

- *Recap/introduction to Timothy. Introduce the rolling theme of this whole letter - faithful, persevering service, as Paul himself has exemplified. Then verse by verse this?*

Introduction

- Only going to briefly go back to introductory remarks, since we've recently worked through 1 Timothy...
 - warm, personal relationship - father/son, in faith and service
 - Timothy delegated authority by Paul to lead the church in Ephesus
 - few years gap between 1st and 2nd Timothy... would appear Paul's circumstances have taken a turn for the worse, and he is perhaps facing the results of a trial (and expecting the worst)
 - letter is not simply encouragement to keep going (though certainly covers this ground) but critically and personally an request for Timothy to come and visit Paul - one last time before he is executed? (4:9)

Exposition

(1) Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, according to the promise of life that is in Christ Jesus, (2) To Timothy, my dear son: Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

- Paul, still writing with the authority of an apostle:
 - authority rooted not in his own character or charisma, but in God's will and the new life (of which he is a preacher, an apostle) from Christ
 - to Timothy, his **dear son** - two words, but incredibly telling!
 - real affection, and I suggest hope for the on-going work of the gospel; as we'll see, this is a letter filled with the sense of the impending end of Paul's earthly ministry (4:6) but he is investing his hope for the continued work of the gospel in Timothy, and those like him who will **be faithful** to the end
 - and his desire for Timothy? Still that relationship of grace, mercy and peace with God, that comes from knowing him in Jesus...

(3) I thank God, whom I serve, as my forefathers did, with a clear conscience, as night and day I constantly remember you in my prayers.

- Over-riding note is of thankfulness - not worry - for Timothy!
 - he's **not** desperately praying "God, help that youngster Timothy with the huge responsibility of the church in Ephesus, and all his character flaws and failings...."
 - he's thankful, because of God's work - God has saved Timothy, God has secured therefore Timothy's responsibilities...
 - **(he's in continuity/fulfilment of the OT)**
 - **clear conscience** is interesting. The clear conscience comes **before** the constantly remembering. He has a clear conscience **not because** he has prayed, but as he comes to pray... **his sins are forgiven, and he lives in the daily reality of a clear conscience**
- **Do we come to God with a clear conscience?**
 - for we are able to...

(4) Recalling your tears, I long to see you, so that I may be filled with joy.

- Timothy obviously misses Paul too - its mutual
 - Paul longs to see him, and to be filled with joy...
 - a joy that is deeper than simply human contact (good and God given though that is), but is rooted in shared faith...

(5) I have been reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also.

- Something has brought Timothy back to mind - presumably a letter from Timothy or visitor from Ephesus, or perhaps even the imminence of death, that has prompted Paul to write this letter

- and he's been reminded of Timothy's **sincere faith**
- bit weird the **I am persuaded now lives in you also!**
- did Timothy have to persuade Paul he was a real Christian, perhaps by being so faithful he became a church leader, or something?
- I think the emphasis is in the other direction. Timothy gets the wobbles (eg v.8) and Paul is seeking to convince Timothy that he Paul is not saying this **sincere faith** stuff to make Timothy feel better, but because he is **persuaded**, because it has foundations. **He is affirming and encouraging Timothy's faith in the midst of a wobble...**
- **Whose faith can we affirm this week?**

(6) For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands.

- **Hoovering up ashes story from Montague Street...!**
- Something that was going out to be fanned back into flame:
 - not sure of the detail, but the context of **vs.7/8** would suggest something public, perhaps preaching or teaching?
 - and also unclear whether this was a gift given supernaturally by God at a point where Paul prayed for Timothy and laid hands on him, or whether there was some kind of recognition and affirmation of a pre-existing gift...
 - (compare how I feel about preaching - latent abilities, heritage from parents **BUT** very conscious that I've seen God gift me beyond what my education and experience and stuff would suggest I'm capable of and wired for...)
- **How do you fan into flame a gift?**
 - **exercise the gift, not hide it away**
 - (context suggests Timothy was prone to soft-peddling, taking the easy path...)

(7) For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline.

- Timidity is running away
 - the opposite of timid is not brash nor abrasive, but confident
 - so picture Paul is painting isn't necessarily of Timothy being an **in your face**, aggressive preacher (say), but of one confident of God's ability, able therefore to love and not harangue, to hold onto personal holiness rather than straying into manipulation or bullying...

(8) So do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord, or ashamed of me his prisoner. But join with me in suffering for the gospel,

- Two things here, and they are connected:
 - not being ashamed... Assumption is that testifying about Jesus, or associating with Paul, is something other people will look down on
 - Paul's point is that, when that pressure is there, we are still to associate ourselves with Jesus...
- And Paul connects that pressure not to associate with Jesus to suffering for the gospel when do associate with Him...
 - if we associate with Jesus, we will suffer - as Paul is

by the power of God, (9) who has saved us and called us to a holy life - not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace.

- When we suffer, we do so in the context of God's power:
 - we are already saved
 - reminder that our call to boldness issued to us on the bedrock of our salvation and God's grace...

This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time, (10) but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Saviour, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

- Focus on Jesus - no other name - his achievements...

(11) And of this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher.

- This gospel - no other - this gospel of Christ and him crucified...
 - Paul is sliding into a reflection on his own ministry, for Timothy's challenge and encouragement
 - herald - announces
 - apostle - sent one, sent with authority, and has leadership overtones
 - teacher - consolidating, explaining, giving a foundation - not for its own sake, but for health and wholeness

(12) That is why I am suffering as I am. Yet I am not ashamed, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him for that day.

- Here we shift into what, for Paul, is a corollary of gospel service:
 - **corollary**, a secondary implication of the main point, which follows naturally or obviously from it...
 - saved by Christ leads to service of Christ - but the corollary is suffering for Christ...
 - shame culture, to suffer was a source of shame; you can hear the taunt "Jesus can't be God if he allows his servants to suffer..."
 - but Paul is so clear on who God is that incidental shame here is nothing compared to the glory of being acknowledged and welcomed by the king of kings, the one who is able to keep his life ("that which I have entrusted") safe forever...
- **What risks are we willing to run because we know the outcome can't derail us?**
 - job, conversation, friendship, money...?

(13) What you heard from me, keep as the pattern of sound teaching, with faith and love in Christ Jesus.

- This feature of leadership we've lost:
 - **look at me!**
 - the pattern is to include not just teaching, but the embodiment of that teaching in lifestyle...
 - not just saying "love your neighbour" but actually **loving your neighbour...**

(14) Guard the good deposit that was entrusted to you - guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in us.

- Timothy's responsibility to keep safe, not allow to become corrupted or tainted:
 - again, more than doctrine, but practise too - its about living, not just thinking, about the life of the Spirit in us expressing God to every person and situation we are in...

(15) You know that everyone in the province of Asia has deserted me, including Phygelus and Hermogenes.

- Paul's troubles - not out of easy success does he make his pronouncements...
- **Question: which Christian leaders do we listen to?**
 - those with mega-churches and clear success?
 - or those who have proved their faithfulness and integrity over time, even in the face of opposition?

(16) May the Lord show mercy to the household of Onesiphorus, because he often refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chains. (17) On the contrary, when he was in Rome, he searched hard for me until he found me. (18) May the Lord grant that he will find mercy from the Lord on that day! You know very well in how many ways he helped me in Ephesus.

- Again, pointing to the example of an individual as the embodiment of Christian living:
 - in particular the lack of shame Onesiphorus shows... a particular **hint** to Timothy!

Conclusion

- Be faithful
 - hang in there...
 - don't give up, be ashamed or embarrassed...
 - look to the example of Paul and Onesiphorus... and [who for you?](#)