

Timothy and his Bible

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[0 : 0 0] I hope to come to you soon, but I am writing these instructions to you so that, if I am delayed, you may know how one must behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and bulwark of the truth.

Great indeed, we confess, is the mystery of our religion. He was manifested in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen by angels, preached among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up into glory. Amen. May God bless to us that reading.

We'll sing again. So then looking at 1 Timothy 3, 14 and 15, I hope to come to you soon, but I am writing these instructions to you so that, if I am delayed, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and bulwark of the truth.

Let me come to look at these epistles, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus. These would have been written somewhere about AD 65 to 68. That is, they were written after Paul's release from Roman imprisonment, which you find detailed at the end of Acts 28.

Now in this epistle, and you'll find this epistle, and you'll find this is common with 1 Peter as well. He doesn't actually say where he's writing from. And the reason is actually quite clear, because Nero, who was the Roman emperor at the time, was opposed to Christianity, and he knew who the main culprits were, who were going around propounding it.

[2 : 0 4] So his spies were everywhere. So, for example, in 1 Peter, he simply says at the very end, She who is in Babylon greets you.

Now, Babylon is a figure for Rome, and she is the church. So he doesn't tell us where he's writing from, but he may have been somewhere in Macedonia.

These particular verses, 14 and 15, may be regarded as what we would call a key text to the whole epistle. That is, that they open up the entire message in one or two verses.

And you'll find that throughout the New Testament, that each one of them has a key text, which sums up in one verse or two the entire message of the epistle.

So I'd write to you, first of all, to the writing of these instructions. I am writing these instructions to you, so that you may know how to behave in the household of God, etc.

[3 : 1 9] Now, that's the reason that he's writing. In all of Paul's epistles, he gives a reason.

For example, if we turn to Romans 1, verses 9 to 11, he says this. That without ceasing, I mention you always in my prayers, asking that somehow, by God's will, I may now at last succeed in coming to you.

For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to strengthen you. So there's the reason for Paul writing Romans.

He's got this pastoral concern for the church, a church he did not found, but it was very much in his heart. And so because of this, he wants to visit it.

He's heard about it, of course. But he wants to do anything in his power to build it up. And that is the reason that he's written the letter to the Romans.

[4 : 26] When we come to Timothy, his concern, that is his pastoral concern, is not with a church, but with a person.

And his concern is that Timothy may progress in the faith and fight that good fight of faith. Turning to 1 Timothy 18, 19, he says this.

This charge I commit to you, Timothy, my son, in accordance with the prophetic utterances which point to you, that inspired by them you may wage the good warfare, holding faith and a good conscience.

Now, what is being brought before Timothy is a number of prophetic utterances. We are not informed as to what these were, but clearly they meant a lot to Timothy and also to the apostle Paul.

And then he goes on in 2 Timothy and says this. But as for you, continue in what you have learned and firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it, and how from childhood you've been acquainted with the sacred writings which are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Jesus Christ.

[5 : 58] You have known these since childhood. Now, these sacred scriptures that he talks about in that verse are the whole of its Old Testament and its teaching.

So what is it that Paul is saying that Timothy should do? Look at chapter 4, verse 6. If you put these instructions before the brothers and sisters, you will be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished on the words of faith and the good teaching which you have followed.

So here is something that's very important. Because what he's saying here is, if you are looking for strength to do the task, this is indeed where you'll find it.

You'll find the strength in the nourishment and teaching of God's Word. Now, in the case of Timothy, we've already learned about his upbringing and the faith and the knowledge of the sacred scripture since childhood.

Nobody can put a value on the work that is now going on next door in the Sunday school. Nobody can put a value on the bringing up of children in the home around the Word of God.

[7 : 23] Because this faith, as far as Timothy was concerned, Paul remarks in 2 Timothy, I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother, Lois, and your mother, Eunice, and now, I am sure, dwells in you.

Now, that's a very important verse. Because at the beginning of Acts 16, which is where Timothy comes into the picture, we're informed that his father was a Greek.

The father is never named. There's no indication that he was one of those Greeks who went along to the synagogue. So the sole source of encouragement in sacred scripture did not come from his father, but from his grandmother and his mother.

These are the benefits that derive from honoring sacred scripture in the Sunday school and at home.

My way of personal testimony, I would just add that when I, as a teenager, did a school run, i.e. delivering papers, yes, I did one of those, my father, when I came in, sat down and read with me portions of scripture, which he then discussed, and we discussed, and argued, and believed.

[9 : 05] You can't undermine the value of it. Second, the detail. I hope to come to you soon, but I'm writing these instructions to you so that if I am delayed, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and bulwark of the truth.

And when you examine this letter, and it's common to all of them, there's a balance between what Paul teaches as doctrine and how that teaching is to be lived in a practical way in the Christian life.

Now, here in 1 Timothy, he says, so that you may know how one must behave in the household of God.

Now, if we take, for example, what I've already quoted from, the epistle to the Romans, and you could analyze it like this. In the first eight chapters, Paul is talking about the doctrine of salvation, the faith that he preached.

