

Mornings: 2 Timothy

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Andy and his wife Annie are long-time friends of the summer school, with Andy and Annie having helped lead the children's work in the past. They were last here two years ago when Andy led us through 1 John.

Andy left a career in respiratory medicine in 1992 to join the staff of St Helen's. He went on to be assistant pastor at Spicer Street Church in St Albans, and was then senior pastor of Beeston Evangelical Free Church in Nottingham for 12 years. In 2011 he became co-director of the Cornhill Training Course Scotland.

2 Timothy 1:1-7 - The Rescue Package

1. Introduction

2. Setting the scene

Paul's conversion	33-34
Cyprus and Southern Galatia	47-49 (incl. Lystra)
Jerusalem Council (Acts 15)	49
Macedonia and Achaia (Acts 15-18)	49-52 (Meets Timothy Acts 16:1-5)
Asia and Macedonia (Acts 19-21)	53-57 (2 years in Ephesus)
Imprisonment: Caesarea and Rome	58-63?
Death	64-67?

By the time 2 Tim is written

- Paul and Timothy have ≈15 year ministry association
- It is perhaps 10 years since Paul left Ephesus (Acts 19-20)

3. Three realities it would be more comfortable to ignore

a. Good churches turn bad

Ephesus

- A work of breadth (Acts 19:10)
- A work of depth (Acts 19:18-20)
- A work going wrong (1 and 2 Tim)

Then and now ...

b. Well-trained leaders mislead others

The Ephesian elders (Acts 20)

- All given everything they needed (17-38)
 - Pattern of ministry ("you know ..." 18, 34)
 - Clear instruction (28)
 - Sufficient resources (32)
 - Strong warnings (29-31)
- Some became agents of untruth (e.g. 1 Timothy 1:3)

Then and now ...

- c. Outstanding gospel workers need to be rescued
 - i. Timothy in the NT
 - Experienced in ministry (Acts 16:1, 3, 17:14-15, 18:5, 19:22, 20:4, Rom 16:21)
 - Co-author of epistles (2 Cor 1:1, 2 Cor 1:19, Phil 1:1, Col 1:1, 1 Th 1:1, 2 Th 1:1, Philem 1)
 - Faithful and trusted messenger (1 Th 3:2, 6, 1Tim 1:2)
 - Exemplary (1 Cor 4:17, 16:10, Phil 2:19)

... In trouble! (1Tim 1:18, 6:20, 2 Tim 1:2)
 - ii. Timothy in 2 Timothy
 - e.g. The letter's imperatives

Then and now ...

- 4. The opening move
 - a. The address
 - i. A hint of things to come
 - “promise of life”
 - ii. To a beloved child
 - b. Thanksgivings: reminders of relationship
 - i. Paul and his ancestors (3)
 - ii. Paul and Timothy (4)
 - iii. Timothy and his relatives (5)
 - c. The first imperative: a reminder of relationship
 - Paul, Timothy and God

- 5. Reflections

For Personal Study

1. Skim quickly through the letter and make a note of the direct commands Paul writes to Timothy.

2. Looking at these, what impressions do you gain as to why Timothy is finding his situation so difficult?

How surprising do you find it that these things have to be written to an experienced Christian worker?

3. How might you use what you have learned to pray for those who have particular responsibility for gospel ministry?

4. What is the biggest thing that you learned from this morning's study?

2 Timothy 1:6-14 - Do not be ashamed

1. Introduction

2. Seeing the whole section

6-14 The appeal

15-18 The appeal illustrated

a. Looking at the appeal

6-7

8-12

13-14

b. Two important triads

i. The gift, the hands, the Spirit (6-7)

Compare v14 (good deposit, entrusted, the Holy Spirit))

ii. The gospel, the Lord, his prisoner (8)

Compare v13 (pattern of words, from me, faith and love in Christ)

iii. Putting them together

Where is the Spirit's power demonstrated? (see also 4:16-17)

3. A gospel that brings hardship (9-12)
 - A situationally-driven gospel summary
 - a. Its key features
 - i. A holy calling
Compare 3:1-5
 - ii. Not because of works
Compare 1:1:7
1:4:1-5
 - iii. Beyond the present age
Compare 1:1, 2:17
 - b. Its necessary consequence (v12)
 - c. Its great assurance
4. Implications

For Personal Study

1. Spend a few minutes thanking God for what you have already learned this morning.
2. People often crave spiritual power and long that they would have more. In this passage, what does the power of God and the presence of the Holy Spirit accomplish in the life of a believer?

Is this surprising? If yes, why?

3. In vv 9-10 Paul mentions several important components of his gospel message:

- a holy calling
- not because of works
- the abolition of death and bringing to light of life and immortality

What is encouraging about these aspects of the gospel message?

Why do you think a gospel containing these things might bring suffering to the gospel messenger (12)?

4. Paul urges Timothy not to be ashamed of the gospel. What reasons does Paul give for why he is not ashamed (v12)? What encouragement can you take from his example?

2 Timothy 1:15-2:13 - What about you then?

1. Introduction

2. Two powerful examples

- All in Asia (including Phyg. and Herm.)
 - The household of Onesiphorus
 - His activity in Rome
- Service in Ephesus

Three things matter

- Not Paul's commendation but the Lord's mercy
- Not the present age but the coming day
- Not past loyalty, but enduring faithfulness

3. You then ...

- a. Be strengthened

- b. Enlist others

4. Three illustrations to chew over (2:3-7)

- a. The soldier

- b. The athlete

- c. The farmer

Think about them ... the Lord has something for you to understand.

