

**Romans 16:21-24 Timothy, my fellow worker, and Lucius, Jason, and Sosipater, my countrymen, greet you. 22 I, Tertius, who wrote *this* epistle, greet you in the Lord. 23 Gaius, my host and *the host* of the whole church, greets you. Erastus, the treasurer of the city, greets you, and Quartus, a brother. 24 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you all. Amen. (NKJV)**

Early in chapter 16 Paul sent his greetings to the people **in** Rome. Now he is saying “**hello**” to Rome for everyone that is with him. It is likely that these people with Paul knew some of the people in the church at Rome. Let’s take a look at them. We will skip over Timothy and look at him last. So Paul starts out- Timothy, my fellow worker. Notice that **work** word again. I promise, I am not going to focus on that for a third time. But it is important in our text.

Then a list of Paul’s countrymen

Lucias-

The truth as, with many of these names, we are not certain who they are. Maybe it is the Lucius in the following text.

Acts 13:1 Now in the church that was at Antioch there were certain prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, **Lucius of Cyrene**, Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. 2 As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, "Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." 3 Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent *them* away. (NKJV)

Lucias also could have been Luke’s formal name. Luke travelled a lot of miles with Paul, so it could easily have been him, except that Paul doesn’t usually refer to him as Lucius.

So we really don’t know.

Jason- When Paul was ministering in Thessalonica the following event happened.

Acts 17:5 But the Jews who were not persuaded, becoming envious, took some of the evil men from the marketplace, and gathering a mob, set all the city in an uproar and attacked the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people. This could easily be the same Jason.

Sosipater

Maybe Sosipater is Sopater mentioned in verse 4 of the following passage.

Sopater was a shortened version of Sosipater, much as Jon is often a shortened version of Jonathan.

Acts 20:1 After the uproar had ceased, Paul called the disciples to *himself*, embraced *them*, and departed to go to Macedonia. 2 Now when he had gone over

that region and encouraged them with many words, he came to Greece 3 and stayed three months. And when the Jews plotted against him as he was about to sail to Syria, he decided to return through Macedonia. 4 And **Sopater** of Berea accompanied him to Asia--also Aristarchus and Secundus of the Thessalonians, and Gaius of Derbe, and Timothy, and Tychicus and Trophimus of Asia. 5 These men, going ahead, waited for us at Troas. 6 But we sailed away from Philippi after the Days of Unleavened Bread, and in five days joined them at Troas, where we stayed seven days. (NKJV)

Then we go on.

### **I, Tertius, who wrote *this* epistle, greet you in the Lord.**

Paul often had people who wrote for him. It is likely he had eye problems so others had to help him with his writings. In one letter he points out the fact of the large letters he makes by his own hand. So Tertius was provided a much needed service for Paul. I love seeing the names that are interspersed in Paul's writings. How do you think these people feel about being included in the Bible? They had no idea they were doing anything all that special. They would have known the service they were providing was **needed**, but I doubt they regarded it as being **important** enough to be printed in the Bible.

I suspect heaven will bring light to all of the important ministries that have been done in Christ's name over the years. There will be letters written that no one knew about. There will be money given in secret. There will be phone calls and conversations. There will be people who were given rides and given lodging. And they were all **small** services and they were all **needed**. Doesn't that encourage you to do those things **you can do**, knowing God seems to take enough interest in things like that to see that they hit the pages of scripture?

23 Gaius, my host and *the host* of the whole church, greets you

The word for host is one who receives and entertains another hospitably. Paul was probably living with Gaius. Gaius also probably opened up his house to the whole church at Corinth as well.

Gaius was probably one who came to Christ in Corinth through the ministry of Paul and was likely one of the two men who Paul had baptized.

1 Corinthians 1:14 I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, (NKJV)

Many scholars think he was "Titius Justus, a worshiper of God, whose house was next to the synagogue" in Corinth ([Acts 18:7](#)) and whose full name would have been **Gaius** Titius Justus.

Gaius probably had a large house and he definitely had one well situated for ministry. Being next to the synagogue was ideal.

Reading passages like this ought to put thoughts in our minds that our houses really are ministry tools. They are often used in scripture to minister to the needs of the saints. Never underestimate the use God can make of the tools he has given Him if we will apply ourselves to use them.

