

II Timothy 1:1-12

Everyone Emphasis: Giving

Scripture Focus

II Timothy 1:1-12

Key Verse

II Timothy 1:12

TDM Competency

Biblical Living: Understand and apply biblical principles to all areas of life.

This text actually includes the competency of biblical thinking as well. As you will read in the commentary on verse 12, Paul's right view, belief and understanding of God resulted in his serving God in the right way. Because Paul understood and honored from his heart that which God had made known of Himself, his life mirrored the giving nature of God. What we think about God is always reflected in how we live. Correct theology is essential to faithful, practical living.

Overview

Paul was writing to Timothy, his young son in the ministry, from a prison cell. He was in prison for preaching the gospel. He encouraged Timothy by affirming the faith that he saw in the young minister's life, but also exhorted Timothy to live a life that reflected his understanding of the grace, calling, gift and power of God. Based on the power of the gospel in Timothy's life, he was to serve God without any hesitation in the face of intense persecution.

Theme

Fulfill the call of God on your life in a way that reveals you believe God is giving, all-powerful and faithful to fulfill His promises.

Desired Learner Response [Aiming at the Heart for Life Transformation]

To recognize that God has equipped and called them to the ministry of giving the gospel. To fulfill their call by passionately serving Christ regardless the cost. To serve God out of hearts that have been transformed by His grace.

Outline

- I. The Personal Investment of the Gospel (vv. 1-7)
- II. The Personal Call to the Gospel (vv. 8-12)

Lesson

I. The Personal Investment of the Gospel (vv. 1-7)

v. 1 – One would think that as an old man in prison, Paul would have desired an encouraging word from Timothy. But Paul had a heart that desired to give to others until his last breath. At this point in both men's ministry, it was as if a general were stooping in the middle of battle to give an encouraging word to a lowly private. Paul knew such an example in the incarnation of Christ, where God became the God-man, to Timothy would prove greatly beneficial. Timothy had to learn that the ministry of the gospel was not a mechanical endeavor but rather a personal investment of one person, with the gospel, into another person. Paul's generosity in investing the gospel in Timothy demonstrated the giving nature of Christ.

“An apostle” was a declaration of one's authority, but the statement “of Jesus Christ” revealed that the authority which Paul possessed was solely given to him by Jesus. Paul stated that his apostleship was “by the will of God.” Paul was not an apostle by his own willful desire to achieve such a position but rather by the

determined purpose of God for his life. Philippians 3:4-8 reveals that Paul's apostleship was a total reversal of his life, which only occurs by grace.

The statement "according to the promise" revealed the means by which Paul knew the will of God, namely, the Word of God. The promise or Word of God would serve as the solid foundation of Timothy's ministry.

Ask: Why is a right view of the Bible essential to one's ministry of the gospel? **Note** that without a right view of the Bible as the inerrant Word of God that is completely sufficient for everything in life, one's ministry will have no foundation on which to stand or find direction.

v. 2 – Timothy was from Lystra, the city in which Paul was stoned and left for dead. Paul returned to Lystra to preach the gospel at which time a young boy, Timothy was saved. Timothy saw a man willing to give his life to preach about a man who gave His life. Through the preaching of Paul, Timothy was converted by grace through faith. He referred to Timothy as his "beloved son," which was not only a phrase of personal endearment, but also a phrase that indicated "one reconciled to God." Paul gave encouragement to Timothy by identifying him as a man whose life had been clearly transformed by the power of the gospel.

The second half of verse 2 was a common greeting in Paul's day. However, do not miss the rich theology in these words. Only God gives grace unto salvation; only God grants mercy for His wrath to be eternally withheld from the repentant sinner; God gives true peace that equates to the "tranquility of the soul"; and only God is Christ (Messiah and Savior), Jesus (perfect man), and Lord (Holy God). The theology of this verse would serve as the foundation on which Paul's entire ministerial directives to Timothy would stand.

Ask: Why is it essential to have a right view of God to carry out the ministry of the gospel? **Note** that without a right view of God, we will continuously misrepresent Him; thus, misrepresent the gospel, and thus mislead people to a false gospel and a false conversion. Bad theology is not just an issue of the mind, but has eternal consequences to the soul of man.

v. 3 – Paul gave thanks to God and testified that he served God with a "pure conscience." It was a statement that testified Paul was living in a manner that rightly represented Christ. His "forefathers" included Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This was not only a way of expressing his appreciation for the faithful men that had come before him, but also a way of demonstrating that in every generation godliness is measured exclusively by loyalty to God's Word out of a transformed heart. There are no new standards of godliness or any outdated standards, but rather God's standard as revealed in His Word is the measure of godly living in every culture and generation.