Chapters 9 to 11 deal with the special place of Israel in the sovereign plan of God as it relates to the doctrine of salvation. But chapters 12 to 16 deal with the practical outworking of that doctrine in how the Christian life is to be believed.

[10 : 47] So there is a balance between teaching and practical application. It's no good just talking about what we should believe if we don't at the same time say how we are to live it.

And this is what he's saying here. This is the whole purpose of everything I've taught. All the letters I've written, all the sermons I've given, are about this.

The right teaching and the right way of life. And the verb that he uses here simply means that. To live or conduct one's life.

But it's preceded by another small verb which gives you the idea of something that must take place. So there's no idea here that Paul is writing to Timothy and saying you can do this if you want to.

No, no. This is something. You have to carry through. He makes an appeal at the beginning of his practical section in the letter to the Romans.

[12 : 02] He says this. I appeal to you therefore brothers and sisters by the mercies of God to present your bodies as a living sacrifice holy and acceptable to God which is your spiritual worship.

Now the appeal. The appeal is based on what he calls the mercies of God. In other words everything you find in chapters 1 to 8 that's the mercies of God.

And God's mercies are great and manifold. Now he goes on and makes the appeal further. In the next verse Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind that you may prove what is the will of God what is good acceptable and perfect.

Be transformed by the renewing of your mind. So what he's aiming at as far as the Romans are concerned and as far as Timothy is concerned is a complete application of Christian teaching to the Christian life.

And the idea is that all believers will in their character be like the Lord Jesus Christ.

[13 : 36] this is the example that he wants him to be. And so in chapter 4 verses 11 to 12 he gives this further instruction.

Command and teach these things let no one despise your youth but set the believers an example in speech and conduct in love in faith and purity.

so there is a responsibility with all who teach God's word to live it in such a way that everybody can tell they've been in the presence of Jesus.

Finally the aim of these instructions I hope to come to you soon but I am writing these instructions to you so that if I am delayed you may know how one must behave in the household of God which is the church of the living God the pillar and bulwark of the truth.

So here we're getting to the nub of the thing. What is he to do? And he gives specific instructions in chapter 4 verses 13 to 14 he says this till I come attend to the public reading of scripture to preaching to teaching do not neglect the gift you have which was given you by prophetic utterance when the council of elders laid their hands upon you.

[15 : 28] And that occasion that's been mentioned in that verse or verses is perhaps the moment of Timothy's ordination to the ministry. So he now tells Timothy this is what you are to do.

It has three parts the first of which is the public reading of scripture. And what Paul is talking about here is the ongoing reading of the Old Testament in the synagogue which concentrated on a portion of the law together with that of the prophets.

When Paul and Barnabas went to Antioch we read this that on the Sabbath day they went into the synagogue and sat down after the reading of the law and the prophets the rulers of the synagogue sent a word to them.

Now this reading of the law in Jews the Jews would call it the Torah together with that of the prophets is something that carries on in the synagogue to this very day.

On special feasts other portions may be added such as the book of Esther. And in the Christian church we've taken this practice on so that in some of the communions there are set readings for every service which usually center on the gospels.

[17 : 02] Give attention to the public reading of scripture. Why? Because it inspires faith.

It inspires belief. it inspires people to go on with God. Now it turns to the idea of preaching.

1 Timothy 5 17 we read let all the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor especially those who labor in preaching and teaching.

now when we come to 2 Timothy which is his final counsel to Timothy before death he goes on and says this preach the word be urgent in season and out of season convince rebuke exhort be unfailing in patience and teaching and what's important about that particular quotation is the characteristics that we find in it i.e.

convince rebuke exhort beyond failing in patience and teaching why is it important simply this that these qualities that i've underlined here by repeating them are absolutely identical to those that he has also assigned to holy scripture all scripture is inspired by god and is profitable for teaching for reproof for correction for training in righteousness they're identical so that what's to happen here is that you and i are to so study the word of god and take it into our system until such times as its qualities and powers are our qualities and powers now the third charge goes on to read to the ability to teach the word of god and this is not just those who are doing it at the front but to those who do it everywhere to children in home in work wherever now earlier in 1 timothy he talks about the office of the bishop or overseer or as we might understand it the office of the elder and in that series of definitions as to what the elder is to do he is said to be an apt teacher now that particular concept is expressed by one word in greek which simply means being an able teacher it occurs twice in the new testament both in 1 and 2 timothy and in 2 timothy 2 24 paul is not now talking about bishops or overseers or elders he's talking about everybody who is a servant of the lord and he says the servant of the lord must be an able teacher so these are the requirements that the apostle has placed upon his son in the faith timothy what then are we to do with god's word writing to the colossians he says let the word of christ dwell in you richly that's that's what we're to do with it we're to read it we're to believe it we're to take it into our system in such a way that its qualities become ours and we are to be effective witnesses in this day of uncertainty and confusion god requires us to take his word like timothy and use it for his glory amen to

[22 : 13] Hah Zion witnesses■■■■ on happen following Beloved christ Mah nó