

PAUL'S REMINDERS TO TIMOTHY



By Grant Neuper
Christian Centre Abbotsford

8 September 2024

Introduction

Why did we embark on this time in 1 and 2 Timothy in the first place?

- Engagement between **old and young** in the church
- **Variety** of matters and age groups spoken to – keep it unpredictable!
- **Contemporary issues** addressed: like false doctrine, materialism, discipleship, what will happen in the last days, and the need for endurance.

When I stopped this week at the end of the Timothy hiking trail and looked back, I saw three key aspects that summarized the journey for me. Let's look at those today and see where you find yourself along the way:

1. Focus
2. Partnership
3. Activation

1. Focus

A. Focus: On God the Father and what His Son Jesus has accomplished

1 Tim 1:2 Grace, mercy, and peace from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord.

This is what we receive from Him!

No scope for new doctrines, additional philosophies, false teachings, doctrines of demons

Our God is above all:

1 Tim 1:17 Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise, (to Him) be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen

1 Tim 6:15 (God) is the blessed and only Potentate (Sovereign ruler), the King of kings and Lord of lords, 16 who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see, to (Him) ~~whom~~ be honour and everlasting power.

Our God desires all men to be saved:

1 Tim 2:3-6 refers to God our Savior: 4 who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. 5 For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, 6 who gave Himself a ransom for all

2 Tim 1:10 ...our Savior Jesus Christ, (who) has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel

2 Tim 4:18 And the Lord will deliver me from every evil work and preserve me for His heavenly kingdom. To Him be glory forever and ever. Amen!

These are truths concerning our Father God and His Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ! Focus!!

B. Focus: On the Gospel

Paul warns Timothy about false teachings and calls him to focus on the gospel.

1 Tim 1:3 Remain in Ephesus that you may charge some that they teach no other doctrine,⁴ nor give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which cause disputes rather than godly edification which is in faith.⁵ Now the purpose of the commandment is love from a pure heart, from a good conscience, and from sincere faith,⁶ from which some, having strayed, have turned aside to idle talk,⁷ desiring to be teachers of the law, understanding neither what they say nor the things which they affirm.

1 Tim 4:7 But reject profane and old wives' fables, and exercise yourself toward godliness.

1 Tim 6:3 If anyone teaches otherwise and does not consent to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which accords with godliness, 4 he is proud, knowing nothing, but is obsessed with disputes and arguments over words, from which come envy, strife, reviling, evil suspicions, 5 useless wranglings of men of corrupt minds and destitute of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain. From such withdraw yourself.

1 Tim 6:20 O Timothy! Guard what was committed to your trust, avoiding the profane and idle babblings and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge— 21 by professing it some have strayed concerning the faith.

2 Tim 3:13 But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. 14 But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of,

When we arrive on the mountaintop and look back on our journey through the books that Paul wrote to Timothy –

We hear Paul's voice calling us to focus...to focus on the one true God and the message of salvation through His Son, Jesus Christ.

We hear Paul calling us away from fables, genealogies, disputes, fables, idle talk, arguments, contradictions – and back to the straightforward revelation of scripture.

Q: How focused are you on Jesus?

Q: Are you fully focused on the Gospel in terms of its power and its scope?

Q: What would qualify as a distraction in your life? Even some potentially good things?

(What about religious distractions? Are you distracted by an intense interest in spiritual warfare / or a fascination with the prophetic / or the exploration of our Hebraic roots / or other good Christian causes?)

What else do we see as we look back over these letters?

2. Partnership

Who are the people involved in these letters we have been studying?

1. Paul's relationship with Timothy (and with others):

1 Tim 1:2 To Timothy, a true son in the faith

1 Tim 1:18 This charge I commit to you, son Timothy

2 Tim 2:1 You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

2 Tim 4:9 Be diligent to come to me quickly (Timothy); 11 Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for ministry. 12 And Tychicus I have sent to Ephesus.

Timothy was not trying to do life on his own. He had amazing support from Paul. Many others also featured in Paul's life and in his circle of support.

