

## Daily Bible Study

“A Letter of Courage ~ The Writer & Receiver”

2 Timothy 1:1-2

April 27 – May 3, 2014

**MONDAY** – Today, we begin a new study of the last letter written by the Apostle Paul; namely, **2 Timothy**. I have entitled this introductory lesson *A Letter of Courage* for it is that; a call to courage but also a very emotional letter between two men as father and son. Bishop Handley C.G. Moule in his commentary said he found it difficult to read **2 Timothy** “without finding something like a mist gathering in the eyes”. We can understand the emotion of this letter as we imagine the aged apostle Paul who is in some dark and damp dungeon in Rome awaiting his death by execution. His own work for Jesus is over as he said in the inspired record, “*I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race...*” But the Apostle Paul is concerned about the Gospel; he wants it guarded, suffered for, continued in and preached. He knows he is about to die and therefore desires that Timothy be equipped and prepared to keep this blessed gospel message intact for future generations. So he writes Timothy this letter where he calls him to courageous perseverance. This message is timeless and very necessary for us today. We too live in a time of confusion in both theology and morality and we see our share of apostasy as well. This letter, both the human author Paul and the Divine author God Himself call us to be strong, courageous, brave, faithful, and obedient (**Joshua 1:6-9**). This younger Christian leader Timothy is called to be different, not to succumb to the temptation of sin and the pressure of public opinion but to stand in the truth and righteousness of God and remain as Paul said to the Corinthians, *steadfast immovable always abounding in the work of the Lord*. This is truly a message we need to hear again in the church of Jesus Christ. Read our text: **2 Timothy 1:1-2**: <sup>1</sup>“Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus,<sup>2</sup>To Timothy, a beloved son: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.”

*Suggestion for Prayer: God, teach me this week from Sacred Scripture as I begin to study this inspired letter filled with advice to me on how to live courageously and for the Gospel.*

**TUESDAY** – **2 Timothy 1:1a**: <sup>1</sup>“Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God...” This is quit the impressive credential the Paul uses to start this letter. As *an apostle of Jesus Christ* he is placing himself alongside the Twelve which Jesus Himself had personally chosen. Jesus gave them the title Apostle’s as he “sent them” out (**Luke 6:13**), their mission was to preach and teach and represent Him. Jesus had these men near Himself to prepare them for this role (**Mark 3:14**) and this gave them unparalleled access and opportunity to listen and learn from

Jesus as He taught and worked (**John 15:27**). This is why they so often speak of being witnesses to what Christ had done (**John 1:14, 2 Peter 1:16**). Remember we spoke in the past few weeks around Maundy Thursday that Jesus told them He would send them the Holy Spirit to empower them for this mission (**John 14:25-26, 16:12-13, Acts 1:8**). Paul is staking a claim with this group of men and he was in fact added to this group by The Lord Jesus Himself when He met the Apostle on the road to Damascus and Paul met with Jesus Christ and became a witness of the resurrected Lord and he was made qualified for this position (**Acts 1:22, 1 Corinthians 9:1, 15:8-9**). He was both converted and commissioned as a result of this Damascus road experience. You can read of Jesus commissioning Paul in **Acts 26:16-18**. Jesus says, *egō apostellō se* “I apostle you”, and we know Paul was in fact sent as the Apostle to the Gentiles (**Romans 11:13, Galatians 1:15-16, 2:9**). Paul never forgot that Jesus commissioned him and defended his God given authority many times (**Galatians 1:1, 11-12**). Interesting is the fact that even while sitting in a damp dark dungeon awaiting death this humiliated suffering prisoner is an apostle of Jesus Christ. This was first *by the will of God*. This was the origin of this Apostleship. In nine out of thirteen of his letters, Paul refers either to the *will* or the *call* or the *command* of God as the reason he had been made an apostle. Paul truly understood all his life to the very end that it was God who had appointed him *an apostle of Jesus Christ* by His eternal *will* or command; not the church, men or even himself.

*Suggestion for Prayer: God, thank You for Your eternal will; unaffected & unalterable by men. Thanks that in Your eternal will You have chosen to express Your love to me, giving me the gospel and opportunities to hear You such as right now reading Your Word.*

**WEDNESDAY** – **2 Timothy 1:1b**: <sup>1</sup>“Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus,” Yesterday we saw the origin of Paul’s apostleship; that he was made an apostle *by the will of God*... Now as we move along we see that his apostleship was *according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus*. The word according is **kata** in the Greek which means “according to, toward, along”. I like the definition “toward” in this case as what Paul is saying is that the purpose he has been appointed an apostle is to preach and communicate this life giving gospel. The gospel message is one of *life which is in Christ Jesus* for dead, helpless sinners. Incredibly, it is because of this very gospel that he is facing death in a Roman prison but Paul is confident that this same gospel promises him life in Christ. This good news in particular promises life in Jesus (**John 3:16, 6:37, 10:10**); true life, eternal life, now and forevermore. How different is this man’s thinking (as ours should also be) as opposed to the philosophy of the humanistic world. Humanistic mankind interprets life very differently as people believe the “promise of life” offered in themselves, their pride, greed, covetousness and lusts and find out that although the world “promises” so much it can’t deliver, it can’t keep the promise it makes because it is vain (empty) deceit (deception). **Colossians 2:8**, “Beware lest any man

*spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, following the tradition of men according to the rudiments of the world, and not in accordance with Christ.” All Scripture may be seen as a Divine promise of life; from the tree of life in **Genesis 3** to the tree of life from which God’s people eat in **Revelation 22**. So we have met Paul the Apostle, a man who tasted the sweet gospel of *eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began* (**Titus 1:2**). And it is this gospel and Lord of it that consumed his life and was what he was all about.*

*Suggestion for Prayer: Father, thank You for the promise of genuine life in Christ both now and forever. Help me to see that only Your promises never fail and save me from believing the promises of the world and running for and chasing the empty deception that they offer me.*

**THURSDAY – 2 Timothy 1:2a:** <sup>2</sup>*To Timothy, a beloved son:*” We now meet the man to whom the letter was first and primarily addressed, Timothy. Paul calls him his *beloved son*. We hear those words and think of God the Father speaking of Jesus, “*My beloved Son with whom I am well pleased*” (**Matthew 3:17, 17:5**). This love between Paul and Timothy is in fact a faint glimmer of the love between God The Father and His Son Jesus Christ. Paul fathered Timothy in the faith and as a child in a sense owes his earthly life to his father, Timothy in a sense owes his spiritual life to his father Paul. We assume that Paul had been an instrument used by God in Timothy’s conversion. He described others he had brought to Jesus as “*my beloved children*” and added “*for I became your father in Christ Jesus through the gospel*” (**1 Corinthians 4:14, 15**). We assume, therefore, that when Paul visited Lystra on his first missionary journey he there “... *preached the gospel*” (**Acts 14:6, 7**), Timothy both heard and believed the good news and when Paul re-visited Lystra a few years later on his second missionary journey he found “*a disciple was there, named Timothy*”, who had already grown in the faith and was making so much progress in the Christian life that “*he was well spoken of by the brethren at Lystra and Iconium*” (**Acts 16:1, 2**). It was to this man that Paul writes. These men had such a deep affection for one another, an affection born out of true, Godly sacrificial love and care. These men were growing and maturing in the Lord and with each other. Paul calls Timothy elsewhere in Scripture, “*my beloved and faithful child in the Lord*” (**1 Corinthians 4:17**). As a child serves with and for his father, so Timothy served with and for Paul in the gospel ministry faithfully. Paul in addressing this his final letter remembers this precious young friend and helper whose life had been mingled with his own in so many ways.

*Suggestion for Prayer: Father, help me be faithful to serve my fellow believers and also to be about the business of bringing others to Christ. This takes faithfulness to You and a sacrifice of my selfish interests”. Forgive me of my sin of selfishness and help me live for you not self.*

**FRIDAY – 2 Timothy 1:2b:** <sup>2</sup>*To Timothy, a beloved son: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.”* Here in the closing portion of **verse 2** comes the wonderful pronouncement on this dear son in the faith. In short, Paul pronounces *grace* (charis - favor, good will, a favorable attitude toward someone), *mercy* (eleos – to show

kindness and concern for someone in serious need), and *peace* (eirene – a set of favorable circumstances involving peace and tranquility). Obviously these are loaded terms and they have as their source *God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord*. They are from God; The Father bestows them, the Son has earned them, and The Spirit delivers them. To briefly elaborate *grace* is often called the free, unmerited love of God extended to us in various ways. We see God’s common grace under His providence in the gifts of his love to all mankind. As Jesus said, “...*He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust*” (**Matthew 5:45**). That kind of love is not dependent on anything in man himself. It is free to all, and totally unmerited. God’s grace flows to us each and every day as John says, “*And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace* (one blessing after another).” (**John 1:16**). Apart from common grace we have God’s saving grace which is the forgiveness of sins and the hope of eternal life through faith in Christ. We can’t save ourselves, or earn our salvation, we receive it as the free gift of God lest any of mankind would have a boast (**Ephesians 2:8–9**). All of us who have received God’s saving grace also have His *mercy*. We are as Toplady’s hymn reminds us, “A debtor to mercy alone, Of covenant mercy I sing...” Because we have tasted God’s mercy, we are indebted to Him and we are called to show mercy to others as we see illustrated in the story of The Good Samaritan (**Luke 10:25-37**) and the merciful King (**Matthew 18:33**). “*Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy*” (**Matthew 5:7**). Finally we have *peace*. God’s peace is a treasured possession but to have it we must first be reconciled to God, or be at peace *with* Him through Jesus instead of being alienated *from* Him in our sin. Before salvation we are enemies of God, and remain under God’s wrath and judgment living controlled by sin, unsubmitive to the law of God, and hostile toward Him (**Romans 5:10, 8:7–8**). But through Jesus perfect life lived in obedience to the law of God and His death on the cross to bear the judgment of our sin, we can be reconciled to God, and when by faith we are reconciled to God we have His peace (**Romans 5:1, Colossians 1:20**). Our conscience is now at rest because we have our relationship with God settled and we no longer fear standing in our own righteousness at the judgment seat. All who are in Jesus by faith have these wonderful gifts from God, even Paul reminded Timothy in his first letter that he too, “*obtained*” (received) God’s mercy (**1 Timothy 1:16**).

*Suggestion for Prayer: Father, thank You for grace, mercy, and peace all of which have been freely given me and I have experienced through Jesus and His work. Help me to enjoy You and share the gospel of Your mercy, grace, and peace with others.*