

**A PERSONAL
VERSE BY VERSE COMMENTARY**

2 TIMOTHY

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2Timothy 1:1 ¶ Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus,

This letter is noted as the last to be written by Paul before he was killed. Paul opens five other letters by identifying himself as an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God (2Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Colossians and 1Timothy). Knowing that he is facing death, it is telling that he includes a reference to the promise of life in Christ Jesus in the opening of this last letter. Paul is just as sure of life after death with the Lord as he was of his calling as an apostle. Why wouldn't he be? He knew that to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord because he had visited God's dwelling place.

2 Corinthians 5:8 "We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord."

2 Corinthians 12:1–4 "It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter."

2Timothy 1:2 To Timothy, my dearly beloved son: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

Paul considered Timothy as a "dearly beloved son" because he was his spiritual father or mentor. Luke tells us that Timothy was already a disciple of the Lord when Paul met him.

1 Timothy 1:2 "Unto Timothy, my own son in the faith...."

Acts 16:1 & 3 "Then came he to Derbe and Lystra: and, behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father was a Greek....Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and took and circumcised him because of the Jews which were in those quarters: for they knew all that his father was a Greek."

Most of Paul's epistles also open with a blessing of grace and peace, but he included mercy in his letters to Timothy and Titus. Grace is a reference to God's influence on the heart and mercy includes a prayer for God's compassion on these two young pastors. I found an interesting quote by Spurgeon regarding a pastor's need of mercy: "Did you ever notice this one thing about Christian ministers, that they need even more mercy than other people? Although everybody needs mercy, ministers need it more than anybody else; and so we do, for if we are not faithful, we shall be greater sinners even than our hearers, and it needs much grace for us always to be faithful, and much mercy will be required to cover our shortcomings."

The prayer for peace is a prayer for Timothy to prosper in his ministry and enjoy a fellowship relationship with the Lord.

Paul makes a distinction in the person of God the Father and His Son Jesus, our Savior and Lord. Though distinct in person, the prayer is to One on behalf of Paul's young disciple. I think the CJB expresses it best: *"Grace, mercy and shalom from God the Father and the Messiah Yeshua, our Lord."*

2Timothy 1:3 I thank God, whom I serve from *my* forefathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day;

Though in prison, Paul is more concerned about encouraging his young protégée than in focusing on his own circumstances. He lets Timothy know that he is continually in Paul's prayers. His prayers are sincere and filled with thanks to God, the same God worshipped by his forefathers.

This is a beautiful statement of the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of Paul; he fully embraced God's forgiveness. This is a man who persecuted those in the early church until He met Jesus as His Lord and Savior on the road to Damascus, a man who stood by and witnessed the murder of Stephen. Paul's past only motivated him to serve the Lord more diligently from a heart of gratitude and love. His life was an example of the truth expressed in Luke.

Luke 7:41–43 "There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most? Simon answered and said, I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged."

2Timothy 1:4 Greatly desiring to see thee, being mindful of thy tears, that I may be filled with joy;

2Timothy 1:5 When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also.

Paul's desire was to once again see this young man who had so openly shown his love and devotion to his teacher when they had last parted. Just to see him would bring him great joy as he was reminded of Timothy's simple, sincere faith—a faith that was exemplified before him by his grandmother Lois and his mother Eunice. Though he had the example of his grandmother and mom, Timothy did not "inherit" their faith; he had to make his own choice to believe.

Romans 10:9–10 "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

These verses in Timothy are dear to the heart of this mom and grandma. I know that I have failed God in many ways in my life, but I have really tried to example a life of faith before my children and grandchildren. I am so blessed to know that my children and grandchildren are growing in their faith in the Lord and have even been used by God in the process of continuing to grow my faith.

Paul recognized the importance of a spiritual heritage in one's life.

2Timothy 1:6 ¶ Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands.

Scripture teaches that every believer is given the earnest of the Holy Spirit as a guarantee of our eternal life to come as part of the family of God.

Ephesians 1:12–14 “That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. 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.”

In these verses Paul is referencing a gifting that Timothy received when Paul laid hands upon him. This would seem to be an act of confirming God's call and empowerment upon Timothy to become a minister of the gospel. Paul and Barnabas were commissioned in the same way before embarking on their first missionary journey.

Acts 13:2–3 “As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.”

To be called to become a pastor is a gifting of the Holy Spirit.

Ephesians 4:7–11 “But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ....And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers....”

2Timothy 1:7 For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

I think Paul wanted to remind Timothy of the power within Him. We know from his first letter that Timothy was a young man being commissioned with great responsibility.

1 Timothy 4:12-16 “Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to

all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee."

The Holy Spirit is always exemplified in the life of the believer in power, love and self-control or self-discipline (from the Greek). When we give in to fear, hate and/or just not caring, or lack of self-control, we are yielding to the flesh. The Holy Spirit will always enable us to overcome if we will but keep our focus on the Lord Jesus and the truth of His word.

1 Corinthians 10:13 "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."

1 John 5:4 "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."

Hebrews 4:12 "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword...."

Isaiah 55:11 "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."

Peter didn't begin to sink when he stepped out into the water until he took his eyes off Jesus.

Matthew 14:28–31 "And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water. And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus. But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me. And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?"

When we allow circumstances to interfere with our focus on the Lord, we show a lack of faith. The Lord was clear that if we have but little faith, we can accomplish great things for Him.

Matthew 17:20 "And Jesus said unto them...If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you."

Luke 17:6 "And the Lord said, If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you."

My heart cries out with the disciples and the father whose child was possessed of an evil spirit.

Luke 17:5 "And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith."

Mark 9:23–24 “Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth. And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.”

