

*We exist to make disciples who delight in God and make Him known  
by proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

## **An Encouragement with an Edge**

2 Timothy 1:3-5

**Keywords:** Paul, Timothy, discipleship, faithfulness, Faithful walk

**PowerPoint Presentation included:** NONE

**SermonAudio Blurb:** Paul begins to set the stage for this final, powerful letter to Timothy. A treasure-trove of wisdom, exhortation, and concern from this old saint to his dear son in the faith. He has hard words for Timothy, but he starts it all with words of encouragement, but even in those words there is an edge about them.

### Bible Study Starting New Members

Dismiss

V & V Oct 21, 26

#### **I. Introduction.**

##### **A. Relay races.**

1. The key was the ability to effectively pass the baton. The race is never determined by one person, each person is critical in the race.
2. Failure to do so was automatic failure. Have the receiver start too soon and he had to slow down to get it. Too slow and the first person overruns the second.
3. And finally when it all goes together, the handoff is almost when the next person is at full speed and it is effortless.
4. A good illustration of our work as Christians in the bigger picture of the history of the Church.

The purpose of writing: That Timothy should come to Paul's side quickly and that Timothy stand firm in his calling and faith. This is important to understand when you read this letter. Every sentence and word is probably the last words in writing Paul will give to this young man. The end is near for Paul and Timothy will not be able to lean on him ever again. This is something is huge, the giant of the Church is passing away. It is like Moses looking at Joshua. ~~The baton is being passed. That moment where the first holder releases his grip and the second~~

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takes full charge to deliver it to the next is taking place. It is an emotional point and it is a critical juncture.

- B. The value and need of gospel relationships.
1. Where our friendship is founded and flows from a common love of Jesus and the good news. It is a relationship where the common desire is to grow in their Christian faith and in faithfulness.
    - a. No guarantee that this will occur (certainly Paul has witnessed this in his own life, cf. last part of 2 Timothy such as Demas). But that is not the point.
    - b. Pragmatic effectiveness **is not** the basis of how we are to live and act and speak as Christians.
    - c. I do believe that when the relationships become founded upon the Word and a common faith most will flourish. (Cf 1 Peter 2:2)
    - d. Or, as the relationship grows more deep and thorough, one will eventually back away because they do not truly desire to flourish. It is too personal (cf. 1th 2:8, "we bared our souls to you out of our affection").
  2. And here again Paul is baring his soul. And what I love about Paul is that he did not give up.
    - a. Burned by others time and time again. Yet here we see him in a prison, waiting for death for the sake of the Lord Jesus, and we find him baring his soul yet again to this young man.
    - b. Others burned and abandoned Paul over the gospel, but Paul refuses to do the same all the way to the end of his life.
    - c. (Those of you burned or abandoned, what is your tendency? The Gospel demands you press forward bearing the scars of hurt with joy)
- C. In vs 8 Paul exhorts Timothy to not be ashamed of the gospel (testimony about our Lord).
1. In many ways that exhortation (explain) is the theme of the whole letter.
  2. And leading up to this exhortation is a very clear encouragement to be faithful. An encouragement with an edge to it.

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3. First we will consider the text itself, then I will try to draw out the encouragement and the edge that is in it as well.

