

Wheelersburg Baptist Church 5/10/92

II Timothy 1:5-7 "The Greatest Thing a Mother Can Give Her Child"

Intro: Today is Mother's Day.

Illust:

Q: What's the greatest thing a loving mother can give her children?
We'll see this morning in II Tim 1:5-7.

Review:

II Timothy is a great letter! The human author was Paul. Humanly speaking, his situation was bleak. He was chained in a dingy Roman dungeon. On death row. He would soon be executed by the order of Nero because of his allegiance to Jesus Christ. Yet Paul was content. In fact, instead of feeling sorry for himself, he thought only of two things: the future of the gospel, and the future of his associate in the gospel.

Q: Why did Paul write II Timothy?

A: To encourage Timothy in the ministry at Ephesus!

Q: Why did Timothy need encouragement? For over 15 years Timothy had been Paul's assistant. A second man. When he needed guidance, Paul was there. But soon, Paul knew, he would not be there. And Timothy would be thrust in a new position of leadership.

Tim had 3 strikes against him:

1. He was relatively young (I Tm 4:12; II Tm 2:22)--mid 30's.
2. He was prone to illness (I Tm 5:23).
3. He was timid by temperament (naturally shy; an introvert)

That's why Paul wrote II Timothy! I like the outline of II Tim provided by John Stott. He suggests that Paul gave Tim (and us!) 4 charges in this letter:

Chapter 1--The charge to guard the gospel (1:14).

Chapter 2--The charge to suffer for the gospel (2:3, 8, 9).

Chapter 3--The charge to continue in the gospel (3:13, 14).

Chapter 4--The charge to proclaim the gospel (4:1-2).

That's the Big Picture of Paul's letter to Timothy.

Last week we took a Closeup view of 1:3-4. Paul became transparent with Timothy. Paul bore his soul. He says he thanked God for Tim, longed to see Tim, and prayed for Tim.

Q: What came to mind as Paul remembered Timothy?

A: Paul couldn't forget two experiences from Timothy's life. And he didn't want Timothy to forget them either.

Key: Timothy's mother played a great role in these 2 experiences...

Proposition: In II Timothy 1:5-7, Paul reminds timid Timothy of 2 experiences from his life. What were they?

I. Paul reminds Timothy of his Salvation (5).

- A. Personal
- B. Pure
- C. Patterned
- D. Persuasive

II. Paul reminds Timothy of his Service (6-7).

I. Paul reminds Timothy of his Salvation (5).

What was the first thing that came to Paul's mind when he thought of Tim?

One word--"faith."

V 5 "When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee..."

What is faith?

By definition--to have faith means to believe, to trust, to have confidence in, to be persuaded of something. In what?

See: II Tim 1:12 "... for I know whom I have believed (same greek word)..."

Faith is a commitment I make to trust in the Person, Word, and Work of God in Jesus Christ.

Q: What was true of Timothy's faith?

A: I want you to see 4 marks of Timothy's faith which came to Paul's mind.

A. Timothy's faith was Personal.

V 5 "the unfeigned faith that is IN THEE"

Faith is personal. Faith is not hereditary. It's not in your genes, dad and mom. You don't pass it on genetically to your children. What do you pass on to them?

Ps 51:5 "Behold I was shaped in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me."

Rom 5:12 "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for all have sinned."

Eph 2:3 "...we all...were by nature the children of wrath."

That's the first thing we give our children. A sin nature. Every one of us is born separated from God, alienated. Is 59:2, "But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you..."

Tim was born that way too. Separated from God. But what happened to him?

He acknowledged his sin. He placed the confidence of his life in Christ. He experienced what Paul wrote about in Eph 2:8-9, "For by grace are you saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest..."

Tim's faith was personal.

B. Timothy's faith was Pure.

V 5 "the UNFEIGNED faith"

That's an interested word. The same root greek word appears in Rom 12:9, "Let love be without hypocrisy."

"unfeigned" = unhypocritical, genuine, sincere

True faith is pure. We have a tendency to contaminate faith. Paul warned Tim of this problem in his first letter.

I Tim 1:5 "Now the end of the commandment is... faith unfeigned."

I Tim 1:6 "From which some, having swerved, having turned aside..."

Genuine faith is pure. Yet Paul announced the solemn truth that a church can have people in it who possess corrupt hearts.

Quote: Swindoll points out the all too prevalent conception of repentance, "Repentance is what a man does on Sunday for what he did on Saturday and intends to do on Monday."

Illust:

C. Timothy's faith was Patterned.

V 5 "which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois...Eunice..."

Listen carefully dads and moms. We can't give our children faith. We can't inject it into their blood. We can't force them to have faith in Jesus Christ. What can we do? We can model faith. We can give our children a pattern of faith.

That's exactly what Tim's mother and grandmother did for him.

Look at Acts 14, 16...

Acts 14--Paul's first missionary journey

14:6-7 (after fleeing Iconium) "They fled to Lystra and Derbe...preached."

14:19 Paul stoned at Lystra

14:21-23 Established the believers into churches--Where? V 21 Lystra, Iconium

Acts 16--Paul's second missionary journey

16:1 "Then came he to Derbe and Lystra..." (Asia Minor)

Who did Paul find there?

16:1 "and behold a certain disciple was there, named Timothy"

That's important. Timothy was a disciple of Jesus Christ. Apparently Paul had led this young man to Christ on his first trip.

What else does Luke tell us about Tim?

--Tim's mother was a Jew. (Eunice acc to II Tim)

--Tim's father was an unsaved Greek

--Tim's mother was a Jew who had believed in Jesus Christ

Listen. Apparently Eunice and her mother Lois were converted to Christ under Paul's first ministry. Did they mean business about their commitment to Jesus Christ? Did they really surrender all to their Lord?

The test came when Paul arrived the second time. What happened?

Acts 16:2-3 "Timothy was well reported of... Him Paul would have to go with him."

Moms, would you encourage your son to go tramping off a man like Paul?

Remember, this woman had an unbelieving husband. She could have said, "I need Timothy here with me. He's my source of spiritual strength." And Remember that this

was the same Paul who'd been stoned earlier in Iconium! Would you be willing to send your son off with company like that?

Eunice was. Do you know why? Because her faith was unfeigned! She was willing to give up her own son, so he could do what God wanted him to do. She was willing to send her son into the unknown, to serve Jesus Christ.

Let me say a word to parents here today that have unbelieving spouses. If you're trying to raise your children to love and live for Christ without any support from your spouse, be encouraged. You can do it, by God's help! Don't give up! Look at the great impact made by Lois and Eunice!

Q: Dads and moms, are you willing to surrender your children to God for His service, like Eunice did?

You say, "Well Tim wasn't a little boy. He was around 20 when he first met Paul." That's right. But there are Dads and Moms today who have children in their 20's and 30's and older, who still hold the emotional reigns on their children, who refuse to support them in obeying God's will.

Illust: Gary B.--in his late 20's sensed God's call... but dad opposed

Illust: "I don't want my child to go off to a Christian college and prepare for ministry. I want him/her to get into a career where there's security, and prestige."

Q: Parents, have you prayed, "God, these are your children, not ours."?

Q: How could Eunice surrender her son for service? And why was Tim so ready to go?

A: We find a clue in II Tim 3:14-15...

3:14-15 "But continue thou... And from a child you have known the holy scriptures..."

Long before she ever heard of Jesus the Messiah, this Jewish woman named Lois taught her daughter Eunice the OT Scriptures. And Eunice did the same with Timothy. She gave Timothy a great respect for God and His Word. She taught Tim that obeying God should be his greatest priority in life.

That's why, when Paul offered the invitation to Tim, both Tim and his mother could echo these words...

Quote: "All to Jesus I surrender, all to Him I freely give. I will ever love and trust Him, in His presence daily live. I surrender all. I surrender all. All to thee my blessed Savior, I surrender all."

Timothy's faith was patterned. Notice a critical word...

V 5 "which dwelt FIRST in..."

"First". Listen parents. You can't pass on to your children what you yourself don't have. I hear people say all the time, "I want a good church for my kids." Great! The best church for kids is a church that will reach moms and dads, and challenge them to live for Christ!

If you really want what's best for your children, make sure you are right with God FIRST.

Illust:

Tim's faith was personal, pure, patterned, and fourthly...

D. Timothy's faith was Persuasive.

V 5 "and I am persuaded that in thee also."

Q: In v 5 Paul says he "remembered" Lois's faith, Eunice's faith, and Timothy's faith. How do you remember faith?! Isn't faith strictly a personal matter? Isn't it something inside of me?

Key: Genuine faith persuades. Persuades whom? Other people!

Faith ought to be seen. And genuine faith will be seen.
James 2:14 "What does it profit if a man say he has faith, and have not works? Can faith (THAT KIND OF FAITH) save him?"

Paul had seen the evidence of Timothy's faith for 15 years. He says, "I am persuaded of your faith Timothy."

Q: What is the evidence of faith?

A: Fruit!

