



# The Joy of Making Disciples

## Summary and Goal

Paul didn't begin 2 Timothy with a sense of urgency to combat the invading heresy like he did in 1 Timothy. Instead, the apostle opened with a reminder of the promise of life Christians have in Christ. Paul was suffering, but was thankful for his relationship with Timothy, their anticipated reunion, and Timothy's genuine faith.

### **Main Passages**

2 Timothy 1:1-7

### **Session Outline**

1. Of, In, and From Christ (2 Tim. 1:1-2)
2. Paul's Affection for Timothy (2 Tim. 1:3-5)
3. An Exhortation to Timothy (2 Tim. 1:6-7)

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### **Theological Theme**

Calling, comfort, and perseverance are all wrapped up in the person and work of Christ Jesus. Jesus' work on behalf of Christians provides them with a great salvation, as well as surpassing benefits, as they make their way down the narrow road toward heaven.

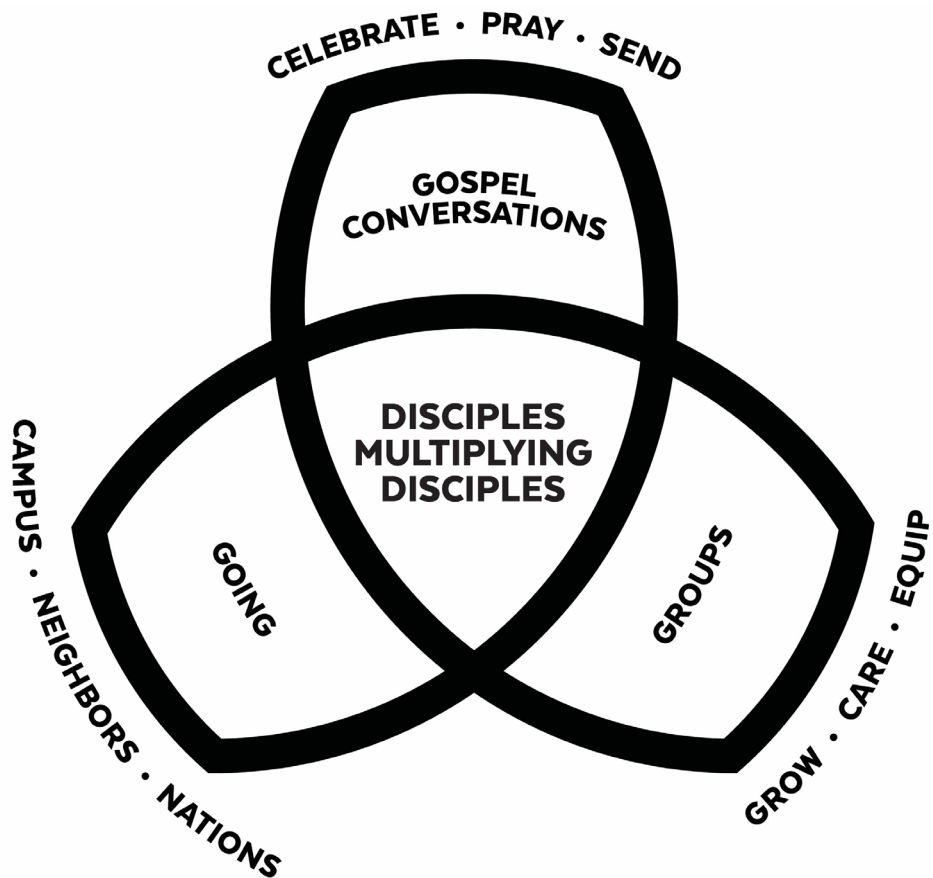
### **Christ Connection**

Just as Paul was an apostle *of* Christ, so Christians are servants *of* Christ. Just as Paul's promise of life was *in* Christ, so a Christian's promise of life is *in* Christ. And, just as Paul counted on grace, mercy, and peace *from* Christ, so do Christians today.

