

2 Timothy Study
Week 1
2 Timothy 1:1-18

Day One

1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, according to the promise of life that is in Christ Jesus, 2 To Timothy, my dear son: Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord. 3 I thank God, whom I serve, as my forefathers did, with a clear conscience, as night and day I constantly remember you in my prayers.

v. 1 – Paul was comfortable referring to himself as an apostle. What is an apostle? It was one who was sent forth on a task, something Paul certainly was. Yet today the term is often applied to local pastors who want a title above pastor. I don't see any apostle in the New Testament who was also pastor of a local church. I don't have any problem with there being modern-day apostles. But an apostle who stays in one place is not an apostle.

You can't choose to be an apostle, or anything in Christ for that matter. It is chosen for you. Charles Spurgeon once said to a man who was considering whether or not he had a pastoral calling, "If you can do anything else, do it. For with a call, it is all-consuming and without question."

It is interesting that Paul was an apostle according to the promise of life in Jesus. Your purpose is a living thing because Jesus is alive to maintain and oversee it in your life. Your purpose is also a promise from God; He gives His word that you will achieve it if you accept it, not receiving it in vain.

As God's fellow workers we urge you not to receive God's grace in vain. 2 For he says, "In the time of my favor I heard you, and in the day of salvation I helped you." I tell you, now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation (2 Corinthians 6:1-2).

v. 2 – Paul wrote this particular letter to his son in the faith, Timothy. This was the only relationship that he had like this that I can see. I don't see the same kind of relationship between Paul and Luke or Titus, for example. To see how this relationship between Paul and Timothy started, look at Acts 16:

He came to Derbe and then to Lystra, where a disciple named Timothy lived, whose mother was a Jewess and a believer, but whose father was a Greek. 2 The brothers at Lystra and Iconium spoke well of him. 3 Paul wanted to take him along on the journey, so he circumcised him because of the Jews who lived in that area, for they all knew that his father was a Greek. 4 As they traveled from town to town, they delivered the decisions reached by the apostles and elders in Jerusalem for the people to obey. 5 So the churches were strengthened in the faith and grew daily in numbers (Acts 16:1-5).

Paul started the letter by imparting a blessing to Timothy of grace, mercy and peace. Paul also seems to have made a distinction between the Father and Jesus, indicating the concept of the Trinity took shape in Paul's mind early on.

v. 3 – Paul saw what he was doing as a continuation of the work of his forefathers. Many of the Jews would have disagreed, seeing it as a new work and not a continuation of the covenant or Judaism. Paul served God with a clear conscience, which he reiterated when he spoke to the Ephesian elders.

"Now I know that none of you among whom I have gone about preaching the kingdom will ever see me again. Therefore, I declare to you today that I am innocent of the blood of all men. For I have not hesitated to proclaim to you the whole will of God (Acts 20:25-28).

Paul prayed for his son, Timothy, regularly. **Who do you pray for regularly?**

Day Two

4 Recalling your tears, I long to see you, so that I may be filled with joy. 5 I have been reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also. 6 For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands.

v. 4 – Did Paul and Timothy have some tear-filled separation? It seems so, which is an indication of just how close they were. I don't think you can manufacture that kind of relationship. Only God can develop it.

Paul would have been filled with joy when he was reunited with Timothy. **Who is filled with joy when you are around?** One of my goals is to see people smile when I show up, not when I leave.

v. 5 – Paul had fond memories of his relationship with Timothy and they had a history together. Thus Paul could reference Timothy's mother and grandmother because he had first-hand knowledge of them. I like to meet the families of people with whom I work. I think it's important to do that.

