

## ***FPFWC Christian Development***



### **God's Call**

February 2023

Winter Quarter

**February 11, 2023**

**Lesson #2 – Reminder of the Call**

SCRIPTURE TEXT – 2 Timothy 1:3-14

**ICE BREAKER** –

1. How can we refresh another believer today?
2. What person has had a substantial impact on your spiritual life? How did they impact your life?

***Key Verse: “Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.”—2 Timothy 1:13***

**LESSON BACKGROUND**

Two recognized groupings of some of the apostle Paul’s writings are the Prison Epistles (Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon) and the Pastoral Epistles (1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, and Titus). The letter of 2 Timothy could actually fit in either category since Paul wrote it while imprisoned (2 Timothy 1:16; 2:9).

The New Testament presents 2 Timothy in an uncomplicated fashion: as a letter written by the apostle Paul to the younger evangelist Timothy. We are introduced to the person of Timothy in Acts 16:1–3. That introduction occurs in the context of Paul’s second missionary journey, which extends from Acts 15:36 to 18:22. Over time, Paul came to think quite highly of Timothy as a protégé, referring to him four times as a “son” in a spiritual sense (1 Corinthians 4:17; Philippians 2:19–22; 1 Timothy 1:2; 2 Timothy 1:2).

We know certain things about Timothy in a personal sense: he was relatively young (1 Timothy 4:12), probably had a reserved personality (1 Corinthians 16:10), and was frequently ill (1 Timothy 5:23). His ancestry was that of both Judaism and paganism (Acts 16:1; see further commentary below), and he had a good reputation among the believers of his native region (16:2). Paul’s trust in him increased over time (see 19:22), so much so that Timothy is named as the co-sender of some of Paul’s letters (example: 2 Corinthians 1:1). Timothy’s dedication to the gospel resulted in his having been imprisoned at some point (Hebrews 13:23). The two dozen occurrences of his name in the New Testament indicate the importance of his role in the spread of the gospel. Following his days as a traveling missionary with Paul, Timothy seems to have settled into a ministry located in Ephesus (1 Timothy 1:3).

We date the letter of 2 Timothy to about AD 67, as Paul’s final New Testament writing before his execution in Rome (see 2 Timothy 4:6–8). Persecution under Emperor Nero (reigned AD 54–68) was underway. But internal problems of the church at Ephesus and Timothy’s leadership in that regard were Paul’s main concerns.

## **LESSON COMMENTARY**

2 Timothy 1:3–14 (MBC): Timothy’s Heritage of Faith (1:3–7)

1:3–7. Paul characterized his devotion to God as service (cf. Ac 24:14). This heritage of worship was passed down to Paul by his forefathers. Paul’s devotion to Christ was consistent with the true faith of his ancestors. Verse 4 may shed some light on the content of the petitions mentioned in the previous verse. They expressed Paul’s longing for renewed fellowship with Timothy. Perhaps Paul prayed for his own release from prison or for a visit from Timothy. Timothy’s spiritual heritage resulted in a sincere faith (v. 5) that Paul described as an indwelling faith. Similar language is used to speak of the Holy Spirit in v. 14 and of “the word of Christ” in Col 3:16. The gift (v. 6) probably refers to Timothy’s ministry (cf. 1Tm 4:14). The Holy Spirit’s presence does not relieve us of responsibility to be diligent in the exercise of our gifts. Timothy struggled with a natural timidity (v. 7). Yet the dynamic of the Holy Spirit was more than enough to compensate. The Spirit supplies the power to love God and others as well as the strength to control ourselves.

II. Paul’s Experience of Suffering (1:8–18)

A. Suffering for the Gospel (1:8–14)

1:8–14. Paul’s imprisonment contributed to Timothy’s reluctance, sparking fear of retaliation. The testimony of our Lord (v. 8) is the gospel. To be ashamed of the gospel is to be ashamed of Christ. Those who come to Christ do so because the Father has called them. This holy calling (v. 9) is based upon God’s own purpose and grace. Jesus Christ is the ultimate manifestation of divine grace (v. 10). Immortality is one facet of the life that comes to those who are in Christ. Elsewhere Paul identifies immortality as a characteristic of resurrection life (1Co 15:42, 50, 53, 54). Preacher, apostle, and teacher (v. 11) are related but not identical terms. While not all who preached and taught were apostles, the ministry of the Word was an essential aspect of the apostolic role (Ac 6:2; cf. 1Co 12:29). Commentators differ over the nature of what Paul mentioned he had entrusted to God (v. 12). Some think this refers to Paul’s salvation. Others see it as a reference to the gospel or to Paul’s ministry. But what is entrusted in this verse belongs to Paul rather than God, indicating that it refers to his life or ministry. The apostle’s teaching set the standard for Timothy both in terms of its content and communication (v. 13). The same is true for all who teach. Apostolic doctrine provides the outline, Jesus Christ supplies the ethos. Possession of the truth is a sacred trust. God’s servant must rely on the help of the Holy Spirit who dwells in us (v. 14). Indwelling indicates control.

**LESSON NUGGET** – Timothy was in a time of transition. He had everything he needed to face the future if he would hold on tightly to the Lord’s resources. When you are facing difficult transitions, follow Paul’s advice to Timothy and look back at your experience. Who is the foundation of your faith? How can you build on that foundation? What gifts has the Holy Spirit given you? Use the gifts you have been given.

**Sources: *Moody Bible Commentary, Standard Lesson Commentary, Wiersbe Study Bible, The Life Application Bible and The Essential Everyday Bible Commentary***