### **Missional Application**

Christians today who care about the Great Commission and sending workers into the harvest ought to have the same emphasis that Paul had: faithfulness to the calling to share God's Word and have gospel conversations, even in the midst of suffering.

# Disciples Multiplying Disciples



## DxD This Week

### ***Getting Started***

Plan a Zoom meeting with Group leaders two weeks prior to the series launch for a “heads-up” on what this series represents.

This is the BBC Vision series with the new DXD strategy introduced. Each session has “Anti Zoom-fatigue” features, more interactions with participants, and encouragement to have participants share their stories.

A week before this session have your Co-leader pre-enlist a group member to share their God-story of how they became a Christ-follower.

# 1

## Session Plan

# The Joy of Making Disciples

### For the Leader

If meeting via Zoom, encourage participants to share on screen a photo, item, or Google image of the thing they would be very grieved over if they lost it.

## Introduction/Ice Breaker

- What is something you would be very grieved over if you lost it? How likely is it you would be able to regain or replace this item if you lost it?
- What is the relationship between the amount a person grieves over a loss and the ability to recoup that lost thing and/or abundant supply of reserve of the lost item?

Paul wrote this letter to Timothy to encourage him to stay faithful to his call even in the midst of suffering. In the passage we are studying today, Paul reminded Timothy of who he was (Paul's dearly loved son), expressed his affection and thanksgiving for him, and challenged him to continue the work to which he had been called.

## 1. Of, In, and From Christ (2 Tim. 1:1-2)

Paul introduced himself as "Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus" in verse 1. The prepositions in these first two verses, as they relate to Christ, are important. They help us see Christ's identity and role in the lives of Christians. In this first instance, Paul said that he was an apostle of Christ. This means that his apostleship both proceeded from the person of Christ and that he belonged to Christ. In other words, Paul expressed that he was an apostle of Jesus Christ because Jesus Christ made him an apostle and continued to make him an apostle.

- Have participants underline each use of: *of*, *in*, and *from* in their Bibles or study guides. What is significant about Paul's use of the words of, in, and from in these verses? What implications do these have for the lives of all Christians?
- Application: Do you cling to Christ? Is your identity, your hope for the future, and your strength today intricately tied to Him? How does your life give evidence of this?

## 2. Paul's Affection for Timothy (2 Tim. 1:3-5)

There is no doubt that Paul loved Timothy. He viewed him as a son and cared deeply for his well-being and his spiritual growth. Timothy

had made his spiritual father proud by serving faithfully in Paul's footsteps. Discipleship relationships are much more than simply a transfer of information. Our hearts get entangled when we share our lives with someone. The fellowship and companionship that Paul and Timothy shared was deep because it was rooted in and watered by Christ.

- ❓ How did Paul express his affection for Timothy in these verses? What are some ways we might express our affection for those God has put in our lives in disciple-making relationships?
- ❓ Application: Do you love those in the church as Paul expressed toward Timothy? Does that love show itself in the gratitude you feel for them, the prayers you pray for them, and your desire to be with them? How might you express this love to those in the church around you this week?

### 3. An Exhortation to Timothy (2 Tim. 1:6-7)

A key dynamic in discipleship is authority and submission. We live in a context where it is often seen as unkind or even unchristian to correct someone or command someone with authority. The words authority and submission often carry negative connotations in our current cultural climate. These concepts, however, are thoroughly biblical and absolutely necessary for discipleship to take place. A mature Christian has to have the ability and guts to say hard things to a younger Christian who is in need of correction. Christlike, humble, loving authority is a great blessing in the life of an immature Christian.

- ❓ What is the command that Paul gave to Timothy? How might this type of encouragement and challenge be viewed today? How is this instructive for us as we seek to live in healthy disciple-making relationships?
- ❓ Application: What has God called you to do? Are you doing it? When has fear played a part in you disobeying the commands and call of God on your life?

### Conclusion

- ❓ What keeps you from pursuing disciple-making relationships in your life? How is today's study an encouragement in this regard?
- ❓ Why is it important that Christians both seek to make disciples but also seek to actively be discipled by others?
- ❓ How is disciple making connected to the call of Christ in the Great Commission? How do we necessarily fulfill this call as we seek to lead others in discipleship and to grow in this area ourselves?