Paul prayed without "ceasing" for Timothy. He gave much time to interceding on behalf of those he loved and to whom he had invested much of his life teaching the Word. He did not share his prayer pattern to commend himself, but rather he was demonstrating the obedience to God that he learned from his forefathers and passed on to Timothy.

Ask: Why is it dangerous to come up with new rules for godly living? **Note** that we must guard against placing personal convictions on the same level as biblical revelation. To do so is to add to Scripture, which is sinful. **Ask:** What are some rules we have today that may be helpful but are not biblical directives? Examples may include the way we expect people to dress for church services or the time and frequency of church services or style of music, etc.

v. 4 – Notice the key words in this text:

“Desiring” – Paul’s deep heart’s desire was to see Timothy. Such a statement reveals that those whom Paul had led to Christ, disciplined and sent out into ministry were not mere ministry projects, but men whom he loved with deep affection and concern. Giving ourselves to another in the body of Christ is not a mechanical act of deeds and activities but rather a heart connection of loyalty, trust and lifelong investment of the gospel.

“Tears” – The fact that Timothy had tears over his mentor’s imprisoned stated reveals that he had a genuine love for Paul. It also reveals the very personal nature of Paul’s discipleship ministry in the life of Timothy. Again, it was not a ministry of a controlled laboratory but rather one man pouring the gospel into another man and preparing him to go out and make disciples.

“Joy” – Notice the incredible love Paul had for Timothy. Only Christians that walk with God can bring joy to man of God. Notice a similar statement in III John 4. Both John and Paul found joy in seeing other believers walk right with God.

Ask: What do we learn about disciple-making from verse 4? **Ask:** Whom have you made a disciple in the manner by which Paul disciplined Timothy?

v. 5 - The very reflection on Timothy’s reputation that stemmed from the godly investment of Timothy’s mother and grandmother brought joy to the imprisoned apostle. “Genuine” – Paul’s description of Timothy’s faith included a faith that was sincere, meaning without hypocrisy and with full reliance on Christ for all things. Nothing self-serving or self-seeking could be observed in Timothy’s faith, but rather his faith in action constantly revealed a heart of generosity and humble service to Christ and others.

“Dwelt” – Notice the word Paul used was not describing outward deeds but rather the hearts of Timothy’s mother and grandmother that were obviously filled with genuine faith. Certainly such a heart invoked actions, but Paul was testifying that Timothy’s redeemed heart was first seen in his family. Such a past puts Paul’s command in 2:2 in proper perspective. Just as Timothy had seen in his family and just as he had seen from Paul, he too was to go and, out of a transformed heart, pass the Word of God to others. This is the mission of disciple-making to which Jesus called every believer in Matthew 28.

“Persuaded” – Paul was convinced without lacking any certainty that just as the two ladies mentioned were transformed believers, so too was Timothy a man who, out of a transformed heart, served the Lord.

Ask: Why is a transformed heart so necessary to the ministry of the gospel? **Note** that without the grace of God saving us from the present bondage of sin and the future wrath against sin, we may say the words of the gospel, but we cannot honor, worship, or glorify God. It is only the redeemed that can honor God in the ministry of the gospel.

v. 6 “Therefore” – Because Timothy’s salvation was obvious, because his faith was genuine, Paul encouraged him to live out his faith.

“Stir up” – Meant to rekindle; continuously use your gifts; your flame will burn bright when you remain faithful. Timothy was not just to be thankful for his godly heritage, or rejoice in his salvation, but out of his new heart was to continuously and vigorously serve the Lord. “Stir up, 'kindle up:' fan into a flame: the opposite of 'quench,' or extinguish (1 Thess. 5:19), Paul does not doubt Timothy's faith; but, just because of his 'persuasion' of its reality, urges him to put it in full exercise (from Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1997, 2003, 2005, 2006 by BibleSoft, Inc. All rights reserved).

“Gift” – “Gift translates *charisma*, which denotes a specific expression of charis ("grace") and therefore carries the idea of a grace gift. It refers to the general categories of spiritual gifts that Paul explains in Rom 12 and 1 Cor. 12. God sovereignly bestows these enablement's on believers according to His own divine will, totally apart from any personal merit, qualification, or seeking.

“A believer's divine giftedness is inseparable from his divine calling. At salvation, each Christian's grace gifts are bestowed on him uniquely to equip him to serve God in the specific area or areas of ministry to which he has been called. The grace gifts are divine enablement's for effective service of the Lord. Timothy's giftedness prepared him not only for preaching and teaching but also to "do the work of an evangelist, [in order to] fulfill your ministry" (2 Tim 4:5).” (From The MacArthur New Testament Commentary, Copyright © Moody Press and John MacArthur, Jr., 1983-2007.)