Illust: If I see an apple hanging on a tree, there's a good chance that it's what kind of tree?! An apple tree! The fruit reveals the inherent qualities of the tree.

What reveals whether Christ truly lives within us? Fruit

Q: What kind of fruit?

1. Christlike Character (Gal 5:22-23)
2. Christlike Conduct (Mt 7:16, 20)

Mt 7:15-16 "Beware... Ye shall know them by their fruits."

Mt 7:20 "Wherefore, by their fruits ye shall know them."

If we have genuine faith, what will it produce in our lives?

Eph 2:10 "For we are His workmanship, created unto good works..."

Application:

Q: Do you have genuine faith?

If I say, "I believe in Jesus," but that belief has never exhibited visible evidence, it is a deficient faith, a non-saving faith.

Objection: "You mean faith is not enough?! You mean I can believe and not be saved?"

Fill in the blank of James 2:19, "The demons believe, and tremble."

Listen. It's not enough to merely "believe in God" to be saved. It's not enough to merely believe some things about Jesus Christ. Genuine faith demands that I place the confidence of my life in the Person and Work and Word of Jesus Christ.

Illust:

Tran: Paul remembered Tim's Salvation experience.

II. Paul reminds Timothy of his Service (6-7).

Remember why Paul was writing. He was on death-row. His days numbered. Who was qualified and needed to care for the churches after his departure? Timothy was! But there was a problem. Timothy was hesitant, even a little afraid. He was young and unsure of himself. He was apparently shy, and intimidated by the situation. So Paul wrote...

V 6 "Wherefore, I put thee in remembrance... stir up the gift of God..."

Q: What did Paul want Tim to do?

A: "Stir up the gift of God."

What gift? What had God given to Timothy? The word lit. is "grace-gift." It's a broad word in the NT. Sometimes it refers to General gifts God gives us. Here it has a special sense.

How did Tim receive this gift? "by the putting on of my hands"

see: I Tim 4:14 "Neglect not the gift..."

Paul has in mind Timothy's commissioning/ordination service in his home church.

What gift had God given Tim? A special call to serve in the ministry of the Gospel. Paul says, "Timothy, remember what God did 15 years ago? He called you into His service! And He gave you a special gift, a special enablement so you could do the task He'd given you to do."

Key: God equips us for His service. Every believer has a spiritual gift (s).

Q: What did Paul want Tim to do with that gift?

A: V 6 "stir up the gift"

Only NT use of this word--literally means to "rekindle a fire". It's as if Tim's gift was like a fire that was capable of dying out through neglect. Tim's fire had not gone out, yet, but his flame needed some oxygen.

Illust: Last week I woke up in the middle of the night and felt something strange next to me. I reached over and touched it. The "it" was actually my left arm, which had "fallen asleep" and was totally numb. There "it" lay, totally limp, totally useless. Have you ever had that experience? What did I do? I took my good arm, and grabbed my limp arm, and started shaking it! It needed to be restored to usefulness.

Some Christians in the Body of Christ are like that. They're dead weight. What do they need? A healthy member to come along to grab ahold and shake them back into usefulness!

That's what Paul did with Tim. "Tim, remember your calling! You have been called to serve! Don't shrink back. Do what God has called you to do!"

Illust: Martin Luther, "Here I stand..."

"But how can I serve? I'm not sure I can do it?"

Yes you can! Why?

V 7 "For God has not given us the spirit..."

Q: What has God NOT given us? "fear" = unusual word (only NT); "cowardice; timidity"; verb "to be afraid"

Q: What has God given us? The Spirit who generates 3 things in us--Power, Love, and a Sound mind

Listen. Timothy didn't need any new spiritual ingredients in his life. All he had to do was stir up what he already had!

That goes for every Christian, including you!

Illust:

Conclusion:

What's the greatest thing a mother can give her child?

Tim had a mother that supported him in 2 great experiences in his life. His Salvation. His Service in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Illust:

These verses compel us to ask two personal questions:

1. Am I saved?

Q: Do you have genuine faith?

We have lots of new people attending WBC now. Some of you have church backgrounds. Some don't. Some of you have had religious experiences before. Some of you have been told by others that your religious experience insures that you are going to heaven.

I want to ask everyone to honestly consider this question.

Q: Do I have saving faith like Timothy did?

Do I have a faith that is personal, pure, patterned, and persuasive?

Objection: "Are you trying to make me think I don't have faith?"

Listen. My fear is this. There are lots of people in churches this morning that have "faith" that is not biblical faith. And if it's not biblical faith, it's not saving faith.

Illust:

2. Am I serving God with my life as He wants me to be?