## Expanded Session Content

# The Joy of Making Disciples

### Introduction/Ice Breaker

If a poor man has one hundred dollars picked from his pocket, it would be no wonder that he would fall into despair and dismay. That one hundred dollars was most of what he had to live on. No one would fault him for crying for losing such a sum. But if a millionaire is robbed of one hundred dollars, he may not like it, but he isn't troubled too terribly, because he has much more at home, in the bank, and in his investments. The rich man won't lose any sleep because of the loss of one hundred dollars. It is as nothing to him. It is no great loss.

Similarly, when a person is in possession of the great treasure of forgiveness for sins, justification before God, and eternal life, the loss of temporal things is of little consequence compared to the person who is living only for what is here on earth. The Christian who knows his or her position before God can comfortably and confidently bear up against all the troubles and trials he or she meets. Faithful Christians have held loosely to earthly things (even their own lives!) since the very beginning. Almost all of the apostles met a martyr's death.

In Paul's second letter to Timothy, Paul aimed to remind his dear son in the faith that he possessed great riches in Christ, and to be careful to not hold too tightly to the comforts of this world that fade away. Timothy, like Paul, faced persecution and suffering. But Timothy's calling was to preach the Word, and his obedience to his Savior was paramount in his heart. The treasures this world had to offer were so temporal that even rust and moth could destroy them. Christ, however, was Timothy's eternal treasure that never fades, never wears out, and never fails. The same is true for all Christians today.

#### For the Leader

If meeting via Zoom, encourage participants to share on screen a photo, item, or Google image of the thing they would be very grieved over if they lost it.

- ❓ What is something you would be very grieved over if you lost it? How likely is it you would be able to regain or replace this item if you lost it?
- ❓ What is the relationship between the amount a person grieves over a loss and the ability to recoup that lost thing and/or abundant supply of reserve of the lost item?

## Session Summary

Paul wrote this letter to Timothy to encourage him to stay faithful to his call even in the midst of suffering. In the passage we are studying today, Paul reminded Timothy of who he was (Paul's dearly loved son), expressed his affection and thanksgiving for him, and challenged him to continue the work to which he had been called.

### 1. Of, In, and From Christ (2 Tim. 1:1-2)

From the moment we learn of Paul in the Scriptures, he was doggedly focused on Christ. Even before he was converted, his attention was turned fully toward Christ by persecuting Jesus' followers. He was obsessed with putting a stop to Christ. After his conversion, he was still obsessed with Christ by making Him known among the nations. Paul went from throwing Christ's followers in jail, to appealing to Christ by name three times in the greeting of a letter in which He plead with another to keep preaching Christ.



What is significant about Paul's use of the words of, in, and from in these verses? What implications do these have for the lives of all Christians?

Paul introduced himself as “Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus” in verse 1. The prepositions in these first two verses, as they relate to Christ, are important. They help us see Christ's identity and role in the lives of Christians. In this first instance, Paul said that he was an apostle of Christ. This means that his apostleship both proceeded from the person of Christ and that he belonged to Christ. In other words, Paul expressed that he was an apostle of Jesus Christ because Jesus Christ made him an apostle and continued to make him an apostle.

Christians rejoice in this truth. The identity of every true Christian is of Christ. We could say it like this: A Christian is a saint of Christ because he or she came to be a saint through Christ's work, and he or she continues to be a saint because Christ keeps them. Every Christian has experienced first-hand at least two miracles. The first was when he or she was saved. The second is that he or she is still saved. If people could lose their salvation, they absolutely would. Christ's saving power, however, both purchases and guards the sinner's soul for salvation.

Paul mentioned “the promise of life in Christ Jesus.” We have a new preposition to consider: in. “In Christ Jesus” was one of Paul's favorite phrases. You'll find it often in his writings. This instance, however, is a little different than his normal usage. Generally, when Paul said “in Christ Jesus” he was referring to a believer's position and privileges in Christ because of the gospel. Paul's phrase here, however, was a bit different.

