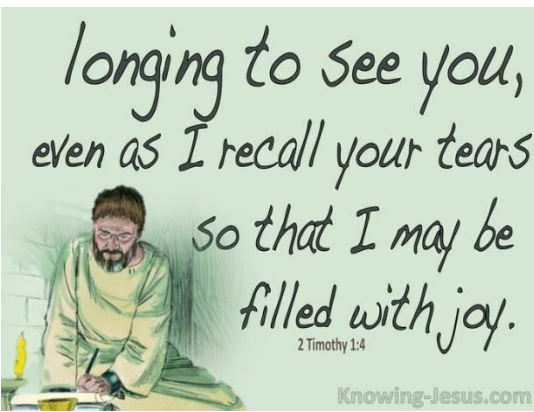


Devotional: 10 - 16 December 2023

Read: 2 Timothy 1:1-5

<https://studyandobey.com/inductive-bible-study/2timothy/2-timothy-1/>



Paul introduces himself, then recaps Timothy's path to becoming a minister. He reminds Timothy of how his family brought him up in the faith, and then how Timothy served faithfully with Paul in the past. Paul then focuses on two primary ideas. First, that Timothy's background in the faith should give him the courage to stand fast against hard times. Second, that Timothy should use that courage to defend the truth of the gospel message. Paul will use these points and examples as the foundation for the rest of his letter.

2 Timothy was Paul's final epistle. Often, we place special importance on people's "famous last words." These are the last recorded words of Paul. In 2 Timothy 4:6-9 he expresses his belief that he would die soon, that his journey as an apostle was almost over. Paul had been imprisoned in Rome before from around 61 to 63 AD. Most scholars believe he was temporarily released and traveled on another missionary journey before being arrested and imprisoned again. We learn in Acts 28 that Paul's first imprisonment was akin to house arrest and he still enjoyed some amount of freedom.

Now it is likely 66-67 AD and he is in prison again. We see in 2 Timothy 2:6 that Paul is in chains, showing his second imprisonment is much more severe than his first. We see his loneliness starting in 4:9 and his longing to see his brothers and friends again. He mentions that Luke alone is with him and asks that Timothy come quickly. At the end of his life Paul is no longer allowed to travel on long missionary journeys. But his service to the Lord continues.

His heart is in making disciples. This had been the core of his ministry for decades. Nearing his death, the importance of discipleship was magnified even more. Paul's disciples would carry on the ministry of reproduction after he leaves. Because he had made disciples effectively and trained up men like Timothy, the work could continue even without Paul. This book of the Bible takes an in-depth look at the final instructions Paul leaves with his dearest disciple.

Discussion Questions:

- How and why did Paul become an apostle according to verse 1?
- Why is this significant?
- How did he view his relationship with Timothy?
- What can we learn about Timothy from the fact Paul called him his "beloved son?" Why did Paul call him this?

Paul was chosen to be an apostle by God – In 1 Timothy 1:1, he says, "by the command of God." It wasn't Paul's choice. It wasn't Paul's plan. God chose Paul to do this task and Paul was compelled to obey.

- What has God called you to do? Do you do it to the best of your ability?

To Timothy my beloved son – Paul clearly loved Timothy. Most scholars agree that Paul never married or had children. Timothy was like the son he never had. This is the kind of son every man should aspire to have. A son who loves God. A son who shares the same vision. A son who can do ministry together with the father. Paul trusted Timothy. He sent him to far away cities and gave him challenging tasks, believing that through God's grace he was up to the task.

While Paul affirms and empowers Timothy, he also continues to support him. He offers advice. He prays for Timothy. He is there for Timothy as a counselor and a mentor. If you want an example of how a father/son should relate to each other after the son has already grown up, Paul and Timothy are a good model to follow. If you have no children, you can still have the vision to raise up disciples (men or women) like Timothy.

Romans 12:4-8 – For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.

I thank God, when I grew up, my parents always told me to be thankful when people did kind things for me. Here we see that the reverse is also true. Parents should verbally express gratitude when their kids do well. They can express thanks to God for the good in their children's lives. They should also express thanks directly to their children.

Sometimes parents like to get together and complain about their children. A lot of pressure is put on children to live up to certain expectations. Pressuring, blaming, and comparing are all commonplace. You can be the authority and discipline your children while still being kind and gracious to them.

Do you say "thank you" to your children, especially the adult ones? Do you say "please" to your children? Do you affirm your children when they do well? Do you thank God for the good in your children's lives? Or do you blame, complain, grow frustrated, and lose your temper?

We should be polite and gracious and thankful. This applies not only to our physical children, but to our spiritual children, to disciples. Let us have a positive attitude. Let us "believe all things" and look for the best instead of focusing on the worst.

