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**Endure. . . till the end**

**2 Timothy 1**

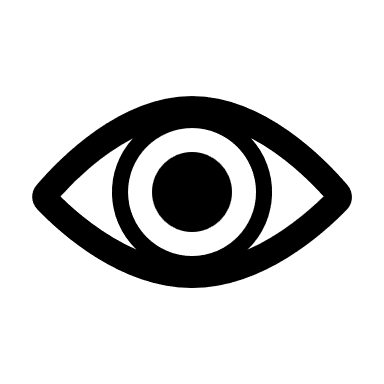
**Background on 2 Timothy:**

* Written by Paul to his spiritual son in the faith, Timothy, about 5-6 years after 1 Timothy.
* Timothy is a prominent leader in the church of Ephesus.
* Writing from a prison in Rome around 67 A.D.
* This is Paul’s “farewell letter.” He knows his own death is imminent (2 Timothy 4:6).
* Paul will be executed (beheaded) by Emperor Nero approx. 67/68 A.D.
* Tremendous persecution against Christians happening during this time – Emperor Nero is leading this.

Question: **If you knew you were about to die, and it’s clear to Paul it was coming, what would be some of the last things you would want to address and impart to others about leaving a strong biblical and healthy legacy in life?**

**2 TIMOTHY 1:1-18**

* Read the passage silently on your own.
* Read the passage twice out loud.



**OBSERVATION** – Ask the question - What do you see or what does the passage say? (Don’t read into it). What do you see in the passage that stands out to you? Look for key words, phrases, comparisons, contrasts. You are seeking to answer the questions – Who? What? Where? When? How? and Why?

*Observation teaches you to see exactly what the passage says. It is the basis for accurate interpretation and correct application.*

*“In observation, you assume the role of a biblical detective, looking for clues.” (Howard Hendricks)*

**GREETING AND HAPPY REMEMBERANCE vss. 1-5**

**Verses 1-2**: “*Paul, an apostle (one sent out) of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus. . .*”

* Instead of fearing death, Paul is rejoicing and proclaiming the promise of eternal life in Christ!
* Timothy (leader in Ephesus) is the recipient of this letter. Paul sees Timothy as his spiritual child in the faith. We all need a Paul, Timothy, and Barnabas in our life.

**Verse 3:** Paul says something that we would not expect a person to say who is chained and sitting in a dark, damp, dirty dungeon in Rome where he awaits execution. What is it? “*I thank God*. . .”

* Paul is old, tired, and about to die. Yet he “thanks God.” There’s no grumbling, no murmuring, no whining, no focusing on himself, no concern about his own plight, no worries about his future… He’s full of praise and gratitude to God.
* ***Thankfulness is the attitude that perfectly dismisses my sinful tendency to complain and argue, thereby releasing joy and blessing into my life.***



**Time out!** If you received this letter, what is it in these verses that encourage you, and challenge you?

In September of 1620, the ship *The Mayflower* set sail from England to come to America. Life in the new world was tough. The first year these people made seven times more graves than homes, yet they endured and decided to set aside a day for thanksgiving. It really is all about perspective. Paul says he thanks God, “whom I serve with a pure conscience, as my forefathers did. . .”



**Time out!** Take a moment and express to the Lord five things you are thankful for which he has accomplished or provided for you in your life.

**Verses 4-5:** Paul is concluding his ministry with no regrets. His conscience is clear. He’s taken no shortcuts. These are parting and powerful words to take to heart.

* He’s served God faithfully with integrity. Paul and Timothy have served side by side for the advancement of the gospel. Paul conveys to Timothy, I have prayed for you day and night, remembering your tears. Paul longs to see him so that he may be filled with joy. He recalls the heritage Timothy has come from.
* **What kind of heritage?** (See Acts 16:1-5)

Timothy is around 15 yrs. of age. Timothy’s dad was not a believer (Greek). But both his mother and grandma (Jewish) were sincere Christians with a vibrant faith. And these two ladies had a profound impact on Timothy, passing on a rich heritage to him. He is the recipient of their influence.

**Time Out!** How many of you are thankful for a praying mother or grandmother in your life? How have they influenced you in a positive way? Don’t ever underestimate the power of prayer you can have on your kids and grandchildren.

Christian Psychologist James Dobson comments:

*“I urge you as parents of young children to provide for your children an unshakable faith in Jesus Christ. The greatest legacy we can live, and leave is an authentic faith which is passed down from generation to generation.”*

**STIR UP THE GIFT OF GOD AND BE BOLD vss.6-12**

Paul gives several commands to Timothy.

**Command #1** “*Therefore I remind you* ***to stir up (or fan into flame) the gift of God which is in you*** *through the laying on of my hands.*” (verse 6)

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***Helpful Notes*** Paul is saying to Timothy, “*I commissioned you and sent you out to be an ambassador for the Lord, so don’t become timid and just sit back in Ephesus and let that fire in your belly die.*” Regardless of your circumstances, fear or feelings of inadequacy don’t let your spiritual life and the gifts He’s imparted to you lie dormant.

**Illus.** Did you ever get out of a swimming pool on a cool day? Once you dry off and warm up it’s awfully hard to make yourself go back in. I think that was Timothy’s problem. He had forgotten that God had given him the tools to be effective for the kingdom of God, but he might be feeling a little timid because Paul is not there with him. Now that Timothy has dried off, he’s having a hard time getting back into the water. Timothy needs to grit his teeth, stir up a desire, and get back on mission with God. Dive back into the pool of life. Perhaps you’ve taken a break from being involved and God is stirring your heart to get you back in the spiritual pool of life.