#### For the Leader

Have participants underline each use of: *of*, *in*, and *from* in their Bibles or study guides.

Paul focused on the essence of the gospel message, namely justification. Paul was saying that his identity, his apostleship (indeed his whole life) were bound up in the promise of life in Christ Jesus to which he clung, to which Timothy clung, and to which Timothy's congregation clung.

Like Paul, Christians today cling to and rejoice in the promise of life in Christ Jesus. Like Paul, Christians today understand that they are chief sinners, without personal righteousness, and deserving of punishment. If there is no promise of rescue, then no man is salvageable. There's no holding out of hope for people who are left to their own devices to be made right with God.

In the end of this greeting, Paul wrote, "To Timothy, my dearly loved son, Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord." Here Paul pointed Timothy to the fact that not only was his saving in Christ, but so were his comforting and his sanctifying. Remember, Timothy faced some difficulties in his ministry. He was in need of the grace, mercy, and peace that only God could provide. Paul made it clear that these blessings proceeded not only from God the Father, but also from Christ Jesus the Lord. The sustaining spiritual strength that Christians need isn't found in themselves, but comes from Christ.

#### For the Leader

Take this opportunity to let the person who has been asked in advance to share their God-story/testimony of how they came to be a Christ-follower.

- ❓ Application: Do you cling to Christ? Is your identity, your hope for the future, and your strength today intricately tied to Him?
- ❓ How does your life give evidence of this?

## 2. Paul's Affection for Timothy (2 Tim. 1:3-5)

There is no doubt that Paul loved Timothy. He viewed him as a son and cared deeply for his well-being and his spiritual growth. Timothy had made his spiritual father proud by serving faithfully in Paul's footsteps. Discipleship relationships are much more than simply a transfer of information. Our hearts get entangled when we share our lives with someone. The fellowship and companionship that Paul and Timothy shared was deep because it was rooted in and watered by Christ.

- ❓ Who are you investing in as a disciple-making relationship? What are some ways we might guide them in this disciple-making relationships?

When Paul thought of Timothy, he probably felt many emotions, but none so strong as gratitude. He, no doubt, had many reasons to thank God for placing Timothy in his life. These include the comfort of companionship on the missionary trail, a faithful co-laborer to help carry the load of the

work, and the joy of seeing a young disciple grow in godliness and wisdom. These are the joys of discipleship that produce thanksgiving. We can be sure that Paul also had struggles with Timothy at times. We know this because we know that even Christians struggle against the sin nature. But Paul and Timothy stayed the course with their hearts rooted in Christ and their hands set to the work, as Paul lead the way.

We also know that Paul cared deeply for Timothy because he prayed for him. When a Christian truly understands intercession as bringing the needs of another before the one true and living God, then he or she can scarcely think of a more significant thing to do for that person. Paul's love for Timothy drove him to pray for him. It wasn't a chore or burden. Rather, to not pray for Timothy would have been the burden. Love makes the labor of prayer light.

Just so, Christians ought to love their neighbors, especially those of the household of faith. Furthermore, this love ought to drive them to their prayer closets to intercede for them.

Further, Paul longed to see Timothy. Paul was filled with gratitude to God for Timothy, he prayed for Timothy, and he longed to see Timothy's face. Christians share a special unity and relationship. This spiritual bond transcends culture, language, economic status, and education level. That's because this fellowship is established by the shared experience of salvation through Christ. Through the lens of the gospel, all Christians were dead in their sins and bound for hell until a gracious God opened their hearts to the gospel message.

This bond, however, only grows stronger in discipleship relationships. As believers seek the Lord together and serve together, the cords of the gospel make new stitches between their hearts, and they are drawn ever closer together. Being together brings them great joy because of the deep fellowship they share in Christ. That's why Paul longed to see Timothy.