## II. Background and flow:

- A. This single sentence prayer-thanks-giving is very complex in the Greek and no English translation can really render smoothly the thoughts and relationships without departing from the original organization of thoughts.
  1. **This is the reality of translations.** Those learning Greek right now will appreciate good translations all the more in the coming days and weeks.
  2. Vss 3-5 is not actually about prayer, Paul's prayer life, or the need to be thankful to God. But these are what usually is the focus and that weakens the subtle power in this passage.
  3. Paul also makes mention of his conscience in relation to his forefathers in vs 3.
    - a. The outstanding point is how he connects his ministry with the OT work of service/worship. The term "serve" is actually a technical terms related to the temple worship/service done by the priests in the OT.
    - b. The "I serve" (present active indicative) with the backward look related to his "ancestors" is an effort to show continuity between what he is doing (as well as Timothy) and the 'Fathers' of the OT.
    - c. [Paul is not talking about all of his family line. If they were like him many of them were also not lovers of YHWH.
    - d. But he is looking back over the stretch of Jewish history, starting with Abraham, and sees those who faithfully served God and he puts himself into that line.
    - e. And it is all a work of grace by God. In the same way, each of us once were blasphemers, not giving thanks to God, but then God made us alive with Christ. And we too joined that long line of 'ancestors' of those serving God
    - f. "Clear conscience" is speaking of the idea of being faithful to the message of the gospel just as those in the past (Moses, David, Isaiah, and Amos).

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- B. Vss 3-5 form a single, complex Greek sentence. Key interpretational issues: 1. Does Paul explain why he gives thanks? 2. How are the various phrases related to one another? 3. What is the function of the “thanksgiving -prayer” within the rest of the letter?
1. Does Paul explain why he gives thanks?
    - a. The main sentence is "I thank God . . . Because I remember your faith." That is the point of this passage. Everything else in it explains or expands it.
    - b. At the same time the thought of 'remembrance' is a key concept that is woven into the sentence using various words for remembering. (3, 4 5).
    - c. Also, Paul is also connecting **his** faithfulness at the beginning of the prayer with Timothy's faithfulness at the end of the book, creating bookends.
  2. How are the various phrases related to one another?
    - a. The various “rememberings” help us here to keep things clear.
    - b. Paul remembers Timothy in his prayers.
      - (1) There is a tenderness and a intensity here as Paul considers his prayers.
      - (2) They are night and day kind of prayers.
        - (a) "constantly remember" does not refer to constancy as much as consistency.
        - (b) Every time he prays he remember Timothy in his prayers. The idea of night and day is that of whenever he is in prayer.
        - (c) 1 Thessalonians 3:10; 5:2 with 2:6.
    - c. Paul remembers Timothy’s tears.
      - (1) The recalling is in the context of Paul wanting Timothy to come to see him.
        - (a) Realize he is asking Timothy to leave an important work in Ephesus. One given to him by Paul. Gives

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a sense of the loneliness Paul is experiencing right now.

- (b) As he prays for this young man his mind goes back to a time where Timothy was in tears. This then causes him to desire to see his dear friend.
  - (c) Unsure of the event, but probably at some point between 1 and 2 Timothy where they had to part.
- (2) The purpose is that Paul might be filled with joy.
- (a) Sound's selfish but really it isn't.
  - (b) If I asked you to come to see me because I missed you and it would fill me with joy I doubt you would rebuke me for selfishness.
  - (c) This is simply baring of one's soul, transparency.
  - (d) The appeal flows out of a secure and intimate relationship and aims to satisfy a deep longing in Paul.
    - i) Grace, mercy and peace will be with us, from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love. I was very glad to find some of your children walking in truth, just as we have received commandment to do from the Father. (2 Jo 1:3-4)
    - ii) For I was very glad when brethren came and bore witness to your truth, that is, how you are walking in truth. I have no greater joy than this, to hear of my children walking in the truth. (3Jo 1:3-4)
- d. And finally Paul remembers the faith that was in Timothy's mother and grandmother and now in Timothy.
- (1) This is interesting because it speaks of Timothy's background like Paul did regarding his forefathers.

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- (2) Timothy's is shorter due to the shortness of his spiritual heritage.
  - (3) But understand that it is not just about the faith that is "in" Timothy. It is also that to have that faith brings a responsibility with it. A race-course that is before Timothy, one that he must run.
  - (4) And that is where the "edge" comes into play.
3. What is the function of the "thanksgiving -prayer" within the rest of the letter?
- a. Paul was faithful to the end to his spiritual legacy is so far true of Timothy.
  - b. But there is a difference that is key to remember. Paul's race is drawing to an end. But Timothy's legacy is still open-ended.
  - c. Notice vs 5 with me carefully (read it again).
    - (1) He affirms Timothy's faith. But then he gives a flow....first grandmother, then mother, then Timothy.
    - (2) But the way he words it the second part is where he is putting the edge to this word of encouragement.

