

## Final Words

### *Loyalty*

2 Timothy 1:13-18

September 16, 2018 pm

HDBC

I want to speak with you tonight about loyalty. If someone is loyal they are faithful. They refuse to give up or to bail out. They go the distance. To be loyal may even mean a willingness to sacrifice self.

**Pastor E.V. Hill** spoke glowingly of his wife, while preaching her funeral several years ago. He shared many stories of her love and loyalty to him, but none more moving than this one. During time when tensions were high in their neighborhood in Los Angeles during a time of great volatility. Hill had taken a strong visible stand for racial unity and condemned acts of violence being performed by some of his neighbors. Received many death threats.

**Awakened early** one morning to find his wife not in bed. Began to search the house when he heard the car pull up in the driveway. She got out in her robe. He asked where she had gone. *I woke up this morning and thought, maybe they put a bomb on your car to explode when you drove it off this morning. And I wanted to check it out. It's all right.*

**Wow!** That is one of the greatest illustrations of love and loyalty that I can imagine. Paul is writing of loyalty in this portion of 2 Timothy. We are continuing our study of 2 Timothy. Tonight we are in 1 Timothy 1:13-18.

### **1. Loyalty to Sound Doctrine (13-14)**

It may not be exciting but doctrine matters. I see more people whom I would classify as ***atheological***. They don't have any theological convictions. What they believe really doesn't matter. That is a huge mistake. It does matter.

*Retain the standard of sound words . . .*

*Guard . . . the treasure which has been entrusted . . .*

**Paul is writing** of the primary doctrines of the Christian faith. He had taught them to Timothy. Paul calls them **sound words**, and a **treasure**. Referring to the body of revealed truth.

**Standard** was used of a writer's outline or an artist's rough sketch. It sets the guidelines or standards for the finished work. The **standard** is a reference to the Bible. **This is a call** to be loyal to the truth of God as revealed in His Word.

**Guard** - keep, watch, defend. Aggressive attention given to something. The obvious danger was that the truth would be eroded by heretical teachers. We are to know and guard the truth.

It is vital that we understand what **sound doctrine** is. Not only the **content** of it, but **the nature** of it. In other words, we need to know what the truth is about God, Man, Sin, etc. These are doctrinal truths. When we study what God says about these subjects and others we are learning **the content** of sound doctrine.

**But equally important** is the **nature** of sound doctrine. In other words, what is doctrinal truth? It is the God's revealed truth. It is truth not because society declares it to be so, but because God declares it to be so. Because it is from the unchangeable God, it is itself unchangeable. For this reason, we have no authority to tamper with it.

Once when umpire Babe Pinelli called Babe Ruth out on strikes, Ruth began to argue. **There's 40,000 people here who know that last one was a ball.** Pinelli replied **Maybe so, but mine is the only opinion that counts!**

Paul is calling to Timothy to remember that the only opinion that counts is God's. We are to be loyal to sound doctrine, as revealed in the Bible. During the early years of my pastoral ministry the SBC went through a difficult battle over this very issue. The right side won, praise the Lord.

## 2. Loyalty to Fellow Believers (15-18)

### A. Some Bad Examples (15)

*All who are in Asia turned away from me . . .* There is a certain sadness in those written words. Paul, the missionary trailblazer now finds himself facing the executioner almost alone. His companions have drifted away. How sad, but how human like.

**A German philosopher** once compared the human race to a bunch of porcupines huddling together on a cold winter's night. He said, *The colder it gets outside the more we huddle together for warmth; but the closer we get to one another, the more we hurt one another with our sharp quills. And in the lonely night of earth's winter eventually we begin to drift apart and wander out on our own.*

**Don't be like these people**, Timothy. Stick by your fellow soldiers. Don't ever leave them alone on the battle field. Paul had been abandoned by many. To be rejected by the world is expected. But to be forsaken by your friends is heartbreaking.

**Paul even mentions two names.** Phygelus and Hermogenes. How terrible to be known for all time as one who abandoned Paul! Because Paul offered no additional information about them, we assume Timothy knew who they were.

### B. One Good Example (16-18)

Paul then reminds Timothy of a lone good example. Onesiphorous. Paul's says this fellow saint was not only not ashamed, but exerted great effort to find and encourage Paul.

**Refreshed** - to blow upon. Cool breeze on a hot day. Here was a man who was loyal to his friend. Committed to a ministry of encouragement. Not waiting for opportunities, but seeking them out.

**Onesiphorous** is a great example of one who was loyal to his fellow soldier. Loyalty evidenced by his willingness to be with Paul even in Paul's imprisonment. Some believe Onesiphorous was himself arrested and executed.

**Missionary Joseph Damien**, 19th century, ministering to people with leprosy on Pacific island. They grew to love him and revered his sacrificial life.

**One morning before** Joseph was the lead them in their daily worship, he was pouring some hot water into a cup when the water swirled out and fell on his bare foot. It took him a moment to realize he felt no sensation or pain. Gripped by the sudden fear of what this could mean, he poured more hot water on the same spot. No feeling whatsoever.

**He immediately knew** what had happened. Tearfully walked to deliver his sermon. Few noticed at first the change in his opening line. Normally, he began "My fellow believers." On this morning he began, "My fellow lepers."

His loyalty was costly. It sometimes is.

Takeaways:

1. Invest in the Word of God.
2. Invest in the lives of other believers.