2. Role-players in the local church:

*1 Tim 3:1: If a man desires the position of a bishop/**elder**, he desires a good work*

*v.8 Likewise **deacons***

*1 Tim 5:1,2 Do not rebuke an **older man**, but exhort him as a father, **younger men** as brothers, **older women** as mothers, **younger women** as sisters, with all purity.*

*1 Tim 5:3 Honor widows who are really **widows***

*1 Tim 6:2 And those (**slaves**) who have believing **masters**, let them not despise them because they are brethren, but rather serve them because those who are benefited are believers and beloved.*

The church was a place for all. It was not a place of isolation.

This was the place where young and old, elder and deacon, men and women, slave and master all gathered with one heart and one purpose. They all added strength and value to the body.

Q: Are you trying to live the Christian life on your own?

Q: Who partners with you? Who do you partner with?

Q: Do you play a fatherly or motherly role for any younger believer?

Q: Have you had influential spiritual fathers or mothers in your life?

Q: Where do you fit in the body? What role do you have in this local church community?

What else do we see when we stop at the end of the trail and look back? A constant theme of:

3. Activation

Paul is constantly calling forth things locked up inside of Timothy, for ministry that he needs to be active in.

Isn't it lovely to have these people in our lives, the ones who really believe in us?

Can't it be irritating sometimes when people around you are always calling you forth into things that you don't think you are quite ready for?

Listen to all of these encouragements that Paul gives to Timothy:

*1 Tim 4:12 Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity. 13 Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. 14 **Do not neglect the gift that is in you**, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership. 15 Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that **your progress** may be evident to all. 16 **Take heed to yourself** and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you*

*1 Tim 6:11 But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness. 12 Fight the good fight of faith, **lay hold on** eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.*

*2 Tim 1:6 Therefore I remind you to **stir up the gift of God** which is in you through the laying on of my hands. 7 For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.*

*2 Tim 2:1 You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. 2 And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, **commit these to faithful men** who will be able to teach others also. 3 You therefore must **endure hardship** as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.*

*2 Tim 2:14 Remind them of these things, charging them before the Lord not to strive about words to no profit, to the ruin of the hearers. 15 Be diligent to **present yourself approved to God**, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. 16 But shun profane and idle babblings, for they will increase to more ungodliness.*

*2 Tim 4:1 I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: 2 **Preach the word!** Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.*

*2 Tim 4:5 But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, **do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.***

Q: What gifts has God given you? What have you done with them? Are they on full display? What still needs to be activated? What has God called you to be involved in?

Q: Are you spiritually inactive? Have you spiritually retired?

Q: Have you been shy / fearful / cautious to step out - and to step into what God has called you to?

CONCLUSION:

Which one of these three is the number one realignment needed for you right now? Which one is calling for your primary attention?

1. Focus:

Has trying to live the Christian life tied you up in knots?

Do you need to return to the simplicity and the reality of Jesus? Have you been caught up in the complexities of thought, even Christian thought and philosophies, that have distracted you from pure devotion?

2. Partnership:

Have you been trying to live the Christian life on your own?

Are you engaged in a community of friends that strengthen and support one another through the joys and challenges of life?

Who are your partners? (and are they close enough?)

3. Activation:

What have you done with the gifts that God has given you? Are they on full display? Are those around you benefitting in the way that God intended when He enabled you? What needs to be stirred into action / activated?

Which is your number one realignment needed right now? To move forward on your journey – which of the 3 doors would you need to move through right now?

The Focus Door - Do you need to give up on distractions and put the focus back on Jesus?

The Partnership Door - Do you need to pursue partnership in the body of Christ?

The Activation Door - Do you need activation in the giftings that God has entrusted to you?

Choose your number one (& go for it / walk through the door this morning!)

Prayer:

Thank you Lord for all that Paul wrote to Timothy!

Thank you Lord for the journey that we have been on!

We choose to focus on Jesus today – and on what He came to accomplish for us! Thank you for the Gospel. Please keep us from distractions!

We choose to partner with others in the body of Christ as we walk, as we endure, as we work! Help us to take hands and walk in unity.

We make ourselves available to You, Lord; we choose to activate the gifts You have given us - and to use those gifts to serve others and to use them for Your glory! Amen!