Since Paul knew Timothy's spiritual heritage, he could appreciate all the more the faith that Timothy had, that was "living" in him. Not only was his faith alive; it was also sincere and without hypocrisy. That is a great goal to have – sincere and living faith. It is even a greater goal to have others, like Paul, who can recognize that faith and be persuaded that it's real. **Who can give testimony that your faith is real? Does your family have a heritage of faith? If not, then are you ready to start one, doing your best to insure that your faith lives in the hearts of subsequent generations?**

v. 6 – Since Timothy's faith was alive and well, Paul directed him to "fan into flame" God's gift in him, which came when Paul laid hands on him. **What does it mean to fan**

into flames? Fire needs oxygen, so if you have a spark or small flame, you can take a piece of paper or cardboard and fan that spark so that it will burn brighter and hotter.

Timothy had a gift. What was the gift? Was it the faith that Paul had just referenced? Was it his preaching or some other public ministry expression? Whatever it was, Paul had a role in its inception, but now it was up to Timothy to make it as effective as possible.

What is your gift? How do you now it's a gift? What are you willing to do to make it grow larger and easier for people to see? Who has played a part in that gift, like Paul did with Timothy? Are you still in touch with that person, or someone else who can exhort you to be all that you can be and to exert your faith for that gift?

Day Three

7 For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline.

v. 7 – This is one of the most quoted verses in the Bible, at least in the circles in which I travel and work. Why? It is because so many, this writer included, have a timid spirit. We are so afraid to do the wrong thing that often we do no thing. We are so afraid of missing God that, quite frankly, we often miss God!

Timidity is closely related to fear and there are all kinds of fears that beset God's people. Some of them are fear of failure, success, criticism, mistakes, rejection, poverty, death, and speaking in front of others – and the list goes on and on. **What can you add to that list?**

If you have fear and timidity, that did not come from God. If God did not give this spirit, that means he does give other spirits, which Paul mentioned next. It isn't enough to know what God doesn't do or give. It's critical we know what he does do and give.

The Bible repeatedly orders us to “fear not.” **Is that just an ideal that is unachievable, something to which we are exhorted to strive?** I don't think so. We are ruthlessly to eradicate any fear or timidity from our lives. **So what are you afraid of? What are you doing to confront and overcome it?**

So what spirits does God give His people? The first is power. I am writing this on a plane right now, and I have my computer plugged into the outlet below my seat. Formerly, I had power to do about two hours work. Now, I can work on this entire transoceanic flight if I so choose. Why? Because I have power. **Is your power limited? What do you have power to do?**

The second spirit is love. There are some people that I don't love and, truth be told, don't even like. That isn't acceptable to God, however, so I have come to realize that I need His help if I am to fulfill His command to love the brethren. So I ask Him for help. I

say, “Lord, I don’t love that person. I need your help. If I’m going to love them, then you have to help me. Give me a spirit of love!” **Is there someone in your life that you don’t love? What are you prepared to do about it? Why not pray the same prayer I pray? Don’t just ignore the problem; get a spirit of love!**

The third is a spirit of self-discipline. Most other translations interpret this to be a sound mind, so let’s try to combine the two. God will give you the ability to control your thoughts so that you aren’t carried away by fears and thoughts of un-faith. I have written in past studies that I can be pessimistic and that my mind can be carried off by cynicism and doubt.

What should I do when that happens? I am learning not to give into that, but to exercise discipline, with God’s help, to maintain correct thinking. God will give me a spirit of discipline to help me do that, and it is so important that you deal with how you think:

Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is — his good, pleasing and perfect will (Romans 12:2).

So which of those spirits do you need most urgently? Ask for them and then thank God for His provision of spirits to help you through life.

Day Four

8 So do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord, or ashamed of me his prisoner. But join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God, 9 who has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time, 10 but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

v. 8 – So it seems that Paul is writing from prison, since he referred to himself as a prisoner. I am impressed by how many great leaders spent time in jail. **Are you prepared to spend time in jail for what you believe?** The immediate impression of the public when someone is in prison is, “What has that person done wrong?” Then people could tend to shy away from that person. Paul was asking Timothy not shy away from him and not to be intimidated to preach the gospel, which is what got Paul in jail in the first place.

