

20251012 2 Timothy 1

1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God according to the promise of the life that is in Christ Jesus,

2 To Timothy, my beloved child:

Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

Guard the Deposit Entrusted to You

3 I thank God whom I serve, as did my ancestors, with a clear conscience, as I remember you constantly in my prayers night and day. 4 As I remember your tears, I long to see you, that I may be filled with joy. 5 I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you as well. 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 God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.

8 Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God, 9 who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began, 10 and which now has been manifested through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, 11 for which I was appointed a preacher and apostle and teacher, 12 which is why I suffer as I do. But I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that he is able to guard until that day what has been entrusted to me. 13 Follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. 14 By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, guard the good deposit entrusted to you.

15 You are aware that all who are in Asia turned away from me, among whom are Phygelus and Hermogenes. 16 May the Lord grant mercy to the household of Onesiphorus, for he often refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chains, 17 but when he arrived in Rome he searched for me earnestly and found me— 18 may the Lord grant him to find mercy from the Lord on that day!—and you well know all the service he rendered at Ephesus. (2 Timothy 2:1-18, ESV).

The Book of 2 Timothy is Paul's second letter to the young pastor of Ephesus. It is a call to faithfulness. This is Paul's last letter written in the New Testament. It is his last letter written on earth. By its contents, we know this. The writings of a person near death carry much weight in matters of law. What Paul writes is essential to Paul, and he obviously

feels that it is vital to Timothy. It is also important to us. I would like to illustrate the significance of a dying declaration in legal matters.

Most people are familiar with the "hearsay rule." In simple terms, it means that you can't testify as to what you heard someone else say. For example, if there was an accident at an intersection and Pastor Larry saw it happen, he would be a witness. If he tells Pastor Darrell, "I saw the blue car hit the red car". Pastor Darrell can't testify and say, "I heard Pastor Larry say the blue car hit the red car." However, when people say things against their own interest or make statements on their deathbed, the listener can often testify as to what they heard that person say. Why is that? It's because people who are dying tend to be more honest. There's no incentive to lie about anything. They speak from their innermost being. They speak from their soul. They say things that are important to them and that they want others to know.

So, what is it that Paul is going to say?

V. 1 Paul begins stating again his credentials, saying that he became an Apostle by the will of God. Paul was working out the calling that God had put on his life. Each of us serves according to God's will. It is crucial for a person called to be a pastor to recognize that they are called. I promise you that attacks will come. I never believed that I would experience the things that I've experienced as a pastor. A pastor MUST know that his calling is from God in order to hang in there and keep on going. When God calls you, it is His responsibility to maintain you, keep you, and guard you. We are called according to the promise of life. Paul doesn't focus on his impending death, but rather on the life that is to come with Christ. If you look at verse 10, you can see that Paul is focused on the fact that the power of death has been taken away.

Each of us needs to understand our calling and recognize that we will be fulfilling it for as long as God intends for us to do so. It can be discouraging to think that when we're born, we are in the process of dying. But we're supposed to focus on life itself. You've heard me say before that you will not die one day before or after the days that God has for you to live on this earth.

V. 2 He once again calls Timothy his son. More and more, I consider some of the young people that I minister to as my spiritual children. I am currently counseling a couple in the church in premarital counseling. I almost feel like I'm speaking to my own children as I minister to them. One of the highlights of my week is sitting in the pastor's study with the young adults. They're like my spiritual kids. I love dreaming with them about what Union Grove will be like when I move to heaven. I often tell them, "You guys listen, because someday this is going to be important to you as you become leaders here." Look what Paul says to the Corinthian church.

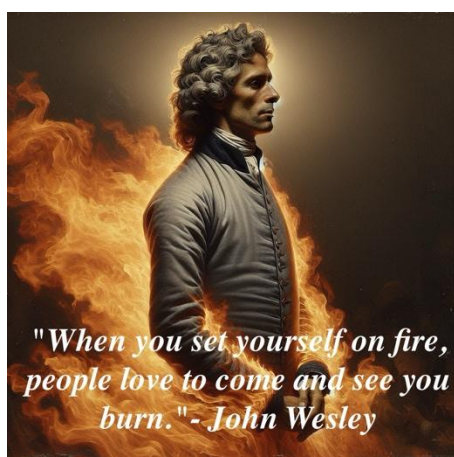
¹⁴ I do not write these things to make you ashamed, but to admonish you as my beloved children. ¹⁵ For though you have countless guides in Christ, you do not have many fathers. For I became your father in Christ Jesus through the gospel. (1 Corinthians 4:14-15, ESV).