### **III. The Encouragement.**

- A. Paul loves this young man and he knows he is not long for this world.
- B. He has many things to say to Timothy. Some will be in this letter, others, hopefully in person.
  1. Some of them will be reminders, others will be corrections and reproofs.
  2. Notice 1:6-8, 11-14, 2:1-9, 15-16, 22-23; 3:1, 10-14; 4:1-5.
- C. But though he has much to say, here he reminds Timothy of his love for him.
  1. As he prays, whenever he prays, his mind thinks of Timothy. There is a burden for this young man and a desire to see him flourish in true, biblical ministry.
  2. He thinks of Timothy and realizes how much Timothy leans upon him—remembering the tears when they parted.

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- a. If Timothy wept then, how much more in the short future when Paul is killed by the Roman government?
  - b. Timothy is in a tough place at this point in his Christian walk. It is clear for the admonitions that the pressures of ministry is heavy upon him.
  - c. I believe he is starting to consider points of compromise. It is tiring to be the focus of hate, innuendo, gossip, slander and the like.
  - d. It is tiring to always be at the front of the battle, especially when you find those who should be next to you shying away.
3. So Paul gives him these good words, reminding him that he is not forgotten, not in the least.
- D. But there is an edge to this all as well.

## **IV. The Edge.**

- A. As I said earlier, the edge is found in vs 5. But to see it takes effort so shake your mind awake, if your bible is not still open, open it. Don't rely on this outline.
- B. In vs 5 notice again the flow. It starts out with Timothy's faith, then grandmother mother and then back to Timothy.
- C. In vs 3 Paul states that he has been faithful to the point of a clear conscience, that he has served the Lord as did those before him.
- D. The implication is that Timothy belongs to a long line of people who were faithful to the gospel.
  1. Paul's forefathers, Paul, grandmother, mom, and Timothy.
  2. And heavy, but unsaid at this point is the question, "Will this continue with you Timothy?"
  3. Will he be able to say that at the end he has served the Lord with a clear conscience? Will he be able to say that he has run the race and fought the fight?
  4. Even the idea of the "sincere" faith has this built into it.
    - a. ἀνυποκρ?του [*hypokritos* with alpha privative] "without hypocrisy."

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- b. This is the faith that Paul says resides in Timothy.
- c. But listen, this is the faith that he may have said was true of others. Demas (4:10, others 4:16, Phygelus and Hermogenes 1:15, turned away.
- d. One of the key evidences of true faith is persevering in the midst of suffering.

## V. Conclusion.

- A. This section is one of those places where the Apostle lays the ground work for much of what follows in the letter. It is serious yet gentle.
  - 1. It show loves and yet no compromising with the faith once delivered to God's people. It shows honest transparency and need that is refreshing.
  - 2. And it shows a foundation of deep, God-centered theology from which it is written.
  - 3. A dying man to the next man in line to live and to die for Jesus Christ.
  - 4. Hebrews 11:32-38.
    - a. Show where it goes from victory to torture.
    - b. We never know which path God has ordained. We are not to concern ourselves with it. We are called to run.
- B. The bible does not recognize a faith that is only punctiliar.
  - 1. The Christian faith has a specific starting point in your faith in Jesus Christ.
  - 2. But it is just the beginning of a race that is to be run with endurance to the end.
  - 3. Paul is finishing his race, he has fought the good fight and now it is time to pass that fully over to Timothy.
  - 4. And therefore he reminds him of his faith, expressing encouragement that it is a genuine faith and all of this was in anticipation of the harder words he will say in the rest of the letter.
- C. Your faith is not punctiliar either.
  - 1. You are called to enjoy the truth of what Jesus has done on your behalf.