Paul said, "I constantly remember you in my prayers night and day." Discipleship and raising children is not easy. It takes a lot of work and effort. What kind of work goes into discipleship? One of the most important areas about discipleship or raising children is prayer. Prayer is what goes on behind the scenes that the disciples or the children may never see or know about. But prayer is perhaps the most important ingredient of all. No matter how well you teach your children, you cannot make them believe in Christ. No matter how well you model a Christian life for your children, you cannot make them become an actual disciple of Christ. No matter how well you discipline your children and control their external behavior, you cannot control their heart.

The same applies to discipleship. You cannot make anyone love God's word. You cannot make them pray. You cannot make them share the gospel. You cannot make them start fellowships. You cannot make them obey the Word. You cannot change people's hearts. (Ezekiel 11:19)

But God can. God is in the business of changing hearts. If you want someone's heart to change, pray for them. Don't just say a short prayer every now and then. Follow Paul's example to pray for that person night and day.

Longing to see you. Paul had a close relationship with Timothy. When he didn't see Timothy, he missed him. He enjoyed being around him. He enjoyed spending time together. Discipleship is also a time investment. It is not quick. It doesn't happen automatically. We should not view it as a burden. Some of us are naturally introverts. We might find it easier to isolate ourselves and spend time with ourselves rather than others. Some have said, "I am not a people person." Well, guess what? God wants us all to be a "people person." We should love people. Our love for people should motivate us to spend time with them and then when we do spend time with others use that time to invest spiritually in their lives.

Paul understood Timothy's spiritual situation and history. If we want to disciple others, we should understand their spiritual background. That might require asking questions and learning about each other. At the same time, we should happily share our testimony with those who ask. It is important to understand someone's spiritual environment so that we can disciple that person in their real life.

A godly heritage is a great blessing – Timothy was blessed with a mother and grandmother who also believed in God. Some of you too may be blessed with a godly heritage. People have blazed the way before you teaching, you the gospel and praying for you. Be grateful for that. Also desire to raise up your children in the same way.

“I am sure that it is in you as well” – While his mother and grandmother’s faith was a great blessing, Timothy had to have the same faith. It wasn’t enough to grow up in a family who believed in God. As a wise person once said, “God has no grandchildren.” Each person is responsible in God’s sight for their own life and decisions. A child who grew up in a Christian family must not rely on that. It is impossible to be “born a Christian.”

Those who are not mothers also have opportunities to encourage sincere faith in others. What spiritual influence do you have? Are you modeling a sincere faith?

Mothers, who are your children learning to view as heroes? One of your great tasks is to teach and model spiritual discernment. Are your children spiritually attractive? The greatest gift you can give is not a perfect life or perfect parenting techniques, but a faith that is rich and relational in the person of Jesus Christ your Lord. Model daily for your children the disciplines that cultivate sincerity in your faith.

Hypocrisy (insincerity) in your walk with God is the greatest enemy to mothers and grandmothers. Amidst all the million things you do for your family, don’t forget to read your Bible, and pray on a consistent basis! Don’t forget to work hard by faith at biblical change! Be a woman of faith whether you think you are good at being a mother or not. This is the stuff that potentially will rescue your children from their inevitable crisis of faith.

When worried about your children's futures, there is one thing you can do to influence their perseverance. Walk with God! Pursue and grow your faith in all sincerity. This is a reality your children will never be able to deny, and it will stand as a powerful witness to them when they are tempted to give up.

PRAYING TO OUR HEAVENLY FATHER –
YOU'RE NOT ALONE, LET US PRAY WITH YOU & FOR YOU
PRAYERS WILL BE ANSWERED

- **Ms. Mary Rogge** had Rotator cuff surgery on 10 November 2020. She is completing physical therapy. Ms. Mary is appreciative for your cards and notes of encouragement and love. We give God thanks for Mr. Roger and the Family, who are supporting and caring for Ms. Mary. Cards and notes of love and encouragement can be mailed to: **Mr. Roger and Mrs. Mary Rogge, 4436 Magna Vista Drive, Jackson, WI 53037.**
- **Ms. Sandy Wamser** is home; thanks be to God. She is going through radiation and chemotherapy treatments. She is grateful for your continued prayers for healing, restoration, and strength. She is very appreciative for your love, prayers, and support. Ms. Sandy is also grateful for prayers for Mr. Pat and the Family as they care and support her through this season of treatments and healing. Cards and notes can be sent to: **Mr. Pat and Mrs. Sandy Wamser, 3742 Pleasant Valley Road, West Bend, WI 53095.**
- **Bro. Bob Krell** is rooted in our hearts and prayers as we shower him and the Family with our love, care, and support. It was a marvelous blessing to have Bro. Bob with us in worship last Sunday; “I’m doing well and slowly getting my strength back”. We continue to pray for Bro. Bob’s healing, restoration, and strength. Thank you, God, for hearing and answering our prayer. Cards and notes of love and encouragement can be mailed to: **Bro. Bob and Mrs. Jean Krell, 804 Lenora Drive, West Bend, WI 53090.**
- **Mr. Michael Cahoon**, son of Mr. Jim and Mrs. Sandy Cahoon, has been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. Mr. Mike completed his regime of chemotherapy. Good and gracious God, the odds were overwhelming; you gave me hope. The opponent was powerful; you gave me strength. I felt alone in the struggle; you gave me a team. I felt like a stranger; you sent cheering supporters. I felt confused; you showed me the game plan. I felt defeated; your words inspired me. I was felt hopeless; you picked me up and put me back into the fight. I feared time was running out; you gave me a new beginning. The cancer cannot win against Your love; against the team of scientists, physicians, and nurses; against the support of my family and friends. Great Physician, you are the guide, you are the motivator, you are the healer; you are Lord. Thank you for helping me to achieve the goal, for leading me to the win. May I now be a champion for others who feel what I felt, who need to know the Power behind every victory. Amen. Cards and notes filled with prayers encouragement can be sent to: **Mr. Michael Cahoon, C/O: Mr. Jim and Mrs. Sandy Cahoon, 1615 Beverly Lane, WI 53090.**