Not only did Paul ask Timothy not to shy away, but he also ordered Timothy to join with him [Paul] so that together they could suffer for the gospel’s sake. Would Timothy endure suffering without help? Absolutely not, for he would receive help, God’s power, to suffer. Suffering is not a bad thing; it helps us rely on God and it helps us identify with others. Suffering for the gospel’s sake is a joyful thing.

Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 5:10).

They called the apostles in and had them flogged. Then they ordered them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. The apostles left the Sanhedrin, rejoicing because they had been counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the Name. (Acts 5:40-42).

Are you suffering right now for your testimony of Jesus? If so, are you doing it joyfully?

v. 9 – God has saved and called us all to a holy life because of what Jesus did, not because of anything we have done. God had His own intentions when He called us to Himself. Don't ever think that you can earn God's grace. You can cooperate with God's plan and receive His grace, you can thwart His grace, but He gives His grace freely.

v. 10 – God's grace is a gift; it is "given." You can never earn a gift. His grace is given in Jesus Christ; there is no grace apart from Jesus. And God's grace was given before time! Yet it was not made manifest until the appearing of Jesus. God's plan in Christ for you and me existed before time. God did not play chess with the serpent in the Garden, matching him move for move. God's purpose was established in Christ before the Garden and time.

In this verse, Paul mentioned "life" for the second time in the letter. If Jesus lives forever, then you and I will, too. If that's true, then all the other things that come in God will last forever as well – things like the spirits of power, love, self-discipline, faith, purpose that He bestows on His people.

All these things came to light through the gospel, and that is why Paul urged Timothy to suffer if need be so that the gospel may go forth. It is a life and death message, the supreme message, and it is of the utmost importance that we spread it by every means possible.

That doesn't mean we only preach salvation, for holy living is a part of the gospel message as well. **What are you doing to further the message of the gospel? What are you willing to do?**

Day Five

11 And of this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher. 12 That is why I am suffering as I am. Yet I am not ashamed, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him for that day.

v. 11 – Paul was assigned a purpose and duty to proclaim (herald), spread (apostle) and explain (teach) the gospel of Jesus Christ. What did he do to deserve this privilege?

Nothing! Was he better equipped than others to do so? Perhaps, but he was not assigned this task based on his qualifications? Absolutely not!

Paul was not a philosopher, and he was not a Jewish evangelist. His message sprang out of Judaism, but Paul saw his message as the gospel of Jesus Christ. Paul was focused and he knew what his message was. That is why he was so effective.

You have a purpose. It may not be as dramatic or public as Paul's, but you have been "appointed" to do something. Do you know what it is? Can you describe it to others?

v. 12 – There is suffering that is common to mankind, like the loss of a loved one, inconvenience, broken relationships and stress. That isn't what Paul was referring to here. At that moment, Paul was suffering in jail because of his work for the gospel. God appointed him, knowing that he would suffer and be martyred. Yet God assigned Paul that work anyway, and Paul was privileged to receive it.

The fact that you work for God doesn't mean you won't have hardships and pain. Paul "encouraged the brethren with that thought at one point:

Then they returned to Lystra, Iconium and Antioch, strengthening the disciples and encouraging them to remain true to the faith. "We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God," they said (Acts 14:21-23).

Paul was suffering but he was not ashamed of his testimony or the reaction to it. He had entrusted his work and his very existence to God. He knew that God would preserve his work in His sight until the last day and then Paul would be rewarded in full for his work. Paul was a man of faith, so he wasn't asking Timothy to do anything that he wasn't willing to do himself. Some leaders will do that, and send followers where they are not willing to go. Paul wasn't one of them.

I think Paul was not only entrusting his work to God, but also the people impacted by Paul's ministry to Him as well. **What work or results of your work have you entrusted to God? Is there anything that doesn't look like it's yielding results, yet God sent you to do? Can you entrust the results to Him?**

As I write this, I thought of these studies I have been writing for six years. Oh, how I would love to see them published! I get so discouraged that more people don't see them because I know they could help them in their Bible study. Yet I will continue to write, knowing that I have entrusted their results into His hands. Maybe they will be published next year, maybe after I'm dead and gone and maybe never at all. That is up to God, and I will trust Him as to how He wants to use them or not use them.

