted to him as a promise of eternal, immortal life. Paul wants Timothy to retain the same principles of the faith and guard everything that has to do with God because God has entrusted Timothy with a great gift and a life's purpose.

2 Tim. 1: ¹⁵You are aware of the fact that all who are in Asia turned away from me, among whom are Phygelus and Hermogenes.

Paul wanted Timothy to stay focused on his purpose even in the midst of struggle. Paul had experienced struggle in Asia and there were two who left the essentials of the faith and strayed from the teaching of Paul. Phygelus and Hermogenes are mentioned in the Scripture for all generations to know that they were opposed to the work of the Lord. We do not know what the circumstances were that surrounded the need to mention these two men's names. It could have been the refusal of the Christians in the Roman province of Asia to help Paul on his arrest. It could have been in response to an appeal from Rome. It could have been the Asian Christians in Rome who deserted Paul in the first stage of his trial. Nothing else is known of Phygelus and Hermogenes except this shameful item. But Paul tells us that Timothy was "aware of the fact" and Timothy knew the reasons for Paul mentioning their names.

2 Tim. 1: ¹⁶The Lord grant mercy to the house of Onesiphorus for he often refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chains; ¹⁷but when he was in Rome, he eagerly searched for me, and found me-- ¹⁸the Lord grant to him to find mercy from the Lord on that day-- and you know very well what services he rendered at Ephesus.

In contrast to Phygelus and Hermogenes, Onesiphorus was a great supporter of Paul. Paul was in chains and could do nothing in return for Onesiphorus. Paul is offering a prayer of sorts for the household of Onesiphorus. From this prayer we may deduce that good deeds done on behalf of Christians are not done in vain, even if such people are unable to repay them. For when Paul prays that God should reward them, it is equivalent to making a promise that this will happen. Paul also expresses his own gratitude by transferring to God the duty of paying back, since he himself is unable to repay the debt. When Paul says that Onesiphorus was not ashamed of his chains, this is evidence not just of his generosity, but of his zeal, since he willingly exposed himself to danger and to the reproach of people in order to assist Paul. "He eagerly searched for me and found me".

2 Tim. 2: ¹You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. ²And the things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, these entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.

Paul has told Timothy previously to guard what was committed to him, so now he tells him to become strong in grace. Grace is a gift and that gift is Christ Jesus, who is common to all people who have entrusted themselves to Him. Timothy was a child of God and a faithful evangelist of Christ Jesus. He had sat under the tutelage of Paul many days and had heard the same teachings along with many other witnesses. Paul was now charging Timothy with the responsibility of passing on those important teachings to other faithful men who would be able to teach them.

2 Tim. 2: ³Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. ⁴No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life, so that he may please the one who enlisted him as a soldier.

Paul compares the ministry to being a soldier. Paul wants Timothy and those who will be entrusted with passing on the teachings to be good soldiers, not entangled in the dealings of everyday business, but faithfully in the battle for the Lord.

2 Tim. 2: ⁵And also if anyone competes as an athlete, he does not win the prize unless he competes according to the rules.

Paul compares the ministry to being an athlete and points out the fact that an athlete can only win if he plays by the rules. Timothy and all the ministers to follow must play by the rules.

2 Tim. 2: ⁶The hard-working farmer ought to be the first to receive his share of the crops.

Paul compares the ministry to being a hard working farmer. Just as in Paul's first letter to Timothy where Paul stated that a workman is worthy of his hire and wage, so too the minister is to be paid his wage and share first so that he can provide for his own family.

2 Tim. 2: ⁷Consider what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything.

Timothy needs to consider all that Paul is saying and let the Lord give the understanding. There is a fine line between being a minister, acting as a good soldier, competing in the race as an athlete and plowing the fields. We should not forget that this is to be done in power with love and discipline.

2 Tim. 2: ⁸Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, descendant of David, according to my gospel, ⁹for which I suffer hardship even to imprisonment as a criminal; but the word of God is not imprisoned. ¹⁰For this reason I endure all things for the sake of those who are chosen, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus *and* with *it* eternal glory. ¹¹It is a trustworthy statement: For if we died with Him, we shall also live with Him; ¹²If we endure, we shall also reign with Him; If we deny Him, He also will deny us; ¹³If we are faithless, He remains faithful; for He cannot deny Himself.

Paul struggles with his people. I think this is interesting. Most people of the world deny that the Jews are God's chosen people. The Jews deny that Jesus, a Jew, is the Messiah. In the letter to the Romans Paul states that he would die for the salvation of the Jews if they would only believe, but they will not believe. Yet Paul is suffering and soon he will die. He will be beheaded in Rome. He will go to the execution station still serving the Lord whom his own people deny as the Savior. Here is the fourth trustworthy statement. It is made up of a series of four "if" statements. Look at them carefully.

1. For if we died with Him, we shall also live with Him;
2. If we endure, we shall also reign with Him;
3. If we deny Him, He also will deny us;
4. If we are faithless, He remains faithful; for He cannot deny Himself.