

Series Theme: Remaining Faithful in a very unaccepting world.

Sermon Title: Timothy, Paul's Beloved Spiritual Son; 2 Timothy 1:1-5

Keep in mind: This letter is Paul's last words to Timothy. In this letter every word counts.

Last words should be like that. The last words of Paul to Timothy express love, provide principles of conduct to Timothy, and make clear that Paul didn't see himself as a man dying. Rather in the life of Paul, when ever he talked about his life it was always, "life in Christ," "alive in Christ," and "living for Christ," "hidden in Christ." (He was already dead and the life he lives He lives by faith in the Son of God, **see Gal. 2:20**); He said in Romans 6:11, "In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus." As Christ died, so we did in Him; As Christ was raised, so we were Raised with Him. Colossians 3:3 Paul exclaims, "For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God." He also never talked about coming up to a final day on this earth saying that he is going to die. He referred to a "departure" and having "fought the good fight," and "finishing the race." (see **Acts 20:23; Also, 2 Timothy 4:6-8**) **Since Paul came to a knowledge of the truth of the Gospel, his life was all about life!**

The famous theologian John Owen understood this. The story goes that when he was on his deathbed his secretary was writing a letter on John's behalf to a dear friend. The secretary read back what he had written to John's friend. It read, "I am still in the land of the living." To which Dr. Owen firmly corrected, "No, please do not write that. I am yet in the land of the dying but later I will be in the land of the living." (John Newton said these same last words about a century later. And recently these words resurfaced when Voddie Baucham went to the land of the living!)

Today we focus on the salutation of this letter. First, Its beautiful. Second, It provides Paul's firm footing for faithfulness. Third, it provides Timothy with firm footing for faithfulness, and fourth, in this salutation Paul provides Timothy with motivation for faithfulness.

- I) **(1:1-5) What a beautiful salutation from Paul to Timothy.**
 - A) It is quite an encouragement for Timothy to be faithful.
 - 1) If he's feeling depressed or disengaged there is enough in here to roust his soul and stir up faith!
 - B) If you look at the salutations in Romans 1; Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 and 2 Thess, and Titus...
 - 1) Great encouragement. It is like he's saying to them, "Do more of that. Commit to knowing God and loving the Lord, being obedient to the Truth, loving one another, etc."
- II) **(1:1) Paul's firm footing for faithfulness: His divine calling by God to apostleship with a message to preach**
 - A) "An apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God" (apostle in NT was a person called, authorized and gifted by God to serve as a personal, and authorized representative of Christ Jesus.
 - 1) Paul understood his apostleship to mean that he belongs exclusively to Christ Jesus for His purposes.
 - (a) He's been "bought with a price" and must "glorify God in his body." (1 Cor. 6:20)
 - 2) "Christ (His fulfillment of prophecy, and His deity) Jesus (His humanity as promised in prophecy)"
 - 3) "by the will of God" Paul's apostleship is a divine appointment, not of self-appointment.
 - (a) Proof of his authentic apostleship is proven by his next statement.
 - B) "according to the promise of life that is in Christ Jesus."
 - 1) The Gk word translated "according" is the preposition "kata" which serves to **define the aim and purpose of Paul's apostleship**, which is:
 - (a) To further the good news of the gospel of the promise of life that is in Christ Jesus!
 - (i) That is that people that are dead in trespasses and sins can find life in Christ Jesus!
 - 2) That's why 2 Timothy is written so that Timothy would remain faithful to the gospel and proclaim it!
 - III) **(1:2) Paul provides Timothy with firm footing for faithfulness: God's gifts of grace, mercy and peace!**
 - A) Paul's love for Timothy would provide firm footing: Timothy, by beloved son. **Compare with 1 Tim. 1:2**
 - B) The grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus the Lord would encourage faithfulness.
 - 1) He wanted Timothy to have the very best that God the Father and Christ Jesus the Lord had to offer:
 - (a) Grace to cover our sins
 - (b) Mercy to overrule our miseries

- (c) Peace to dominate our lives
- 2) Beloved, this is the Lord's desire for you to have His best! **Hebrews 4:16** (the throne of grace).
 - (a) Grace for His beloved, not a throne of judgment.
 - (b) Grace for salvation according to the work of Jesus Christ on the cross for our justification.
 - (c) Mercy because He loved us with His great love and made us alive together with Christ!
 - (d) For overruling mercy when the consequences of sin bring grievous misery to our lives.
 - (e) Peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. 5:1)
 - (f) Peace given to us from God (2 Tim. 1:2, etc., etc.)
- 3) From God the Father and Christ Jesus the Lord.
 - (a) I'm reminded of Romans 11:29. In the context Paul is saying that God remembers and is holding firmly to His promises made to the patriarchs concerning the future salvation of Israel, even though in the present time they are "enemies of the gospel" (11:28)
 - (i) 11:29 should encourage us, "for God's gifts and His call are irrevocable."
 - (b) What He gives us and the goodness he provides springs forth from His love, not dependent upon our worthiness or merit.
 - (i) All three: grace, mercy and peace are gifts to us originating from His love through Christ Jesus!!
- C) Paul isn't "wishing" God's best for Timothy. He is communicating these gifts to Timothy from God!
 - 1) And, this should reassure Timothy and strengthen Timothy to listen up and reengage in the fight, fighting faithfully, holding on the Truth of the Gospel of God in the person of Jesus Christ the Lord!
- IV) **(1:3-5) Paul provides Timothy with motivation for faithfulness: Paul's certainty of Timothy's sincere faith.**
 - A) It is likely that Paul has received reports that Timothy is down, depressed, discouraged, possibly defeated.
 - 1) See 1:6-7; 1:13-14; 2:8-9; etc.
 - B) Paul encourages Timothy
 - 1) "I thank God for you...constantly...remembering...in my prayers"
 - (a) Nothing means more than when we pray for one another.
 - (i) Paul probably had a list of names of people he prayed for every day.
 - 2) How did he pray?
 - (a) With thanksgiving (1:3)
 - (b) Night and day (1:3)
 - (c) With thoughtful remembrance of Timothy and Timothy's tears (1:3, 4)
 - (d) With longing to see him (1:4)
 - (e) With hopes of being filling with joy at seeing him (1:4)
 - C) What made him thankful for Timothy?
 - 1) The remembrance of Timothy's sincere faith. Paul saw it!
 - (a) He saw it first in Timothy's grandmother Lois and his mother Eunice.
 - (b) And because they were faithful to train him from infancy (3:15) Paul is convinced beyond doubt that his faith in God is genuine and alive in him.
 - 2) Again, given some of the Paul's imperatives and admonitions to Timothy in this letter it may be that he is trying to reawaken Timothy from the doldrums that accompany the discouraged soul.

Remember: Paul is addressing his beloved spiritual son. It is his desire to reawaken an energetic faith in Timothy leading him to fulfill his calling as a minister of the gospel and a defender of the Truth.

God's calling and appointment of Paul was irrevocable.

God's grace, mercy and peace are irrevocable.

And there is a lot to be said for Paul's confidence that the gift of faith is still living and active in Timothy.