Day Six

13 What you heard from me, keep as the pattern of sound teaching, with faith and love in Christ Jesus. 14 Guard the good deposit that was entrusted to you—guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in us. 15 You know that everyone in the province of Asia has deserted me, including Phygelus and Hermogenes.

v. 13 – Paul imparted a body of teaching to Timothy that was sound and not weird. It was a mixture of theology and practical living. He wanted Timothy to continue that, but it was only the pattern. That means that Timothy could adapt it to fit the needs of the moment, without deviating from the core. I think we are to do the same thing today. Yet there are some who have anything but sound teaching. We have a proliferation of teachers and teaching, yet people living unholy lives now more than ever. **What’s wrong? Where is the disconnect, so to speak?**

The goal of my teaching or any teaching should be faith and love in Christ. **So we go through elaborate teachings about the end times and who the Antichrist is? We should study the results of those teachings to determine if they are sound. What results should there be? Faith and love in Jesus. How does teaching about the Antichrist, for example, contribute to faith and love in Jesus? Does it help people raise their children? Perform their jobs more effectively?**

And don’t even start me on much of what is presented on so-called Christian television. It does not fit the criteria mentioned here for sound teaching. Some of it is weird.

v. 14 – Paul ordered Timothy to guard the good deposit. **What is that deposit?** It would seem to be the gift mentioned in verse six and the sound teaching that Paul had imparted. Paul had entrusted something to God – the results of his work – and something to Timothy – his body of sound teaching. **So what have you entrusted to those below you?**

When you do that, you take a risk that they won’t treat your entrustment properly. It requires faith for you to do so. I am always amazed that Jesus departed the scene when He did. It didn’t appear like the disciples were ready. He entrusted the task of spreading the good news, and then went away. When He left, however, He did send a Helper – the Holy Spirit – and Paul referred to that same Helper when He ordered Timothy to guard what he had given him.

I am glad I have help. I am glad that the Church belongs to Jesus. I am grateful that the Holy Spirit lives in me to do His work.

But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment: in regard to sin, because men do not believe in me; in regard to righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; and in regard to judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned (John 16:7-11).

Are you working to protect what has been entrusted to you? Are you trusting God to help you? How do you know you are trusting Him? What faith actions have you taken to entrust something over you to God and under you to some followers, workers or volunteers?

Day Seven

16 May the Lord show mercy to the household of Onesiphorus, because he often refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chains. 17 On the contrary, when he was in Rome, he searched hard for me until he found me. 18 May the Lord grant that he will find mercy from the Lord on that day! You know very well in how many ways he helped me in Ephesus.

v. 16 – Paul was writing from Rome and mentions one person by name. **How would you like to help one of God’s workers with such distinction that your name is memorialized forever?** I want that! Onesiphorus served with such distinction that Paul singled him out. **Why?** He brought times of refreshing to Paul’s spirit by not being ashamed of Paul’s situation.

We can look back in time and see that God was with Paul without question. Such was not the case with Paul’s contemporaries. Yet this Onesiphorus saw clearly and did the right thing by standing with God’s man.

v. 17 – It wasn’t easy for Onesiphorus to do the right thing. First, he had to find Paul! Paul indicated that he worked hard just trying to do that. Once he found him, however, Onesiphorus must have visited and identified with Paul in his suffering. For that, Paul prayed a blessing on his entire household!

God is no fool. He knows those who are His and serve His purposes. He blesses those close to those who are a blessing to Him. **I want that for my family, don’t you? If you do, then how can you get it?**

v. 18 – **On what day was Paul referring to in this verse? Is it the day of judgment? Onesiphorus’ own day of trouble, similar to what Paul was experiencing?** I’m not sure, but I want help on “that day” because it seems like I will need it. **So what can I do to insure that I get it?** Perhaps I will need to find someone to refresh who is under stress for their work for Jesus?