

The Importance of Reminders

Introduction

But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry. For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.
2 Timothy 4:5-7

Only a few years before this, Timothy was with Paul in Rome under house arrest. Then Timothy was released before Paul (Hebrews 13:23). Paul had been two whole years under house arrest in Rome (Acts 28:30). He was released right before a terrible fire in Rome, which was in June of 64 AD. Nero wrongly blamed it on Christians, causing persecution to begin – the first by Roman emperors.

Paul was free for about two years. During that time his travels took him to Crete, where he left Titus in charge, and to Ephesus, where he left Timothy in charge. In 65 AD, as Paul continued his travels to various churches, he wrote instructions to Timothy (1 Timothy) and to Titus.

Soon after that, in 66 AD, Paul was arrested, taken to Rome, and put in prison. By 67 AD Paul knew that his time on earth would soon end. He wrote to his beloved son in the Lord, Timothy, and we have that in 2 Timothy. Paul wrote to Timothy in this way to encourage him. If Timothy knew what was coming, he would not be surprised by Paul's departure from earth. And Paul here gave him good instructions and encouragement to continue his work.

So this is a somber letter – yet it is very uplifting and encouraging. Let's see how Paul began this letter of love, remembering, and a sweet goodbye.

READ 2 Timothy 1:1-7

Verses 1-2: Paul began this letter as he did many other letters – a declaration of his authority as an apostle, the Lord as the highest authority, and a statement of blessings that the Lord pours out on us. Note the order of those blessings: grace, mercy, and peace. They must come to us in this order. We cannot have peace without first receiving God's grace and then mercy.

Verses 3-6: Immediately he reminds Timothy:

(verse 2) Timothy was Paul's beloved son.

(verse 3) Paul had Timothy in his prayers – night and day.

(verse 4) Paul very much wanted to see Timothy.

Paul knew of Timothy's tears at being apart.

(verse 5) Timothy's true faith.

The faith of Timothy's grandma and mom being instrumental to his faith.

(verse 6) The need to rekindle the gift of God that was in him.

That gift was in Timothy by the laying on of hands by Paul.

All of this meant that there was a very powerful preparation of the Lord for Timothy to serve to the end – even in difficult circumstances. He had been called by God at a young age and was still rather young. Yet he had matured greatly and needed to continue to do so.

The reminder to rekindle the gift of God in him speaks to us all. Especially with the passage of years, we can become complacent and “let down our guard.” Beginning with verse 8, Paul detailed for Timothy – and for us – how to walk in these things.

Verse 7: But first Paul wrote verse 7. What a gift to us all.

We can know that when we fear, it is not from God. Then we can deal with it by rejecting it. How?

God has given us:

Power – this is from God, so it will be strong enough.

Love – the love of God guides us away from Satan's devices brought on by fear. And that love leads us into just the right way to handle it all.

Sound mind = discipline, self-control. We can think straight according to the Word of God, and then act on it.

When we do these things, fear has no hold on us. We can let the gift(s) God puts within us burn brightly with His holiness. What a joy to do His will and see Him get the glory.

Next week we will see Paul's example for us as he wrote in detail.

*For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.
For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear;
but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.*

Romans 8:14-15

2 Timothy 1:1-7 Supplement

Peter was martyred about the same time as Paul, and similar thoughts were on both of their minds and in their last letters to their fellow believers. So this devotional adds to our understanding of how we are to live when under the pressures of this life.

Holy Conversation

By Henry M. Morris, PH.D

Days of Praise (ICR.org): Thursday, February 02, 2023

Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness.

2 Peter 3:11

The picturesque phrase “holy conversation” occurs only twice in the New Testament, both in Peter’s epistles; one in his very first chapter, 1 Peter 1:15, the other in today’s verse. The other is, “But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation.” This distinctive King James rendering does not really mean “clean speech” but assumes the older, more precise meaning of “conversation,” namely “behavior,” especially behavior that involves other people. The Greek word translated “holy” primarily implies “dedicated to God.” Thus, holy conversation simply means living in such a way that our entire manner of life is oriented to honor God and to influence other people to honor Him.

These two exhortations of Peter tell us why we should live this way. The first incentive is simply the holiness of God Himself: “Be ye holy; for I am holy” (1 Peter 1:16). We have become children of God through faith in Christ, and we should therefore behave “as obedient children, not fashioning [ourselves] according to the former lusts in [our] ignorance” (1 Peter 1:14).

The second incentive given just before the words of today’s verse is the ever-imminent return of Christ, following which, eventually, “the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat” (2 Peter 3:10). Incentives, both past and future, are thus given for holy living in the present!

Eight of the 13 occurrences of “conversation” (Greek *anastrophe*) are in Peter’s epistles, stressing his vital concern that Christians ought to demonstrate “all holy conversation and godliness” in their lives.