Paul took on protégés that he disciplined in the faith. Sandy and I have taken on young people who don't have good spiritual role models, and it is a joy to both of us.

V. 3 Prayer must be an integral part of how we support those whom we parent in the faith.

Vv. 4-5 We see a curious statement here of Paul remembering Timothy when he went through a season of mourning. He also mentions Timothy's mother and grandmother, and their faithfulness. This reminds us of the importance of being strong Christian parents or grandparents. Recently, our granddaughter was talking about going to church, and she said that sometimes she doesn't like to go if she can't sit with her mommy and daddy. We were quick to tell her, "Going to church is something that McMullens do because we love God and want to serve Him. We learn more about Him by going and being with other Christians." Church, many of us have precious few years left with our grandkids. Be consistent in telling them about Jesus and the importance of your faith in Him.

Paul came back on his second trip to Lystra, where he had been before, and it was there that he met Timothy, whom he took on the journey with him. Paul poured his life into Timothy. We are in this room today reading a letter in which Paul spoke not only into Timothy's life, but into our own lives. Let's not waste any of the contact we enjoy with people younger in the faith. Pour what you know into them.



Vv. 6-7 Paul is reminding Timothy that we need to do our best to keep putting wood on the flames of faith in our hearts. Fanning the flames means being BOLD about sharing the gospel. If you struggle with being bold about your faith walk, ask the Lord to ignite a fire within you. I love to hear Scott T. Armstrong quoting John Wesley, who said, "When you set yourself on fire, people love to come and see you burn." Paul is reminding Timothy to catch on fire and not to be afraid of it. People will come against us, but we should be bold. Stand firm. Don't be scared. There is no room for

fear in the heart of a believer. Set yourself on fire with the faith and burn so that others may watch.

V. 8 As a believer, like Timothy, we will share in the sufferings of the faith. Don't try to share in the sufferings with your own power; only in God's power. None of us in the USA really understands suffering like Paul and Timothy had to endure. Lately, however, we've begun to see what it looks like even here. We saw it the day Charlie Kirk was assassinated. Charlie was open about the gospel. He didn't ram it down people's throats, but he didn't hide it either. He was open about his ideas for society and how things should work, but more importantly, he was open about the gospel of Jesus Christ. He was assassinated because he was bold about what God's Word says. As a consequence, he suffered and his wife and children continue to suffer the loss of a husband and a daddy.

V. 9 Paul then turns to the idea of the calling on each of our lives. God has a lot to say about our callings, even if we often don't know precisely what ministry we are called to. I've preached repeatedly that God has a purpose, a place, and a plan for each one of us in this room, and I really believe that. Sometimes our purpose is simply to endure some sort of hardship so that we can be a compassionate ear for someone going through the same thing. Sometimes our purpose is to fill a need that presents itself before us. But the truth is that we each have a definite calling of the Lord. This verse has four points about our calling.

1. It is a holy calling. This means you and I are set apart from the world for a heavenly purpose. You are called to be different.

2. Our calling is not because of our own goodness or works. It is a calling given to you by grace.

3. Your calling is based in the purpose and grace of God. God has a purpose for your life. You are not just sailing through this life without a purpose. You have a heavenly purpose. You have been called by His "grace," giving you the power to fulfill that purpose.

4. Your calling was designed before the beginning of time (see Ephesians 2:10). Paul says, "it was before the ages began."

Vv. 10-11 He is restating that Jesus did indeed abolish death. Paul is saying this **EVEN AS HE WAS WAITING TO DIE**. He knew that he was immortal. He knew that he had been appointed as a preacher, an apostle, and a teacher. And Paul says, "This is why I suffer as I do."

ETERNAL SECURITY

V. 12 Then Paul states that God is good for His word. He says that "I am not ashamed because I **KNOW WHOM I HAVE BELIEVED**." Do you know Him whom you have believed? The reason you can be assured that you know that you have been saved is that God has promised that to you.

Sometimes Baptists are criticized because of a doctrine to which we hold fast. It is the doctrine of eternal security. It is foundational. It is founded on an understanding that you

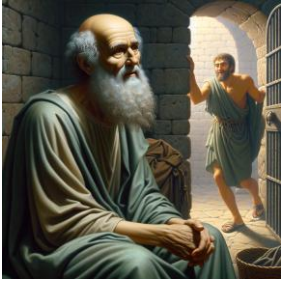
and I were saved by grace. Your works did not save you, and you will not continue to be saved by your works. Paul is saying here that his assurance in God's grace is permanent, and God's love for him is permanent. He is stating that he is so sure about it, and that he knows that God will keep him secure and saved until "that day." What is that day? That is the day that Paul will go to be with the Lord. We can be secure in Christ until the day that each of us is called to be with Him. Walk in that security.

