

**Message #2****II Timothy 1:1-2**

Many years ago I was hunting deep in the back country of the mountains of the Teton National Forest outside of Jackson Hole, Wyoming. I had taken a backpack that had my tent, sleeping bag and food about 5 miles into the mountains and set up a little camp. One day I met a man who had hiked clear back to this basin I was hunting and when he saw me, he came over to talk with me. I asked him if he wanted to go back to my camp and have some coffee and he said he would love it. He actually worked for the Consumer's Power Company of Jackson Hole, Wyoming. In fact, this is how I actually learned where all the movie stars lived. He knew their addresses and gave them to me. Well anyway, when he was at my little camp drinking a cup of coffee, he said to me "what you are doing is not for the faint-hearted." That always stuck with me. It is true. If you are going to hike back into grizzly country and set up a little camp, it is not for the faint-hearted.

When you think about it, life is not for the faint-hearted. Death is not for the faint-hearted. Christianity is not for the faint-hearted. Ministry is not for the faint-hearted. When we come to this book of II Timothy, we come to the last letter written by Paul before he died. This will be the last time Paul's tired hands and dim eyes will write a letter. This will be the last time God will move in his heart and prompt him to write an inspired letter.

John Calvin said, "For my own part, I know that this epistle has been more profitable to me than any other book of Scripture, and still is profitable to me every day; and if any person shall examine it carefully, there can be no doubt that he will experience the same effect."

Back around 1900, Bishop Handley Moule of England wrote: "I have often found it difficult deliberately to read these short chapters through without finding something like a mist gathering in my eyes."

II Timothy is a final look at Paul's mind and heart. As one writer said, it is like this book was written with his blood because he knew he would die. Paul knew that "the time of my departure has come" (II Tim. 4:6). It was time for him to leave this world. He was about to die.

As we mentioned last time, one of the great inspiration statements of the Bible is in this book. II Timothy 3:16 which says, "All Scripture is inspired by God..". So what this would demand is that we crawl through every word of Scripture in its context. We owe it to God; we owe it to Paul and we owe it to our own spiritual development to examine every single word in this great final epistle.

Now the opening two verses present to us the opening of a letter written by a man who knows he is writing for the last time. That intrigues me because the way a typical letter began in the first century is the way Paul opens the document. In New Testament times, the writer would introduce himself at the beginning of the letter so the receiver of the letter would know from whom the letter was sent. But when we consider that this is the last letter Paul would write, it certainly ups the ante of the words and the sentences.

Certainly one thing that catches our eye in the opening two verses is the amount of times he mentions God and Christ Jesus. He mentions God two times and he mentions Christ Jesus three times. It seems to me what he is saying is this:

**WHEN OUR LIFE COMES TO AN END, GOD'S PEOPLE REALIZE THAT OUR HOPE IS FOUND TOTALLY, ONLY AND COMPLETELY IN GOD AND IN CHRIST JESUS.**

This is Paul's focus. This needed to be Timothy's focus and this needs to be our focus. Paul was obviously thinking about his life and what God had done with him and as that thought process was taking place, he was totally focused on God and on Christ Jesus.

Now there are two introductory parts to this opening of the final letter:

**INTRODUCTORY PART #1** – The introduction of the writer of the letter. **1:1**

The writer names himself as Paul. This is the first word of the Greek text and the English Bible. As we mentioned, Paul begins the letter in the same cultural normal way even though this is his final letter. This shows us that he is not emotionally distraught writing some erratic suicide note. He is in total and complete control and still functioning abiding by the normal rules of grammar.

There are three facts we learn about Paul that apparently he wanted Timothy to consider:

**Fact #1** - Paul is an apostle of Christ Jesus. **1:1a**

Now it is not unusual that Paul identifies himself to be an apostle because he does that in most of his letters. In fact, the only letters where he doesn't do that are his letters to the Philippians; the two letters to the Thessalonians and his letter to Philemon.

Now most of the time when Paul uses this term concerning himself, he does so to establish his authority. The word "apostle" means one has been specifically commissioned and sent by God on a mission as a sent messenger of God. In the Church Age, the gift of apostle was the highest gift one could have (I Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:11). In fact, this will be an honored gift in all eternity (Rev. 21:14). Since this will be Paul's last letter, this will be the last time he will introduce himself this way and since Timothy had been his close son in the faith and since if any man on earth knew full well Paul was an apostle, it would be Timothy, one must wonder why in the world did he remind Timothy that he was an apostle. This would be the one man you would not have to remind so why do it? Let me suggest two reasons:

**(Reason #1)** - To specifically remind Timothy of his authority.

Paul does not begin with Paul your buddy or Paul your pal; he begins with Paul an apostle. Paul wants Timothy to realize that this letter is coming to him from a rare apostle who has true authority in the program of God.