**Erastus, the treasurer of the city, greets you,**

Erastus was actually a big shot in Corinth. Being the treasurer of that city would have been a very important office. Many scholars believe that this is not the same man as mentioned in Acts 19:22 or 2 Timothy 4:20

What a hodgepodge of people come together in the name of Christ. From the lowliest to the most prominent. Christ calls people to Himself from all walks of life. A few weeks ago we learned about those who were in the lineage of the emperors of Rome who came to Christ. And here is a big shot in Corinth who came to Christ as well. Never forget that this is **the Lord's church**. We just need to pay attention so we can deliver His mail, His gospel, to all that we have an opportunity with.

**and Quartus, a brother.** Quartus was either the brother of Erastus or he was simply a fellow believer.

The next phrase is left out in some of the most reliable texts.

**24 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you all. Amen.**

Now let's jump back to Timothy.

I am sure I have said this before so please bear with me. I really like Timothy. In scripture we find many strong personalities. Paul was one such person. Peter was one. John was one. Probably even Thomas was one.

But Timothy was not.

I can relate to Timothy more than all the other ministers addressed in the New Testament. Timothy was a natural follower who is learning the discipline of leading. I can really relate to that. Let's close out our time together this morning taking a look at the life and ministry of Timothy.

Timothy is mentioned 24 times in the New Testament. Most of the occurrences are couched in a ministry that he is performing. He was either **with** Paul, **coming to** Paul, or **being sent by** Paul to accomplish a task.

What did Paul think of Timothy? How did he regard him?

**Philippians 2:19 But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, that I also may be encouraged when I know your state. 20 For I have no one like-minded, who will sincerely care for your state. 21 For all seek their own, not the things which are of Christ Jesus. 22 But you know his proven**

**character, that as a son with *his* father he served with me in the gospel.**  
**23 Therefore I hope to send him at once, as soon as I see how it goes with me.**  
(NKJV)

This is so encouraging.

Look at **what it is** that endears Timothy to Paul.

Like minded- Literally it is “equal in soul”. You could say soul mates. What endeared Timothy to Paul is that he **cared about those that he ministered** to the same way Paul did. They regarded **the ministry** in the same way. Paul was willing to spend himself **for the good** of those he was ministering to. **Timothy** was willing to spend himself **for the good** of those he was ministering to.

What is the alternative to that? What is it that we can choose that will limit ministry?

Selfish interest that **detracts** from ministry. Paul says that all the rest seek their own. They look out for number one first. They put what is **best for them** above that which is **best for those who they are serving**. But Timothy was not that way. The fact that he remained single during these years of his youth might display just how devoted he was.

We need to assume that Paul would not have wasted his time giving Timothy personal advice **that he did not need**. I think it is safe to assume that if Paul **gave** the advice, Timothy **needed** the advice. He tells Timothy in **2 Timothy 2:22 Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.**

Obviously Timothy had the same struggles that most young men have. Paul gives him good advice. Flee those temptations he says, and pursue the things that matter most.

So Timothy was likely just like most young men, except that he had prioritized ministry over his own comfort.

Then back in the Philippians text Paul says

**22 But you know his proven character, that as a son with *his* father he served with me in the gospel**

Those who watched Timothy work could see what he was made of. They could see that he was not pretending. His character was tested by life’s circumstances and it was proven to be good. They also saw that Timothy, although no relation of Paul’s, worked with Paul like a son with a father. Timothy was loyal and submissive to Paul. Timothy didn’t ambitiously pursue his own ministry, his own name, his own anything. He served the Gospel alongside Paul, glad to be serving someone who was **a proven expert** in the work.

I guess that is the thing I like most about Timothy. He never wanted to be the main man. He didn’t want to be Paul 2. Being Timothy, fellow servant with Paul, was good enough for him.

Timothy didn't want to be the leader. In fact it looks to me like he was quite timid. Isn't that more like most of us? I can really relate to that. I was pleased to assist Mike when he was alive because I always knew the **God had created him to lead**. He was a person who would chart a course. He was good at it. He was wiser than his years. And I was fortunate to be able to work with him and gain the advantages that came with that. So I think I can relate to Timothy. Maybe you can too. Look at what Paul says to one of the locations to which Paul is going to send Timothy.

**1 Corinthians 16:10 Now if Timothy comes, see that he may be with you without fear; for he does the work of the Lord, as I also do. 11 Therefore let no one despise him. But send him on his journey in peace, that he may come to me; for I am waiting for him with the brethren. (NKJV)**

Now, why would you write that to a church? You would write it because you know that Timothy is not a forceful person. He is timid. He needs some outside force compelling the people at Corinth to be thoughtful and respectful to him, because he probably is not well equipped to win that respect on his own.