**Verse 7:** “*For God has not given us a spirit of fear or timidity, but of power and of love and of a sound mind or self-discipline*.” If the Spirit of Jesus courses through our spiritual veins, He’ll drive out fear with a much needed supply of His power, (dunamis-dynamite) and His love, (agape- perfect love casts out all fear) and His wisdom.

**Command #2** *“Therefore* ***do not be ashamed of the******testimony of our Lord****, nor of me His prisoner, but share with me in the sufferings for the gospel according to the power of God...” “who 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 given to us in Christ Jesus before time began…”* (verses 8-9)

* Timothy had gotten discouraged by looking at Paul’s plight. His mentor was in chains. But Paul tells him, *“Do not be ashamed...”* He’s the prisoner of Jesus, not Rome. Evil men can chain Paul, but not the gospel. It’s “the power of God.”
* What’s the worst that could happen to Paul in first century Rome? They can behead him. What’s the worst that could happen to us in the 21st century? Someone can “unfriend” us.

**Command #3: “Join with me in suffering for the gospel** (verse 8)

* God’s eternal purposes far outweigh our momentary struggles.
* Keep your eyes on Jesus (read verses 10-11) and endure till the end. Paul may have been a prisoner, but his Savior is risen and victorious.
* Paul would rather lose his head to a sword than turn loose the Gospel.

**Verse 12:**  Notice Paul doesn’t say, “I know **WHAT** I have believed,” but **WHOM** I have believed in. Being a follower of Christ is not just faith in a set of doctrines or principles, but it’s faith in the incredible person- Jesus Christ! Paul’s confidence was in the risen Christ. He was persuaded that no matter what happened to him “today,” or “on any other day” when He stood before the Lord on that day when his life was over, Jesus would stand by his side, and obtain for him the mercies and favor of God. This is what has fueled Paul’s life.

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**Time out!** What scares you about Paul’s command about suffering for the gospel?

Share a time when you have physically, emotionally, or relationally suffered for the gospel?

**Command #4: Hold Fast to the truth.**  “**Hold fast the pattern of sound words** which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us. guard the good deposit entrusted to you. (Verses 13-14)

If you’ve ever been blessed to sit under a steady stream of solid Bible teaching, it is truly a marvelous time of watching your faith grow and mature. Solid Bible teaching keeps us from being trapped or deceived by false teaching.

**Verse 14:** “guarding the good deposit” refers to our faith. Guard it, cherish or value it, so you don’t take it for granted. We guard the good deposit through the help of the Holy Spirit.

**DESERTERS AND AFFIRMERS vss.15-18**

**Who are the deserters mentioned? And who does Paul mention was an affirmer?**

Paul then reminds Timothy of those who did not stand with him for the advancement of the gospel. *“This you know, that all those in Asia have turned away from me, among whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes.”* These were former, fair-weather friends who abandoned Paul when it got too difficult. They bailed on him.

But verses 16-18 also give us an example of a faithful man – *“May the Lord grant mercy to the household of* ***Onesiphorus****”*(his name means useful or one who brings advantage).

* **He often refreshed me**: He was a visible blessing to Paul and worked to refresh the apostle who did so much for other people.

**How do you think he might have refreshed Paul?**

* **Was not ashamed of my chains:** Onesiphorus showed himself to be a true friend of Paul when the apostle was imprisoned.
* **He sought me out (with much zeal) and found me**: There were many prisons in Rome, so it was probably difficult for Onesiphorus to find Paul, but he did.

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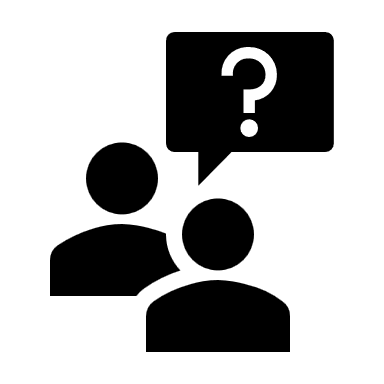
***Helpful Notes*** Onesiphorus’ mission to Rome to find and be with Paul reminds me of Alvin Straight’s journey to the state of Wisconsin in the United States. Alvin lived in the state of Iowa. He was 73 years old. His eyes were so poor he couldn’t get a license, and he didn’t trust buses or planes. So, when his brother had a stroke, and Alvin wanted to be at his brother’s side, he cranked up his 1966 John Deere riding lawn mower - and drove 200 miles from Iowa to Blue River, Wisconsin, to console his brother.

In the same way, Onesiphorus found Paul in prison, and stayed by his side and ministered to him, just as Paul had ministered to him.

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**Who are people who have ministered to you in your most difficult moments in life?**

Paul says of Onesiphorus, *“The Lord grant to him that he may find mercy from the Lord in that Day - and you know very well how many ways he ministered to me at Ephesus.”* Onesiphorus was a breath of fresh air. Let’s seek to refresh one another!

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**INTERPRETATION –**What does the passage mean? What’s the author’s main intent or purpose in sharing this truth in the passage?

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**APPLICATION –** Ask the question: How can I put this into practice?

How can this passage be applied to:

* my marriage?
* my family?
* my church?
* my spiritual life?
* my workplace?
* other?



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