One challenge that will come from this book is stay focused on the Word of God until the end and Paul wanted Timothy to realize this is not a suggestion coming from some spiritual simpleton or carnal Christian; this is coming from an apostle fully authorized by God. When Timothy would read the opening four words “Paul, apostle *of* Christ Jesus” he would realize this was coming from one who had the highest authority in regard to him and the church.

When we consider that this was written near the end of Paul’s life, what we must conclude is that **in God’s word and work “intimacy will never replace authority.”** This is true in the church, this is true in the home, and this is true in any context of God’s world. There is authority structure. Paul was a gifted apostle and Timothy wasn’t. Authority needs to be recognized and there needs to be proper submission.

**(Reason #2)** - To specifically remind himself in the face of personal difficulty.

In the early days of Paul’s ministry, the gift of apostle would have motivated him to keep plugging. Now, it was this gift that would mean his execution. **The gift that once motivated him was the same gift responsible for executing him (1:11-12).**

By Paul thinking about the fact that he was a called and gifted apostle and by him realizing that he was a sent messenger for God who had been commissioned and sent on a mission as a messenger of God, he could realize his mission was over. He had completed his assignment.

David Livingstone, the African missionary, said, “Shall I tell you what sustained me amidst the toil, the hardship and loneliness of my exiled life? It was the promise ‘Lo I am with you always even unto the end.’” The thought that you are doing God’s will with your life enables you to face the end victoriously because you realize that God controls the end of the assignment.

Now don’t overlook that three times in these two verses Paul uses the word order “Christ Jesus” not “Jesus Christ.” This is important because this tells us that Paul was thinking of the proper theological order of the program of God. **God’s program was Jew first and Gentile second.** Christ is the Jewish title Messiah or Anointed One and Jesus is His name that means He is the Savior. John Calvin said that II Timothy is really the sum total of Paul’s doctrine. So it is no coincidence that he uses the noun order Christ Jesus rather than Jesus Christ. Christ came first to the Jews and offered Himself as her King and Messiah and then He went to the cross and offered salvation to all who would believe.

As Paul neared his own death, he was focused on sound doctrine. He thought about the Jew/Gentile theology. He had been the apostle to the Gentiles, but he never forgot about the importance of Israel.

**Fact #2** - Paul is an apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God. **1:1b**

Paul did not ever look to become an apostle. He did not even want to be an apostle. He didn’t envy others who were apostles; in fact, initially he was out to destroy them.

The fact is Paul became an apostle because God willed it. That word “will” means that God was the One who wished, willed and desired Paul to become an apostle.

Now Paul said that this calling that God had on his life to be an apostle occurred at the moment of his physical birth (Gal. 1:15). However, it was not revealed to Paul until the moment of his spiritual birth (Gal. 1:12/Acts 9:1-16). God’s sovereign will for Paul’s life was that he be an apostle.

Paul did not become an apostle by his own personal human choice or because of his own personal prayer; he became an apostle by the will of God.

Now why was this will of God point so important to Paul at the end of his life? The reason was because just as it had been God’s will for him as an apostle to preach to the Gentiles (II Tim. 1:11), now it was God’s will for him as an apostle to die (II Tim. 4:6).

Paul had completed his earthly apostolic assignments according to the will of God and now it was time for him to complete this final assignment. Paul was to write this letter and then go home to be with the Lord.

This is something many believers overlook. Dying is just as much a part of the will of God as living and serving. I talked with a religious screwball one time who said it is never God’s will for a person to die. It is always God’s will when a person dies. It is an appointed moment. Death is just as much an appointed moment as birth.

The utilization of spiritual gifts is the will of God. Preaching and teaching is the will of God. Building a church is the will of God. Living a godly life is the will of God. But so is the moment when we go into eternity. That too is the will of God.

This thought brought Paul comfort. He was an apostle by the will of God and now it was time for him to leave.