This doctrine is sometimes referred to as "once saved always saved." It is the bedrock belief that once a person is genuinely saved, they cannot lose their salvation. Many verses support this belief, and I'd like to share a few of them here:

- a. *And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. (John 10:28-29, KJV).*
- b. *For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:38-39, KJV).*
- c. *In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory. (Ephesians 1:13-14, KJV).*
- d. *Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. (Philippians 1:6, KJV).*
- e. *For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day. (2 Timothy 1:12, KJV).*

Vv. 13-14 Paul urges Timothy to continue faithfully in the pattern of sound words that he has received from Paul. He reminds him that the deposit he has received of his spiritual inheritance is the Holy Spirit. When you and I came to know the Lord Jesus and accepted Him, we received within us the "good deposit" of the Holy Spirit. That's the downpayment of our spiritual inheritance.

WHAT A FRIEND WE HAVE IN JESUS



Vv.15-18 Paul ends by mentioning that he has been abandoned by "all who are in Asia," except for one named Onesiphorus. This person is mentioned only once in the New Testament. We actually don't know anything about him except the fact that he was a faithful friend. When he learned that Paul was in prison in Rome, Onesiphorus went and searched him out. When someone "searches for you earnestly," they have a great love for you.

This past week, a person in our congregation shared with me how, years ago, when they had been incarcerated, they had exhausted every means to get out of jail. They had no money for bail. Their parents had refused to take their calls. They were hopelessly stuck with no way out. After several weeks, the news spread that they were stuck in jail, and the word reached an acquaintance who had gone to a dance. The moment he heard that our congregant was in prison, he told his dance partner, "I'm sorry, I've got to go. I need to go find him and get him out of jail."

It is a wonderful thing to have someone come and search for you. Two years ago, we planned a reunion for those who had served as Baptist Student Union summer missionaries in Brownsville, Texas in the summer of 1977. Pastor Steve Johnson and I shared a room that summer. As we hunted for all who had been missionaries, there were a few we just couldn't find. We put notices on the Facebook bulletin boards in many different towns in East Texas, searching for one of our missionaries. We knew she lived up there somewhere. They were sort of like wanted posters. Finally, someone saw a post that we had put on the Athens, Texas Facebook city webpage. A friend saw it and told Cindy (that's the girl we were looking for) that someone was looking for her. She contacted us after that and said she had been looking for us for years and didn't know how to find us. She told me, "When I found that you guys were searching for me, I broke down in tears. I knew that somebody cared about me, and somebody had come looking for me." She told me later, "When we all got back together and had our reunion at Union Grove, I knew what heaven was going to be like." Paul was SO ENCOURAGED by Onesiphorus finding him.

Onesiphorus was not ashamed to be associated with Paul, who was now in chains in a dungeon in Rome. Paul says, "He searched for me earnestly and he found me." Let me ask you this morning: are you that kind of friend? Are you a fair-weather friend who ditches those who love you? Are you so wrapped up in yourself that you have no time to search earnestly and find those who need you? I'm just going to leave that question with you this morning.

And, I'm going to remind you that this morning, you might feel that you're lost, in chains, and stuck in a dungeon somewhere. You may be bewildered by what is going on in your life. Jesus is searching you out. He is looking for you. He is not ashamed of ANYTHING

that you've done or not done. If you know the Lord today and need prayer or a touch from God, I invite you to come to the front to pray with several of our prayer warriors. Don't do it alone. You don't have to do it alone. When I moved to Raleigh, North Carolina, I was relatively new to the Baptist church. I went on the first Wednesday night I was there to Forest Hills Baptist Church, and I heard several old hymns I had never heard or understood before. One was "Trust and Obey" and the other was "What a Friend We Have in Jesus." Never have more accurate words been sung. You and I have a true friend in Jesus and He calls us to trust and obey Him. Do that today.

Let us pray.

Union Grove is one of the oldest Baptist communities of faith in the State of Texas dating back to 1844. Pastor Faber McMullen may be reached by email at uniongrove362@gmail.com or by snail mail at: 15301 FM 362, Navasota, Texas 77868. Tel: 936-825-1227 (Edited and proofed by Amanda Neese- Webster, Texas.) All financial gifts to this ministry are tax-deductible as a 501 (c) (3) Corporation.