I doubt that Paul, himself, would have needed such an introduction. He was old and seasoned and he really wasn't one to tolerate nonsense. Paul was bold and aggressive and driven. If there was an obstacle to the ministry, Paul was going to move it quickly out of his way, nicely or not.

But that was not Timothy's way. Timothy needed encouragement to do these things.

Just read the letters to him and ask yourself, why would Paul say such things? You will soon understand Timothy.

Look at this.

**2 Timothy 1:3 I thank God, whom I serve with a pure conscience, as my forefathers did, as without ceasing I remember you in my prayers night and day, 4 greatly desiring to see you, being mindful of your tears, that I may be filled with joy,**

So we see that Paul deeply loved Timothy. And when Paul would remember Timothy's tears it would endear him to Timothy. We don't know what he was crying about but his emotions were probably easy to see.

Paul goes on.

**5 when I call to remembrance the genuine faith that is in you, which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am persuaded is in you also.**

Paul is absolutely convinced that Timothy is a believer who came from a rich heritage of believers. His faith is true. And since it is true he goes on.

**6 Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. 7 For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind. 8 Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner, but share with me in the sufferings for the gospel according to the power of God,**

And what is Paul addressing here. He is concerned that Timothy will be afraid. And Paul is telling Timothy that God hasn't given us that kind of spirit. No, when you are tempted to be afraid, when you are tempted to give way to the forces that are against you, you need to change your focus.

Does that sound like things that **we** might deal with? Do you sometimes focus on the wrong things? Do you find yourself **fretting in the fear of what might happen** to you or to those you love? Timothy was that kind of person too. He needed to hear this message. And Paul did not say, oh son, I feel so bad for you. I am not prone to being afraid but you are and there really isn't anything I can do about that. I guess you will just have to adjust to living in fear.

No. Paul says that doesn't come from God. It might be very easy for people like us to get into a state like that, but that state does not have its source in God. There is a lie there somewhere. Because God has given us a spirit of power and of love and of a sound mind.

Now in Timothy's situation the fear must have had something to do with Paul's negative reputation in many circles. It likely had to do with how fiercely the Jews hated Paul. So Paul says- **8 Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner, but share with me in the sufferings for the gospel according to the power of God,**

Since we are not given a spirit of fear, Paul tells Timothy not to be ashamed, even though Paul might be in prison at the time. **Now let me ask you, what are you afraid of that is worse than being in prison?** That is the level that Paul is talking about. And he says, share with me in the sufferings. He isn't saying, don't be afraid because this bad thing **will not** happen to you. It is more like he is saying be bold about the Gospel and let the chips fall where they will. Don't let your attention be on the bad that **can** and **might** happen. Share the gospel and you will taste the same kind of suffering I have and in all of it you will be immersed in the power of God. Focus on the power of God instead of the power of man. Yes, they can throw you into prison. But God can throw them into hell. Who should you fear?

Do you see what I am saying? Can you relate to Timothy? If you **do**, it turns the advice that **Paul gives to Timothy** into living advice **God is giving to us**. We don't have to give in to our fearful timid tendencies. We can listen to Paul's advice to Timothy and change what we think and do.

We are going to read several more admonitions that Paul gave to Timothy. And watch the focus. Notice how many there are about dealing with forceful people who are harming the church. I think Paul had to really emphasize that because Timothy would have dreaded those situations like the plague. He didn't like conflict. He didn't want to be forceful.

**2 Timothy 2:1 You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. 2 And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. 3 You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. (NKJV)**

Here Timothy is told how to get the most leverage out of ministry. Don't try to do it all yourself. Delegate. This is everyone's work. Don't think you are doing others a kindness if you are doing all the work yourself. That is not how God wants it done. Multiply yourself.

Also understand that what you know is extremely important. You might tend to undervalue what you know, assuming others know more. But you are probably wrong. They probably don't. What you know needs taught. God has given it to you through me. Now it your job, given to you by God, to teach it to others. And Paul tells Timothy, you will need to be strong about it.

**2 Timothy 2:15 Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. 16 But shun profane and idle babblings, for they will increase to more ungodliness. (NKJV)**

I think Paul's choice of words is interesting.

First Paul tells Timothy to be diligent. In other words, work hard and keep working hard. Tell me, what young man does not be told to do that? I think mothers may best understand that point.