2Timothy 1:8 Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God;

2Timothy 1:9 Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,

Timothy’s reputation was very much connected to Paul’s. As we continue to read in this chapter, Paul makes note of many who have chosen to sever their connection with Paul evidently because of his imprisonment. They didn’t want to take the chance of persecution because of their connection with Paul. Tradition indicates that Nero is reigning at this time, and his hatred of Christians is part of the historical record. By turning away from Paul they were also showing a lack of faith in the Lord. It is when we are in the fires of life’s trials that our faith is shown to be genuine.

Paul is encouraging Timothy to stay strong and unashamed of his testimony for the Lord and his support for Paul. He wants Timothy to be ready to suffer for the gospel if necessary and trust that God will empower him through the Holy Spirit to endure and overcome.

Acts 1:8 “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”

Romans 15:13 “Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.”

God saves us and calls us according to His own purpose and grace, not because of anything we have done to earn such privilege.

Ephesians 2:8–9 “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.”

Paul also reminds Timothy that God’s plan and provision of grace for each believer was provided for in Christ Jesus before the creation of the world.

Ephesians 1:3–4 “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world....”

2Timothy 1:10 But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel:

I think Paul is saying that it is through the birth, life, death and resurrection of our Savior Jesus Christ, that God revealed His plan to redeem mankind from sin and provide the gift of life and immortality to those who would believe the gospel message.

1 Corinthians 15:1–4 “Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures....”

Romans 1:16 “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth....”

2Timothy 1:11 Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.

Paul then goes on to declare that he was appointed (by God is implied) to be a preacher of the gospel, an official ambassador of the gospel with the empowerment to perform miracles (from the Greek for “apostle”), and a teacher of the Gentiles. God specifically singled out Paul to take the gospel to the Gentiles and teach them the truth of God’s word. Paul had been an elite Pharisee and was well versed in the word of God; he had also been personally taught by the Lord Jesus as to how those scriptures pointed to Jesus and given enlightenment regarding other mysteries of God that were being revealed for the first time.

Galatians 1:11–12 “But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.”

Ephesians 3:1–7 “For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel: Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power.”

Romans 16:25–26 “Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith....”

It was important for the Gentiles to be well grounded in the truth of God's word and their understanding of the gospel since they would become the primary body of believers known as the church that would represent God before the world during the coming years in which the Jews would continue to reject Jesus as the Messiah. The day is coming, however, when the Jewish people will recognize Jesus as their Messiah and King and will call for His return to deliver them and establish His Kingdom from David's throne in Jerusalem.

Matthew 23:37–39 “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.”

Zechariah 12:9–10 “And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.”

Zechariah 13:9 “And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The LORD is my God.”

Revelation 20:4–6 “And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.”

2Timothy 1:12 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.

Paul declares to Timothy and to all believers that we should not be ashamed to suffer persecution because of our faith. We should never allow the world to make us feel ashamed for boldly declaring our faith in Jesus Christ and in the truth of His word. Why? Because we know WHOM we have believed. Our faith is in the Creator, the self-existent eternal God who came in flesh as a man to redeem us from sin and give us eternal life in His presence!

Like Paul, I am persuaded—convinced beyond a shadow of a doubt—that Jesus is able to keep my faith secure until He comes to give me my inheritance as guaranteed by the Holy Spirit within me. I know I gave these verses earlier, but they are so important I am going to repeat them.

Ephesians 1:12–14 “That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. 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.”

“earnest” = a pledge, i.e. part of the purchase-money or property given in advance as security for the rest

I am also reminded of some other favorite scriptures regarding the security of my faith.

John 10:27–30 “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: 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. I and my Father are one.”

2Timothy 1:13 Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.

2Timothy 1:14 That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us.

I really like the wording of the CJB for these verses: *“Follow the pattern of the sound teachings you have heard from me, with trust and the love which is yours in the Messiah Yeshua. Keep safe the great treasure that has been entrusted to you, with the help of the Ruach Hakodesh who lives in us.”*

Knowing that he won’t be around much longer to encourage and counsel Timothy, Paul is urging him to remember everything he has taught him and to keep his faith and love rooted in Christ Jesus. He should recognize that God’s word is a great treasure and that he has been entrusted to share that truth through the empowerment of the indwelling Holy Spirit.

Though all believers haven’t all been called to be pastors, scripture is clear that every believer should treasure the truth of God’s word and should be ready to share that truth with others and exercise discernment regarding those that will try to manipulate it for their own purposes.

1 Peter 3:15 “But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear....”

Hebrews 5:12–14 “For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.”

2Timothy 1:15 ¶ This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me; of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes.

As this chapter comes to a close, Paul declares how many (professing Christians are implied) have turned away from him, specifically naming Phygellus and Hermogenes.

It's interesting that Phygellus means fugitive and Hermogenes finds its root in connection with Hermes, the god of the underworld known for his cunning. Both are identified as apostates in Easton's Dictionary. I always think of the words of John in light of such turncoats.

1 John 2:18–19 “Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.”

2Timothy 1:16 The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain:

2Timothy 1:17 But, when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found me.

2Timothy 1:18 The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day: and in how many things he ministered unto me at Ephesus, thou knowest very well.

On a positive note, Paul asks for mercy for Onesiphorus, a faithful servant who ministered to Paul while he was in Ephesus. This man was evidently bold in his faith and faithful in ministering to Paul when he was in Rome. He made a point to find Paul and encourage him. Paul knew that Timothy was aware of the ministry of this faithful saint, and as the presiding pastor in Ephesus was probably benefitting from this man's ministry as well. Interesting to note that in contrast to the previous two men, Onesiphorus means one who brings profit.

Some commentators believe that Onesiphorus was dead and that Paul was praying for mercy for his family in light of their loss and in regard of his service to Paul.

By the way, Paul did not hesitate to call out publicly those who could do harm to the church.