5. A reminder producing endurance

- a. The risen Jesus Christ
 - ... David's offspring
- b. The bound apostle
 - ... whose gospel is not bound

- c. The glory of the elect
 - ... whose salvation requires endurance

- 6. A faithful word: Four ifs
 - If we have died with him

 - If we endure

 - If we deny him

 - If we are unfaithful

- 7. Reflections

For Personal Study

1. In this letter Paul frequently uses examples of personal behaviour in order to persuade Timothy to do the right thing. Skim through the letter and make a note of as many examples of this as you can find.

In what ways have you been helped or warned by the personal example of others?

2. Paul is willing to endure temporal difficulty so that others will gain eternal glory. How might you cultivate a keener sense of eternity?

3. Spend some time praying about what you have written.

For Group Discussion

4. (10 mins) It's easy to think that our own lives can't be much use in keeping others faithful to the truth but it's quite clear that Paul regards personal example as a very important tool in this letter. How might we take seriously our own ability to be an example to others?

How can we encourage one another in doing this?

5. (15 mins) Paul regards the passing on of ministry as a key element of the work Timothy should be doing (2:2). How can we encourage our own church leaders to make this a core part of the work that they do? What are we prepared for them to stop doing in order to do this?

How can we, in our own areas of responsibility, encourage others to be more competent in ministry?

6. (10 mins) Discuss your answers to question 2.

7. (10 mins) Pray through the things you have discussed.

2 Timothy 2:14-26 - How to repent so that others repent

1. Introduction

2. Others need to be reminded and instructed

3. Timothy needs to handle the word of truth rightly

a. There are things to avoid

... certain sorts of talk

... with certain sorts of people

... whose talk spreads fatally

Focus on Hymenaeus and Alexander

- They have swerved
- They may look impressive
- They are damaging some

b. There are principles to embrace

i. The Lord knows those who are his (Numbers 16:5)

ii. Let everyone who names the name of the Lord depart from iniquity
(Numbers 16:26)

c. Cleansing and usefulness are possible (20-21)

- d. So cleanse yourself (22-26)
 - i. Flee ... and pursue ...
 - ii. Don't quarrel ... but correct gently ...
 - iii. God may grant repentance

4. Reflections

For Personal Study

1. Rightly handling the word of God (2:15) is certainly to do with content of teaching, but it's much more than that. Make a note of every example you can find in 14-26 where Paul says something about how Timothy ought to speak.

Does anything strike you about these examples?

2. Can you think of ways in which a "resurrection-past-already" message might upset the faith of some people?

3. It's common to view godliness in terms of avoidance (e.g. v16), but Paul clearly thinks that it's also important to pursue good things along with others (v22). How might you be more active in pursuing good along with others?

4. How does it help us to remember that repentance is something God grants rather than something we can make happen?

For Group Discussion

5. (10 mins) It's clear from this morning's passage that what matters in ministry is not just what is said but how it is said. Baring in mind your answers to question 1, what kind of people should your church encourage into teaching roles, and what kind of people should you discourage?

6. (5 mins) discuss your answers to question 2

7. (5 mins) and also your answer to question 4.

8. (15 mins) It is common for church leaders to become very isolated, especially in times of difficulty. v22 suggests that it is very important not to remain isolated at such times. How might we relate to our church leaders so that our lives can be an asset to them?

9. (10 mins) Pray.

2 Timothy 3:1-17 - Understanding the times

1. Introduction

2. A pattern to be avoided

3. A pattern to continue in

4. Reflections

For Personal Study

1. We often expect difficulty to come to churches from outside, and so it does. However 3:5 suggests that some of the greatest difficulties in these last days come from inside the church, from those in positions of leadership. Read Acts 20:28-30. How can we encourage our own leaders to pay attention to themselves as well as the congregation?

What encouragements does Paul give about the extent of influence of such people?

2. Chapter 3 gives significant help in distinguishing opponents of the truth (v8) from true teachers (v10-12). Use the columns below to list some of the contrasting features of the false and the true.

The False (3:1-9)

The True (10-17)

What aspects of this comparison do you think are most useful in helping distinguish true and false?

3. Spend some time thanking God for those who have exercised faithful ministries in your own life.

For Group Discussion

4. (15 mins) Discuss your answers to question 2.

5. (15 mins) Discuss your answers to question 1. Ongoing leader care is not a prominent feature in church circles. Can you think of ways in which this might be promoted in your own life and your own congregation?

6. (5 mins) What does Paul use to encourage Timothy to continue in the right path? How might we encourage one another to continue?

7. Prayer

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- c. Don't underestimate the hardships (14-16)
 - i. Alexander the (unexpected?) opponent

 - ii. The deserting co-workers

- d. Have confidence in the Lord (17-18)

- e. Remember there are others "with" me (19-22)

5. Reflections

For Personal Study

1. From this passage, what is remarkable about Paul's own example? What is he motivated by?

2. Spend some time reflecting on what you have learned this week and any areas of thought or action that need to change as a result.

3. Write a short prayer that you will pray for yourself in response to what you have learned and in line with how you would like to respond.

Group prayer requests

You might like to record here prayer requests from your discussion group for use over the next 12 months.

Saturday

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday