

Fan the Flame

The apostle Paul sat in that prison cell concerned. He thought about his child in the faith. His heart for Timothy was to stay strong till the end. He wanted Timothy to run his race faithfully till his dying breath.

Timothy had been faithful, but Paul didn't want Timothy to ever stop.

**SERVING THE LORD YESTERDAY IS GOOD;
SERVING HIM TODAY IS BETTER.**

Paul was about to be executed, but wanting to spur Timothy on for the Lord, he wrote one final letter.

1 Timothy 1:1-2 - Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God according to the promise of the life that is in Christ Jesus. To Timothy, my beloved child. Grace, Mercy, and peace from God our Father and Christ Jesus our Lord. ESV

Something was weighing heavy on Timothy's heart and mind, and he needed encouragement from Paul to keep going.

What was troubling Timothy? I believe verse 2 Timothy 1:8 gives insight. Paul provided 3 reasons why Timothy would've been tempted to back down from serving the Lord.

2 Timothy 1:8 - Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God.

(Reason #1) - The testimony about Jesus Christ was being challenged,

(Reason #2) - The testimony of Paul was being questioned.

(Reason #3) - Timothy was expecting to suffer.

In verses 3 through 7, Paul encouraged Timothy to keep at it for the Lord. I see 5 major statements of Paul that would spur Timothy on to live unashamed for the Lord no matter what came his way.

Statement #1 - "I'm **thankful** to God, Timothy." **1:3a**

I thank God whom I serve, as did my ancestors, with a clear conscience, as I remember you..

Paul mentioned 4 reasons he was thankful.

1. Paul was thankful that he spent his life getting to serve God.

As Paul sat there reflecting on his life - a life sold out for God - he thought, "I'm thankful I've gotten to serve him with my life." To Paul, serving God was a wonderful privilege - a blessing.

2. Paul was thankful he got to follow the pattern of the faithful men and women of the past.

Paul's ancestors were those men and women of faith we read of in the Old Testament. Paul got to look back on his own life and say, "Wow, I'm connected to those great people of faith."

3. Paul was thankful he served God with a clear conscience.

What a great testimony at the end of his life. He kept short accounts with God. He confessed his sins to God and maintained a clear conscience

before God. He had nothing to hide. He didn't have these secret pockets of sin in his life.

4. Paul was thankful that he had invested in a young man named Timothy.

Timothy was worth the investment. Paul got to the end of his life and said, "All that time I spent working with Timothy was well worth the investment."

Statement #2 - "I'm **praying** for you, Timothy." **1:3b**

...as I remember you constantly in my prayers night and day.

What an encouragement that would've been for Timothy. Timothy could think to himself, "I've got a prayer warrior going to bat for me night and day."

Prayer is valuable to God. It's an important ministry in the eyes of God.

Statement #3 - "I'm **thinking** about you, Timothy."
1:4-5

In verses 4 and 5, There were 2 qualities of Timothy that Paul was reminded of.

1. Paul remembered Timothy's soft heart.

As I remember your tears, I long to see you, that I may be filled with joy.

Timothy was not a man afraid to shed tears. He had a soft heart for the things of God.

2. Paul remembered Timothy's sincere faith.

I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lios and your mother Eunice...

The way Paul saw it, Timothy had sincere faith. His faith in God was unwavering, unshakable. He was no actor playing Christianity. He was the real deal.

Statement #4 - "I'm **confident** in you, Timothy." **1:5b**

... and now, I am sure, dwells in you as well.

William Barclay said “there is no greater inspiration than to feel that someone believes in us.”

Statement #5 - “I’m **challenging** you, Timothy.” **1:6-7**

For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.

I tend to think Timothy’s spiritual gift was pastor-teacher, but Timothy was starting to get fearful. The world of Timothy’s was getting darker, so Paul gave him 4 reminders in verse 7.

#1 - God does not give His children a spirit of fear.

#2 - God does give his children a spirit of power.

#3 - God does give his children a spirit of love.

#4 - God does give His children a spirit of self-control.

Will you keep at it for the Lord, or will you quit? It’s always too early to quit.