Application: Pause and have someone (pre-enlisted prayer person from your group) offer a prayer of thanksgiving for the people God has used to disciple you and who he has given you to disciple. If you do not have a disciple-making relationship with anyone today, ask God to show you who He has for you this week.

### 3. An Exhortation to Timothy (2 Tim. 1:6-7)

Finally, in verse 6, Paul moved into his purpose for writing to Timothy. In verses 1-2, Paul put the focus on Christ's centrality in their lives. In verses 3-5, Paul expressed his deep affection for his "dearly loved son." With that foundation laid, Paul gave Timothy direct instruction.

### Timothy's Heritage of Faith

Paul and Timothy both had a heritage of faith. Timothy had a Greek father (Acts 16:1,3) but a godly Jewish grandmother and mother (Acts 16:1; 2 Tim. 1:5).



Remember, anytime we see the word “therefore” in a passage of Scripture we need to realize that it is connecting two ideas. We can think of it like this: “What I am saying now is dependent upon what I just said.” In this case, Paul pointed to the verses immediately prior: “I recall your sincere faith . . .” That sincere faith was what eventually led to the “gift of God” that Paul was now telling him to rekindle. Further, “Timothy, because you are my dearly loved son in Christ who saved you, called you, and sustains you; and because I give thanks for you and pray for you and long to see you; and because of your sincere faith that you have had since childhood, you should rekindle the gift of God this is in you.”




What is the command that Paul gave to Timothy? How might this type of encouragement and challenge be viewed today? How is this instructive for us as we seek to live in healthy disciple-making relationships?

A key dynamic in discipleship is authority and submission. We live in a context where it is often seen as unkind or even unchristian to correct someone or command someone with authority. The words authority and submission often carry negative connotations in our current cultural climate. These concepts, however, are thoroughly biblical and absolutely necessary for discipleship to take place. A mature Christian has to have the ability and guts to say hard things to a younger Christian who is in need of correction. Christlike, humble, loving authority is a great blessing in the life of an immature Christian.

Paul told Timothy to “rekindle the gift of God.” This most likely referred to his gift of preaching and teaching. Whatever it was, Paul warned Timothy to not allow this gift to fall into disrepair or abandon. This probably wasn’t an easy thing to hear. First of all, it is never a pleasant thing to be told that one is lacking. No doubt Timothy wanted to please Paul, and it is quite possible that these words hurt Timothy’s feelings. A faithful disciple maker doesn’t shy away from saying/modeling what the disciple needs to hear, even if it could cause some emotional distress. At the same time, it is important that these words be guided by the Holy Spirit—as they were in this case—and not just personal preference.




Secondly, Paul told Timothy to do more (and with greater force) of what may have been the source of his trouble. Timothy most likely faced opposition from outside the church as well as trouble within. Most of the troubles that faithful preachers face will go away if they’ll just shut their mouths. They often don’t even have to shut them completely, but simply avoid certain portions of the Scripture and preach the portions upon which everyone can agree and that won’t offend anyone.

Paul knew this. He was in prison because he refused to shut his mouth. He knew what Timothy was facing. Without a firm foundation on Christ and a brother to exhort him, Paul knew it would be easy for Timothy to give up. This is why Paul told Timothy that God did not intend for Timothy to minister, live, and make decisions out of fear, but with power, love, and self-control (v. 7).

-  Application: All of us have gifts and abilities we are to use in service to God and others. What has God called you to do? Are you doing it?

## Conclusion

In our passage today, Paul began 2 Timothy by expressing that his whole world was wrapped up in the person and work of Christ. He was an apostle of Christ (salvation story). He looked to the promise of life in Christ. He depended upon the continued grace, mercy, and peace of Christ (disciple-making story). Next, he laid out his affection for Timothy that manifested itself in gratefulness, prayers, and a longing to see him that he might be filled with joy (equipping process). Finally, Paul exhorted Timothy to fan into flame his gift. He encouraged Timothy to preach Christ and preach Him with passion. And Timothy was to do this even in the face of danger, because God did not intend for him to operate out of fear, but out of power, love, and self-control.