**Fact #3** - Paul is an apostle of Christ Jesus with the promise of life. **1:1c**

Here is the message and the hope and the focus of the Apostle Paul. Paul’s message was believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved. Paul knew that his faith in Jesus Christ gave him the promise of everlasting life.

By the way, this is important. Paul did not believe his promise of life was due to his faithfulness as an apostle; it was due to Christ Jesus. **The promise of life is found “in” Christ Jesus.** Later in this book we shall see that Paul never thought of himself as sinless (II Tim. 4:18). His hope of eternal life and the promise that he would have eternal life when he died was based on his faith in Jesus Christ.

**When death's door comes knocking at our soul, I guarantee every one of us that any hope we will have of life will be found in Jesus Christ.** When death comes knocking you will not find the promise of life in your house, investments, bank account, achievements, education or position; you will find the promise of life in Jesus Christ. If you have never believed on Jesus Christ, do it today because you do not know when death will come knocking.

**INTRODUCTORY PART #2** – The introduction of the recipient of the letter. **1:2**

Obviously Paul wrote this letter to Timothy. There are two facts that are brought out about Timothy:

**Fact #1** - Timothy had a special relationship with Paul. **1:2a**

Paul wanted Timothy to know that he was very special to him. In fact, Paul calls him his “beloved son.” The word used for son is unique (*teknon*). This word means that Paul considered Timothy to be his genuine son; his genuine child.

What Paul means is that Timothy had literally come into the family of God through the ministry of Paul and Paul had personally raised Timothy in the faith and taught him doctrine. So Timothy was his “beloved, genuine son.”

Timothy was originally from Lystra and probably came to faith in Paul's first visit to that area (Acts 14:6). Local churches were established and Timothy was probably one of the early converts. Years later, when Paul went back to Lystra, Timothy had earned himself a good reputation as a faithful man of God, so Paul took Timothy with him (Acts 16:1-4).

Timothy was Paul's son in the faith who had been taught by Paul and would teach the same things Paul taught (I Cor. 4:17). He was the most like-minded Pauline associate ever to live. In fact, many churches knew of Timothy, Paul's son in the faith (Philippians 2:22) and then knew of his faithfulness.

It is intriguing to me that as Paul is nearing his own death, he is thinking of Timothy. He wanted to write one more letter and it was to Timothy that he would write a final time.

**Fact #2** - Timothy had a grace relationship with God. **1:2b**

The whole theology of Paul leaps out at Timothy right here. Paul was the great apostle of grace. Paul wanted Timothy to realize that the source of the grace and mercy and peace that we have in any relationship with God is from God the Father and from Christ Jesus our Lord.

Everything we have in our relationship with God is from God. It is not our works or our goodness; it is all God's grace.

Now what is pretty normal in Pauline salutations is the combination of “Grace and peace.”

It was very typical for Paul to stress grace and peace. “Grace” is the undeserved, unmerited, unearned favor that God gives to a sinner when He saves him. Salvation is all of grace. The “peace” is that which makes the relationship between Holy God and sinful man tranquil. Once one has believed on Jesus Christ, one is at peace in a relationship with God.

**The thing that is abnormal is the addition of the word “mercy.”** This word only occurs in the final three letter introductions of Paul—I & II Timothy; Titus.

The word “mercy” has to do with God reaching out to helpless and hopeless people and showing pity on them. Grace and peace are more positional and mercy is more practical.

Undoubtedly as Paul neared his own death and analyzed his own life and ministry, he realized more and more that he was in desperate need of the mercy of God. He was in a dungeon sentenced to die. That is about as helpless a condition as one may be in. During those times it was God’s mercy that sustained him. It was God’s mercy that used him for any ministry. Paul realized more and more that everything was due to the mercy of God.

Here is where rock-solid stability comes that will enable one to face death. Focus on the grace and the mercy of God.

When King David faced his own death, he realized the same thing. He realized that God’s goodness and mercy had followed him all the days of his life (Ps. 23:6a).

Paul is writing to Timothy, his son in the faith, and he wanted him focused on God’s grace and mercy because that is what brings peace and tranquility to a heart and mind.

All of the grace and mercy of God are found in Christ Jesus.

If Christ Jesus is not your Savior, when you die God will give you His wrath.

If Christ Jesus is not your Lord, when you die God will not give you His rewards.

If Christ Jesus is your Savior and your Lord, when you die God will give you His wealth.