

Paul, The Encourager

Text: Various passages from 1 Tim. 1.

Ortho: As far as we know, this was
the last of Paul's epistles.

Ch. 4 makes it clear that Paul's ministry was over. He would not be released from prison. It was no longer safe to be seen with Paul. Many had left him, and this had hurt him deeply. We do not know what the charges against him were; it was bad enough that he was a Christian.

How amazing, then, that as Paul writes, he writes, not out of concern for himself, but out of concern for Timothy! When Timothy should have been encouraging him, he instead was encouraging Timothy.

This is what makes this epistle so significant. From the mature standpoint of a seasoned servant of the Lord we see what in life are the most important things — things indispensable, things which held Paul in this time of greatest need.

The epistle reveals Timothy's great need. If there had been stars in his eyes regarding serving the Lord, they were gone now, and he saw it as a

veritable matter of life and death.

What would hold him? Could anything keep him from being so ashamed of the Gospel, and of Paul, that he would forsake them both (as Demas had - 4:10)?

Yes, there were several things. We move from the human to God.

I. The prayers of the Apostle (1:3,4).

Think what reading this must have meant to young Timothy! Paul was praying for him - incessantly, day and night - and more than anything else he wanted to see Timothy again (4:9,21). This was what Paul needed to make his own joy complete.

In this epistle you have the old and the young. May I ask you who are parents, or those of you who are middle-aged and past, COULD YOU WRITE TO ANY YOUNG PERSON AND TELL THEM WHAT PAUL TELLS TIMOTHY HERE?

May this not be one major reason why so many young people get gobbled up by the world, by temptation, by sin?

II. Timothy's heritage (1:5).

Why mention grandmother Lois and mother Eunice? What did their names mean to Timothy?

Paul makes it very clear that one of the reasons Timothy was what he was was because they had been what they were.

Cf. 3:14,15 - Note esp., "knowing of whom thou hast learned them".

"The unfeigned faith" — ἀνυπόκριτος, unhypocritical, not just for public display, genuine, real. Cf. 1 Tim. 1:6.

Again, the impact of people is brought to bear on ~~Paul's~~ Timothy's life. The remembrance of the faith, real faith, he had seen at home, held him.

what kind of a spiritual heritage are we leaving our children? Remember that sometime the only thing that may hold them is the memory of "the unfeigned faith" they saw at home.

One thing more before we leave this point —

we read of grand mother and mother, but what about grandfather and father?

III. What God had done for Timothy.

As we consider this part it is certainly implied that these were truths which Timothy knew. He had learned some things that Paul now calls forth to steady his fearful, discouraged son in

the faith.

How wonderful when we have a foundation; how tragic when we do not.

A. "The gift of God ... in" him (1:6,7).

What is this "gift"? See "given" in v. 7. It is the Spirit of God.

Fear does not come from the Spirit, but power in weakness
love instead of hate or fear
self-control in place of going to pieces
 these do come from Him.

Young people need to know about the Spirit of God, that He is in them, and what He will do for us.

B. The work of salvation (1:8-11).

What do our young people know about the doctrine of salvation? How did it originate? When did it originate? What is its purpose? What all is involved?

Why would I be ashamed of it, and refuse to take my share of the suffering? Only one reason: I feel that it is a lost cause.

But is it?

Does God start anything He can't finish? Would something which originated "ages ago" (RSV), in Christ, involving His death and resurrection, now suddenly come to nothing?

God has too much involved, and in His purpose, His glory that is involved.

IV. Timothy's ministry (what God would do through him)

⇒ A deposit of truth, or doctrine, to keep (1:13, 14).

"~~Held fast~~" - θήτορύπτωσιν, a pattern or model to be held + copied. This was to be held fast, to be kept, guarded (v. 14).

What pattern, or example? That of sound words - ὑγιαίνοτων λόγων. These are true, healthy, pure. A false doctrine is sick. The word is translated "whole" in Luke 5:31.

Healthy doctrine produces healthy souls and is preserved for posterity if it is kept:

(1) "In faith" — believing.

(2) "In love" — obeying. Cf. 1 Cor. 14:21.

But also in v. 14 — the Holy Spirit again is brought in.

Every generation is to keep to the model, preserving it as it is, passing it on to the next generation. Timothy was to mean to others what Lois + Eunice + Paul had meant to him.

Conclusion: Read 1:8. By what God had done

for Timothy through others, by what
He had done in saving Timothy, and by
what He wanted to do through him, there
was every reason to be encouraged.