- **Mr. Tom Damp** has been comfortable and safe in his home for years. This has been possible primarily due to home healthcare services. However, with significant changes in coverage from health insurance, availability of in-home health care personnel, and other life circumstances, Mr. Tom is having to make unexpected decisions; stay in his home or transition to assisted living. He asks for your prayers and care as God reveals, God's plan for his new season. Caring Father, we thank you for the opportunity we have as a church family to pray and care for Mr. Tom Damp. We ask that you bless him with the resources to keep safe from harm. Please surround this whole process with your wisdom and mercy, Lord. We pray for Mr. Tom's health and care in this whole process. In the name of Jesus I pray, amen. Card and notes can be mailed to: **Mr. Tom Damp, 1707 Sunset Ridge Drive, West Bend WI 53095.**
- We give thanks and praise that **Mr. Ben Barth**, now husband of Ms. Heather Wolf, granddaughter of Mr. Roger and Mrs. Mary Rogge. Mr. Ben has been released from the hospital after the recipient of a new heart and new lungs—to the glory of God. Almighty God, whose Son, Jesus Christ, restored the sick to wholeness of mind and body, bless Mr. Ben on receiving his donated organs. Restore him with the gift of health, that he may continue to serve you with hope and thanksgiving. We pray, too, for the donor and family, whose courage and compassion has enabled the possibility of this transplant. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen. Please overwhelm Mr. Ben with cards and notes for continued healing, strength, and restoration. *Also, extend congratulations on their marriage.* Correspondence can be mailed to: **Mr. Ben and Mrs. Heather Barth, 223 South 11th Ave., West Bend, WI 53095.**
- We remain in prayer and support for **Mrs. Ann Cording**. Great Physician, you can heal us in a heartbeat. We pray for God's miraculous healing today. Take our pain away, according to Your will, in Your time. We're not promised a painless life on this earth, but You do want us to live a happy one. Send Your Spirit to help us see past our circumstances and onto Your calling on our lives. Sickness and injury can't stop God-placed dreams. Fill our hearts with hope as we wait on You to move in our lives and flow out from our hearts. In Jesus' Name, Amen. Cards and notes of love and care can be mailed to: **Mrs. Ann Cording, 1416 S. Silverbrook Drive, West Bend WI 53095.**
- **Mr. Don Walters** is still experiencing several medical challenges. We're keeping Ms. Joyce in our thoughts and prayers as well. Letters and notes of encouragement and love can be mailed to: **Mr. Don and Mrs. Joyce Walters, 5368 Woodlawn Summit, West Bend, WI 53095.**
- **Mr. Chuck Rogge** is still on a journey of healing. He is grateful for the cards and notes of support. Please continue to flood the mailbox with love and support to: **Mr. Chuck and Mrs. Sue Rogge, 5011 Hwy. P, West Bend, WI 53095.**
- **Mrs. Janice Liepert-Kempf**, appreciates your continued prayers for healing and strength as she continues to struggle with illness. You can send emails of prayers and support to: alankemp33@gmail.com; or cards and notes to **Mr. Allan and Mrs. Janice Liepert-Kempf, 414B. South Pleasantview Road, Plymouth, WI 53073; phone number: 920.838.1830.**

We continue to celebrate our 175th year of service, commitment and Methodism in West Bend, Wisconsin.

“Honoring Our Past, Celebrating Our Present, Anticipating Our Future”

Prayer: Lord, we have pulled out the Advent wreath, the Christmas tree, the poinsettias. We dusted off the hymns, unsung for a year, and unearthed the words of your prophets. Yet, in your eyes, these efforts are for nothing without the regular, persistent, deep pursuit of justice for all people.

Our efforts are hollow without consistent work toward peace, reconciliation, and participation in your mission for creation. In our hearts, we do long to be your people, to carry out your mission, to be lights in the darkness—proof that no darkness can overcome your truth.

Awaken us to action. Stir us to courage. Rouse us to prepare a way in the wilderness for your coming, clearing the brush of oppression, racism, injustice, and hopelessness—so that all may see your light and perceive your coming. Amen.

Pastor Clarissa & Bro. Martin