

## Daily Bible Study

### *“Faithfulness Matters”*

#### *2 Timothy 1:13-18*

*May 18 – May 24, 2014*

**MONDAY** – As we continue our study of **2 Timothy** we close out chapter one taking for our text, **2 Timothy 1:13-18**. I have entitled this lesson *Faithfulness Matters* and we will see this importance of faithfulness and loyalty to the Gospel illustrated in our text. Timothy is instructed in this passage to remain faithful to the true teaching that Paul has given him and to do so in a spirit of faith and love rooted in Jesus. He is called to guard the precious deposit of the gospel-ministry which God has given him and he is made capable of this by the indwelling Holy Spirit who also dwells in him. We are then introduced to some human examples of faithlessness and faithfulness in Phygelus, Hermogenes, and Onesiphorus. The first two were among those who turned away from Paul in his time of need but the Apostle mentions the refreshing and faithful work of one Onesiphorus who was not ashamed of Paul’s imprisonment and served the Lord by ministering to Paul. The Apostle ends up expressing his desire that the Lord would grant blessing and reward to Onesiphorus for his faithfulness to the cause of the gospel of Jesus Christ and Paul the Lord’s servant. Read our text: **2 Timothy 1:13-18**: <sup>13</sup>“Hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. <sup>14</sup>That good thing which was committed to you, keep by the Holy Spirit who dwells in us. <sup>15</sup>This you know, that all those in Asia have turned away from me, among whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes. <sup>16</sup>The Lord grant mercy to the household of Onesiphorus, for he often refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain; <sup>17</sup>but when he arrived in Rome, he sought me out very zealously and found me. <sup>18</sup>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”.

*Suggestion for Prayer: God, teach me this week from Sacred Scripture the importance of being faithful to You and the Gospel and let me be a servant like Onesiphorus.*

**TUESDAY** – **2 Timothy 1:13**: <sup>13</sup>“Hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.” The next couple of verses have two exhortations to Timothy and we will look at them one at a time. The first one found in verse 13 is the command to *Hold fast the pattern of sound words... sound words* are literally “healthy” words and this Greek expression is used in **Luke 7:10** concerning a servant that Jesus healed. Previously he had been “sick” but now he was made well or “whole”. So the genuine Christian faith is about sound words because it is not diseased or sick but is rather

healthy and whole. Timothy is to hold fast the *pattern* (the Greek word is *hypotypōsis* which means outline, sketch, or example. The only other occurrence of *hypotypōsis* in the New Testament is in **1 Timothy 1:16** where Paul describes himself, an object of Jesus mercy and patience, as “an example to those who were to believe...” The scholars Arndt and Gingrich, who give “model” or “example” as the usual translation, suggest that it is used “rather in the sense *prototype* in **1 Timothy 1:16** and rather in the sense *standard* in **2 Timothy 1:13**. This seems to be what’s in view here as Paul is commanding Timothy to keep before him as his standard of sound words, or as a model of sound teaching what he had heard from the apostle. So in short, Paul’s (the Apostles) teaching is to be Timothy’s guide or rule and so it is to be with us for it is the Apostles that Jesus used to pass down and wrote down the teaching we are to follow and believe for salvation and growth. This is precisely what Jesus said in prayer in **John 17:20**, “*I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their (the Apostles) word;*” So Timothy is to hold fast and not depart from Paul’s sound words and he is to do it *in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus*. Paul is concerned not just with what Timothy is to do, but with how he does it. Both his own personal doctrinal convictions and his instruction of others learned from the Apostle Paul’s sound instruction is to be characterized by *faith and love* which is to say a sincere belief and a tender charitable love. He will find these qualities in *Christ Jesus*.

*Suggestion for Prayer: God, help me understand that the teaching You have preserved for me in Sacred Scripture is sound and healthy. May I hold to Scripture and look to it as well as to the perfect example of Jesus as my guide in how to live, act, and think.*

**WEDNESDAY** – **2 Timothy 1:14**: <sup>14</sup>“That good thing which was committed to you, keep by the Holy Spirit who dwells in us.” Not only does Paul refer to the gospel, the gospel message or the Apostles doctrine as a *pattern of sound words (verse 13)* he now in **verse 14** refers to it as *that good thing*. *That good thing* is of course, *the gospel*, taken in its widest sense. This wonderful message and doctrine is **kalos** “beautiful, handsome, excellent, eminent, choice, surpassing, precious, useful, suitable, commendable, and admirable”. It is so because it is God’s gospel, it belongs to Him and originates from Him. Timothy is urged to guard this *good thing* that was committed (**parakatatheke** - a deposit, a trust or thing consigned to one’s faithful keeping) to him and defend it against every attack and never allow it to be changed or modified. But since Timothy is weak and the enemy is strong Paul reminds Timothy that this is done *by the Holy Spirit who dwells in us*. This includes all of us who truly believe in Jesus for salvation (**Romans 8:11**). The gospel is a treasure deposited for safe keeping with the church of Jesus. Christ had entrusted it to Paul, and Paul now entrusts it to Timothy. This man is to *keep* it; “to guard, watch, lest he escape, to guard something so that it is not lost or damaged”. When we deposit money in the bank we entrust it to the bank’s safe keeping and this is precisely what Paul says to Timothy in this grand God given deposit. We are to be guardians of God’s Word and message brothers and sisters. We are to

defend its authority and truthfulness, and not dilute or distort its message to suit popular thinking and undermine its message. Thankfully as mentioned earlier, Timothy was not alone in this and neither are we. We can do it with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in us.