-  What keeps you from pursuing disciple-making relationships in your life?
-  Why is it important that Christians both seek to make disciples but also seek to actively be disciplined by others?
-  How is disciple making connected to the call of Christ in the Great Commission? How do we necessarily fulfill this call as we seek to lead others in discipleship and to grow in this area ourselves?

## Prayer of Response

*Pray that Christ and His gospel would captivate your heart, and that your whole life would be oriented around Him. Ask God to increase your love for your fellow believers. Finally, pray for God to place someone in your life who will tell you what you need to hear, not what you want to hear.*

## Additional Resources

- “How do I make a disciple” (<https://brentwoodbaptist.com/series/how-disciples-are-made/>)
- “How to make disciples” (<https://brentwoodbaptist.com/podcasts/>)
- *Growing Up* by Robby Gallaty
- *Multiply* by Francis Chan and Mark Beuving
- *The Disciple Maker’s Handbook* by Bobby Harrington and Josh Patrick

### For the Leader

Handout:

1. On-campus opportunities page to serve once-a-month.
2. Local mission opportunities page individuals or the Group could serve in the next six months.

## For Next Week

### Session Title

- Gospel First and Always

### Main Passages

- 2 Timothy 1:8-18

### Session Outline

1. A Gospel Worthy of Suffering (2 Tim. 1:8-12)
2. A Gospel Worthy of Guarding (2 Tim. 1:13-14)
3. An Example of Gospel Living (2 Tim. 1:15-18)

### Memorize

*For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but one of power, love, and sound judgment.*

- 2 Timothy 1:7

### Daily Readings

- Monday - 2 Timothy 1:1-2
- Tuesday - 2 Timothy 1:3-7
- Wednesday - Hebrews 4:16
- Thursday - Hebrews 10:24-25
- Friday - Romans 5:3-5
- Saturday - 2 Thessalonians 1:3

# Historical Context of 2 Timothy

## Purpose

In 1 Timothy Paul directed Timothy to actively oppose false teaching. He also gave instruction on the type of behavior that should characterize those in the church. The letter to Titus shows a similar purpose, albeit briefer in scope. As Paul addressed the character of church members, he presented it in light of the work of Christ. The message in 2 Timothy, Paul's final letter, is quite different. It is much more personal, a letter from one friend to another. Paul was preparing Timothy to carry on the work of ministry after he was gone.

## Author

As stated in the opening of each letter, these letters were written by Paul (1Tm 1:1; 2Tm 1:1; Ti 1:1). However, many scholars today assume that Paul did not write them. This opinion is based on the differences from his other letters in vocabulary and style, alleged differences in theology, and uncertainties about where these letters fit chronologically in the life of the apostle. But the differences in style and vocabulary are not troublesome when one considers that authors often use different vocabulary when addressing different groups and situations. Rather than addressing churches in these letters, Paul was writing to coworkers who were in unique ministry settings. Hence we would expect different vocabulary. Also, the traditional view of the historical situation in which Paul wrote these letters is reasonable and defensible. Therefore, in spite of significant opposition by some scholars, there is a solid basis for accepting the Pastoral Epistles as Pauline.

## Setting

Paul most likely wrote these letters after the time covered in the book of Acts. Acts closes with Paul in prison. Traditionally it has been believed that Paul was released from this imprisonment, then continued his work around the Mediterranean, perhaps even reaching Spain (Rm 15:22-29). During this time, he visited Crete and other places. First Timothy and Titus were written during this period of further mission work. Timothy had been left in Ephesus to handle some problems with false teaching there (1Tm 1:3-4). Titus had been left in Crete after the initial work to set up the church there (Ti 1:5). Eventually Paul was imprisoned again, and this led to his execution. During this final imprisonment, Paul wrote 2 Timothy to request another visit from Timothy and to give final exhortations as he anticipated his martyrdom.