“Laying on of my hands” – Paul was in no way indicating that he transferred some spiritual enablement to Timothy; but simply being at Timothy's ordination for ministry, Paul affirmed with the assembly that he had witnessed clear evidence of Timothy's salvation, thus the certainty that God had gifted or enabled him for ministry.

v. 7 “Given” – All that we have is all that we need for ministry and life. All that we have was given to us by God at the moment of salvation and is to be used for His glory. He gives us what we need to give glory to Him and to give that which others need to them.

God has not given us a disposition of “fear.” Satan's attempt is to douse a believer's passion for serving Christ and turn bold believers who exercise their gift into cowards unwilling to use their gifts to serve the Lord. Any hint of fear that causes a believer to even pause in the exercise of his gifts is not in any way from the Lord.

“Power” – God has given us every necessary resource for the tasks to which He calls us. **Note** that the tasks are clearly defined in Scripture and that it is only through the Word of God that we learn and know the will of God.

“Love” – The faculty given by God that enables us to serve in adversity and to continuously give to others without desire or expectation for return. Christ's love was displayed on the cross and was demonstrated in a manner that was without any expectation of return. There is nothing that those for whom Christ died could ever accomplish that would repay His loving work. “Sound mind” – also could read self-discipline or self-control. Neither of these attributes is possible apart from the redeeming work of Christ in our lives. Paul clearly stated in Romans 3 that man is not capable of anything but worshipping himself apart from Christ. If a person has self-control, it is not because he has developed an ability over a period of time or through a method of action, but rather has been equipped by God with that which is necessary to carry out ministry. The gospel radically reverses the most flawed effects of sin in man.

Ask: According to these verses, what do we have to do in order to be ready to give lost people the gospel or invest the gospel in others? **Note** the answer is “nothing.” We have been given all that is necessary to open a Bible and proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ. Certainly, continuous training and study is necessary for obedience to the faith, but the power and message for salvation is given to every believer at the moment of salvation.

II. The Personal Call to the Gospel (vv. 8-12)

v. 8 – “Therefore” – Paul told Timothy, because God had equipped him with every necessary resource and disposition to carry out the work of His ministry, what he was commanded to do and avoid.

“Ashamed” – to be embarrassed; to back away from that which you are called to do. Standing on the certainty that God has given all that is necessary to carry out His commands, Timothy had no justification for every backing away from sharing the gospel.

Paul implored Timothy to “share with me in the sufferings.” Just as God does with every believer, He had also equipped Timothy to enter the ministry with the certainty that he would suffer for the gospel. No amount of suffering could overtake the power that God had given Timothy to endure. Remind your class that Paul was writing this message from a prison cell and that he was in that prison cell for proclaiming the gospel. He gave his freedom in proclaiming the gospel and assured Timothy that he too could suffer all things by the power of God as he would give himself for the gospel.

Ask: What are you most fearful of when giving the gospel to someone? **Note** that fear is in no way from God and that God has given us all the power necessary to speak. A believer who chooses not to give the gospel has no excuse but can only repent of willfully denying and being ashamed of Christ.

v. 9 – Two acts attributed solely to God are noted in this verse. First, God saved us. One may ask, “From what did God save us?” Romans 5:9 and I Thessalonians 1:10 reveal that we are saved from the wrath to come. God’s wrath was poured out on Jesus on the cross, and those that are saved by grace through faith are saved from the wrath of God that will be poured out on all unrepentant people. Second, God called us. One may ask, “To what did God call us?” In the context of this passage we learn that God called Paul to be a preacher, apostle and teacher (v. 11). Paul affirmed that he saw the call of God on Timothy’s life to do the same (2:2). The call of God in the life of any believer may be different from the call of God in these men’s lives, but one common thread is seen in the call of God to ministry throughout the New Testament, namely the call to obey the Word of God and to pass the Word to others through evangelizing the lost and discipling the saved. To these two ministries every believer is called to give his life.

Note that the word “called” in this text is not synonymous with an invitation to which one chooses to respond. Rather, the call of God is a summons to a life of gospel investment in others. Every believer has the call to give his life to the ministry of the gospel. The call is not based on our “works.” Making certain that Timothy kept his calling in humble perspective, Paul emphasized that God did not call him based on any previous experience, labor or achievements but based solely on the will and grace of God.

v. 12 – Paul gives a personal testimony of his own call. The reason he “suffered” persecution was because of his faithful proclamation of the gospel. Even in terrible prison conditions Paul did not back away from that which God called him to do. We get no hint of self-determination to complete the mission to which he was called. Rather, Paul’s confidence in continuing to proclaim the gospel was rooted totally in the promise and nature of God. He was confident in God’s ability (“able to keep”) and in His promise to return (“until that Day”). Since Paul’s theology was right, his actions were right. He had a right belief in the nature and activity of God therefore, his behavior mirrored that belief, and he represented and honored Christ even while suffering in a prison cell.

Ask: How does one’s theology determine his actions? **Ask:** Why is it essential for someone to have a right view of God in order to live right before God?