*Suggestion for Prayer: Father, thank You for The Holy Spirit who dwells in me. Help me through His strength to guard, keep, hold fast, defend, obey, believe, proclaim, and submit to this wonderful message You have entrusted to me as Your child.*

**THURSDAY – 2 Timothy 1:15-17:** <sup>15</sup> *This you know, that all those in Asia have turned away from me, among whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes.* <sup>16</sup> *The Lord grant mercy to the household of Onesiphorus, for he often refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain;* <sup>17</sup> *but when he arrived in Rome, he sought me out very zealously and found me.* We now get to the reasons that Timothy must guard the gospel. There is faithlessness in some as Paul records that *all those in Asia have turned away from me, among whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes.* These churches of Asia are where Paul had labored for several years and now they have turned away from him. We know nothing of *Phygellus and Hermogenes*, but their mention suggests they were influential or leaders in this faithless departure from the Apostle and the message of our Lord. Previously, during Paul's two and a half years' residence in Ephesus, Luke says that *"all the residents of Asia"* heard the word of the Lord and many believed (**Acts 19:10**) but now *"all in Asia"* had turned away from him. There had been a great defection where there had once been a great work. In the middle of the faithlessness is a bright shining star of faithfulness, a man called *Onesiphorus*. Paul says of him that *he often refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain;* <sup>17</sup> *but when he arrived in Rome, he sought me out very zealously and found me.* If we imagine Paul's situation of loneliness, desertion, and isolation we can imagine how encouraging, uplifting and refreshing it was for him to think of *Onesiphorus* who apparently unashamedly visited him in his prison cell. Interesting and as only God could orchestrate the name *Onesiphorus* means "bringing profit, profitable". He most certainly did that to Paul, both as a fellow-believer and as a Christian friend. This gracious man went to great trouble on the apostle's behalf. He did not know where Paul was but *he sought me out very zealously* and with a God given determination found Paul and was able to refresh him in his soul and spirit. As Peter Williams writes, "There are people in the church in whose company we feel drained and empty, but there are others who brace us up and come like a breath of fresh air into our lives. *Onesiphorus* was like that. And it seems he carried out a similar ministry of refreshment in the church at Ephesus. Paul says, 'You know very well in how many ways he helped me in Ephesus' (**2 Timothy 1:18**). And we can exercise that refreshing ministry if we have a mind to, since it does not call for any special talent or training. How do we do it? By getting alongside people in their distresses and so refreshing them in their spirit by showing kindness and compassion. Also we do it by giving encouragement to others. Eliphaz, a friend of Job, said to him: 'Your words have supported those who stumbled; you have strengthened faltering knees' (**Job 4:4**). There must be many

other ways in which we can bring refreshment of spirit into people's lives. May God help us to get on with it."

*Suggestion for Prayer: Father, thank You for men like Onesiphorus who encourage and refresh their fellow believers and those who serve and labor for You. Help me be like Him, faithful to support and look for ways to build up Your work in Your church and this world.*

**FRIDAY – 2 Timothy 1:18:** <sup>18</sup> *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".* Previously Paul had mentioned *the Lord grant mercy to the household of Onesiphorus...* and he now continues this thought. We see here that the Apostle Paul speaks what Hendriksen calls a "devout wish" as he says *on the great day of judgment* may the Lord Jesus Christ grant that the man who had gone to such a great deal of trouble to serve him in faithfulness *find* mercy. Also notice the wordplay here used by Paul through the Holy Spirit's inspiration as he speaks of "*finding mercy*". This is the man who searched zealously to "find the Apostle Paul" as he was in prison. Without going into great elaborate detail concerning the judgment we do know that God will reward men according to their works and Paul prays that this man would receive mercy from Jesus as a result of his faithfulness. Paul and Jesus speak elsewhere of a man being rewarded according to how he lived out faithfulness or faithlessness to Jesus. **Romans 2:5-6**, *"But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, <sup>6</sup> who "will render to each one according to his deeds".* **Matthew 16:27**, *"For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works."* May God give us strength to be faithful; because it matters now and it will matter then in the great day of the final judgment. May we guard the gospel faithfully, spread it actively, and if necessary, suffer for it bravely. After giving Timothy this wonderful instruction Paul leaves him with an example beside himself that he could look to and emulate, the faithful *Onesiphorus* who like Paul pointed toward and gave Timothy a little picture of the vast greatness and glory of the perfect man, The Lord Jesus Christ.

*Suggestion for Prayer: Father, help me live in light of the day when You Jesus will judge men according to their works. Help me listen to Sacred Scripture and look to the men who faithfully point me toward Jesus. Thank You Jesus that You are the perfect Man and because You lived and obeyed in perfect faithfulness, I will be able to stand in that final day.*