

Second Baptist Church of Doylestown

2 Timothy Chapter 1

6/17/15

Bible Study Notes

Thanksgiving - Verses 1-5

¹Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, in keeping with the promise of life that is in Christ Jesus, ²To Timothy, my dear son: Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord. ³I thank God, whom I serve, as my ancestors did, with a clear conscience, as night and day I constantly remember you in my prayers. ⁴Recalling your tears, I long to see you, so that I may be filled with joy. ⁵I am 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.

1:1 This letter has a somber tone. Paul had been imprisoned for the last time, and he knew he would soon die. Unlike Paul's first imprisonment in Rome, when he was in a house (Acts 28:16, 23, 30) where he continued to teach, this time he was probably confined to a cold dungeon, awaiting his death (4:6-8). Emperor Nero had begun a major persecution in A.D. 64 as part of his plan to pass the blame for the great fire of Rome from himself to the Christians. This persecution spread across the empire and included social ostracism, public torture, and murder. As Paul was waiting to die, he wrote a letter to his dear friend Timothy, a younger man who was like a son to him (1:2). Written in approximately A.D. 66/67, these are the last words we have from Paul.

When we are united with Christ, life takes on both immediate and eternal dimensions. Paul's use of the phrase, "the promise of life that is in Christ Jesus," can apply to the life that Jesus gives immediately to those who trust him, as well as to the life fully realized in eternity. On one hand, Paul said, "If anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come" (2 Corinthians 5:17). So new life begins at conversion. Yet on the other hand, we "wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies" (Romans 8:23). The present experience we enjoy provides a foretaste of our complete redemption at Christ's return. When we struggle with difficulties in this life, remember that the best is yet to come.

1:2 Paul's second letter to Timothy was written about two to four years after his first letter. Timothy had been Paul's traveling companion on the second and third missionary journeys, and Paul had left him in Ephesus to help the church there (1 Timothy 1:3-4).

1:3 Paul consistently prayed for Timothy, his friend, his fellow traveler, his son in the faith, and a strong leader in the Christian church. Although the two men were separated from each other, their prayers provided a source of mutual encouragement. We, too, should pray consistently for others, especially for those who do God's work. On your prayer list, include your pastor, other church leaders, and missionaries around the world. They need your prayers.

1:4 We don't know when Paul and Timothy last parted, but it was probably when Paul was arrested and taken to Rome for his second imprisonment. The tears they shed at parting revealed the depth of their relationship.

1:5 Timothy's mother and grandmother, Eunice and Lois, were early Christian converts, possibly through Paul's ministry in their home city, Lystra (Acts 16:1). They had communicated their strong Christian faith to Timothy, even though his father was probably not a believer. Don't hide your light at home; our families are fertile fields for planting seeds of the gospel. Let your parents, children, spouse, brothers, and sisters know of your faith in Jesus, and be sure they see Christ's love, helpfulness, and joy in you.

Appeal for Loyalty to Paul and the Gospel - Verses 6-14

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. ⁷ For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline. ⁸ So do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord or of me his prisoner. Rather, join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God. ⁹ He 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. 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 this is no cause for shame, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him until that day.

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.

1:6 At the time of his ordination, Timothy had received special gifts of the Spirit to enable him to serve the church (see 1 Timothy 4:14). In telling Timothy to “fan into flame the gift of God,” Paul was encouraging him to persevere. Timothy did not need new revelations or new gifts; he needed the courage and self-discipline to hang on to the truth and to use the gifts he had already received (see 1:13-14). If Timothy would step out boldly in faith and proclaim the gospel once again, the Holy Spirit would go with him and give him power. When you use the gifts God has given you, you will find that God will give you the power you need to accomplish whatever task he gives you.

Clearly Timothy's spiritual gift had been given to him when Paul and the elders had laid their hands on him and set him apart for ministry (see 1 Timothy 4:14). God gives all Christians gifts to use to build up the body of Christ (see 1 Corinthians 12:4-31), and he gives special gifts to some through church leaders, who serve as God's instruments.

1:6-7 Timothy was experiencing great opposition to his message and to himself as a leader. His youth, his association with Paul, and his leadership had come under fire from believers and nonbelievers alike. Paul urged him to be bold. When we allow people to intimidate us, we neutralize our effectiveness for God. The power of the Holy Spirit can help us overcome our fear of what some might say or do to us so that we can continue to do God's work.

1:7 Paul mentions three characteristics of the effective Christian leader: power, love, and self-discipline. These are available to us because the Holy Spirit lives in us. Follow his leading each day so that your life will more fully exhibit these characteristics. See Galatians 5:22-23 for a list of the by-products of the Holy Spirit living in us.

1:8 In this time of mounting persecution, Timothy may have been afraid to continue preaching the gospel. His fears were based on fact because believers were being arrested and executed. Paul told Timothy to expect suffering—Timothy, like Paul, would be jailed for preaching the gospel (Hebrews 13:23). But Paul promised Timothy that God would give him strength and that he would be ready when it was his turn to suffer. Even when there is no persecution, sharing our faith in Christ can be difficult. Fortunately we, like Paul and Timothy, can rely on the Holy Spirit to give us courage. Don't be ashamed to testify of your personal faith in Jesus Christ.

1:9-10 In these verses Paul gives a brief summary of the gospel. God loves us, called us, and sent Christ to die for us. We can have eternal life through faith in him because he broke the power of death with his resurrection. We do not deserve to be saved, but God offers us salvation anyway. What we must do is believe in him and accept his offer.

1:12 In spite of the suffering that might have caused Paul to despair, he affirmed his confidence in God's protection. This was not a claim to strong faith; rather, it was a trust in one so powerful that even a weak faith was sufficient. Paul based his confidence in Christ on his intimate relationship with him. Paul knew the one in whom he trusted with personal knowledge; he knew Christ so well that no earthly experience could break the bond of love by which Christ held him. If your situation looks bleak, give your concerns to Christ because you know him and love him. Realize that he will guard all you have entrusted to him until the day of his return. For more on our security in Christ, see Romans 8:38-39.

1:12 The phrase "guard what I have entrusted to him" could mean: (1) Paul knew that God would protect the souls of those converted through his preaching; (2) Paul trusted God to guard his own soul until Christ's second coming; or (3) Paul was confident that, though he was in prison and facing death, God would carry out the gospel ministry through others such as Timothy. Paul may have expressed his confidence to encourage Timothy, who was undoubtedly discouraged by the problems in Ephesus and fearful of persecution. Even in prison, Paul knew that God was still in control. No matter what setbacks or problems we face, we can trust fully in God.

1:13-14 Timothy was in a time of transition. He had been Paul's bright young helper; soon he would be on his own as leader of a church in a difficult environment. Although his responsibilities were changing, Timothy was not without help. He had everything he needed to face the future if he would hold on tightly to the Lord's resources. When you are facing difficult transitions, follow Paul's advice to Timothy and look back at your experience. Who is the foundation of your faith? How can you build on that foundation? What gifts has the Holy Spirit given you? Use the gifts you have been given.

Examples of Disloyalty and Loyalty - Verses 15-18

¹⁵ You know that everyone in the province of Asia has deserted me, including Phygelus and Hermogenes. 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.

1:15-16 Nothing more is known about Phygelus and Hermogenes, who evidently opposed Paul's ministry. These men serve as a warning that even leaders can fall. Onesiphorus was mentioned as a positive example in contrast to these men.