Then second

Paul is concerned that Timothy **not be ashamed**. It is very likely that Timothy would be easily shamed by forceful people. Paul is telling Timothy how to avoid that. Be good enough at the Word that you are **confident in your competence**. That is the remedy for being ashamed. If you are incompetent you are easily shamed. If you have done the work **to be competent**, there is no reason for shame and you don't need to put up with it.

Then he also tells Timothy **when to fight and when to quit**. Sometimes you must rightly **divide the Word** and sometimes you must **rightly discern the situation**.

There are times when you should not even argue or discuss scripture because nothing is to be gained. That is often very difficult for a timid person to do. To be

silent and determined is often harder than being bated into a situation you should not be in.

**2 Timothy 2:22 Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart. 23 But avoid foolish and ignorant disputes, knowing that they generate strife. 24 And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, 25 in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, 26 and *that* they may come to their senses *and escape* the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to *do his will*. (NKJV)**

Here again Paul is giving advice on what you should do if you are competent in the word. Sometimes you correct those who oppose, but if they will not listen, don't waste your time. Move on. If **they will listen** while you present scripture plainly and confidently, stay with it. You might be being used to win that person to Christ.

**2 Timothy 3:14 But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned *them*, 15 and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 16 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. (NKJV)**

There is so much for us in Paul's advice to Timothy. What equips us for doing good work? Is it superior speech? Is it being an impressive person? Is it superior intellect? No. None of the above. It is the Scripture. It is the scripture that is profitable for all the things we need.

It is as if Paul is saying, your enemies will focus on you Timothy. They will focus on all the things you are not. You are not old. You are not experienced. You are not cool. You don't speak all that well. You are certainly not forceful. You have no natural power or charisma. Really Timothy, they will say, you are not fit for a leadership role. You don't have what it takes. But Paul says, you know what you need Timothy? You need scripture. That is what you need most. That is what equips you for what a Christ-like leader will do. Don't let them distract you. Stick to the word.

**1 Timothy 4:12 Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity. 13 Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. 14 Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership. 15 Meditate on these things; give yourself**



**entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all. 16 Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you. (NKJV)**

Here is what we all need to hear. Paul is laying the advice to Timothy fast and heavy. Timothy is coming into town as a leader, as a minister, as someone who will be instructing people of what to do and how to live. He will come into town with the endorsement of Paul, the big hitter. And flesh will rise up in the people who are jealous or rebellious or envious of what Timothy is there to do. Timothy has to be ready.

Paul tells him, here, don't let people focus on your age in an effort to undermine your ministry. Instead be an example of faith that puts your critics to shame. Show an example that is true. It might embarrass them, but it will definitely endorse your ministry status.

Then again Paul says- focus on the word. Let scripture be central. They don't need to know what **you** think. They need to know what **God** thinks.

Paul tells Timothy to use his gift. We don't know what that gift is, but he is to use it.

And then Paul tells him to focus that gray matter between his ears on this stuff. Think about it. Chew on it. Figure it out. Put yourself in the word. Devote yourself to this ministry. Let yourself be consumed in it. Be obsessed. And there are two parts of it.

**Your life and your doctrine.** Powerless living may prove that **you** are not saved. Powerless preaching will not help **others** to be saved. Both must be present.

Let me ask you something. Are those who know you best, those who really know how you live, **more** likely to take your sermons seriously or **less** likely to take your sermons seriously? Do you find your words influence those **more** who know you well or who **don't know you at all**?

Does your walk back your talk?

Wanna live dangerously? Ask someone who knows you best that question. Ask them what they think of when you are laying out scriptural advice. Ask, "does my life **challenge you to do** what I preach or is it **an obstacle to doing** what I preach?"

In closing, I hope you have been encouraged by the life of Timothy, Paul's right hand man. He was not impressive. His talents are never emphasized. There is only one thing about him that Paul focuses on. He has a heart for the people he ministers to. He has the same attitude as Paul. That is all. He is timid. He is probably shy. Most things in ministry are difficult to him. He dislikes conflict. He has to study hard to be competent. All in all, I think he is a lot like most of us. But Timothy is committed to that which will last forever. Timothy is committed to

Christ. And I have no doubt that a lot of people in heaven would say, I give thanks to God for the service that Timothy gave to me.

I would like to read one last passage about Timothy. Here is Paul in his most vulnerable form. And listen to what he asks for.

**2 Timothy 4:9 Timothy- Be diligent to come to me quickly; 10 for Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world, and has departed for Thessalonica--Crescens for Galatia, Titus for Dalmatia. (NKJV)**

This is what happens when you live a life of true ministry to Christ. You become indispensable to the people who love Christ.