## Special Features

First Timothy, 2 Timothy, and Titus have been referred to as the "Pastoral Epistles" since the eighteenth century. It is reasonable to consider these letters together since they have striking similarities in style, vocabulary, and setting. These letters stand apart from the other Pauline letters because they were the only ones written to Paul's gospel coworkers. The Pastoral Epistles deal with church structure issues and, unlike Paul's other letters, were addressed to men serving in pastoral roles rather than to churches. But we must also recognize these are separate letters with their own distinctives. They were not written primarily to describe church structure or pastoral ministry (contrary to popular opinion), but to teach Christian living in response to the gospel.

## Extended Commentary

### 2 Timothy 1:1-7

1:1-2. What would you say if asked to describe yourself? Paul always saw himself first as a servant or an apostle of Christ Jesus.

Apostle means literally “sent one.” The early church recognized as apostles those leaders with a special call who had seen the resurrected Christ. Paul was always eager to establish his apostleship, not because he desired adoration or special privilege, but because he wanted others to recognize that his authority came not from self-appointment, nor from man’s selection, but by God’s personal choice: by the will of God.

It is possible that, with death so imminent, Paul became more cognizant of the eternal life into which he would enter. Certainly, he understood this promise of life that is in Christ Jesus as experiential to some degree in this present world. But with his approaching execution, he must also have felt the anticipation of seeing Jesus and entering fully into the promise. He must have been aware of standing on the threshold to a blissful existence.

With no expectation that he would be released from prison again, he wrote to Timothy, [his] dear son. This attests to more than spiritual kinship; it announces an intimate and emotional bond. Their love for each other increased over time as they stood together in difficulty and worked in ministry. Paul thought about this young man, now separated from him by distance and prison, and considered him with the affection of a father toward a son.

With these emotions, Paul offered to Timothy grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

1:3. Paul began with thanksgiving. It is important, however, to sift through all the clauses of the sentence in order to arrive at the object of his thankfulness. I thank God... as night and day I constantly remember you in my prayers.

Paul, at the end of life’s journey, offered thanks for this young man of faith. Sitting alone in the chill of a Roman prison, perhaps Paul reflected upon the shared struggles and joys of ministry together. As events replayed in his mind, there stirred within him a thankfulness for Timothy’s loyalty and commitment to Christ. So, with gratitude and concern, even though he knew Timothy’s weaknesses, Paul continued in prayer night and day.

In the middle of his thanksgiving, Paul inserted a personal tribute to his heritage of faith. He probably did this to establish a parallel between himself and Timothy. Later he directed Timothy to consider his own upbringing.

Paul thanked God, whom I serve, as my forefathers did, with a clear conscience. No one could convict Paul of pandering to public opinion, faddish philosophies, or personal ambition. He

served God and no other. The God he served was the same one to whom his ancestors were committed. He drew the line of his faith through previous generations. Paul had not denied his Hebrew heritage by following Jesus Christ; he had fulfilled it (Acts 13:16-33). This he did with a clear conscience, one that was healthy and not diseased by the misinterpretation of Scripture or the hardening of his heart through sin.

1:4. Paul inserted a very personal word to Timothy, one of deep affection. These two men were obviously close companions. They were not afraid to talk about this or to display the emotions of their friendship.

Paul thought back on the last time they saw each other: recalling your tears, I long to see you. Why Timothy shed tears, we can only guess. Perhaps it was the frustration of having to deal with difficulties he felt were beyond his ability to manage; perhaps Paul's leaving left Timothy feeling utterly alone; perhaps it was simply the heartache one feels when a dear friend departs. Whatever the cause, it seems Timothy had a sensitive and tender disposition.

This tenderness in Timothy evoked from Paul a greater desire to see the young man. Like a parent for a child, Paul sensed in Timothy a vulnerability, and he wanted to strengthen him through God—he wanted to see him. But Paul also knew that this relationship was not one-sided. Seeing Timothy would benefit him as well: he would be filled with joy. This joy is a delight that breaks the bonds of circumstances, centering itself in the person of Christ and his people.

1:5. Paul returned to the subject of spiritual heritage as he thought about Timothy: I have been reminded of your sincere faith. He had watched Timothy and worked beside him for years. In Timothy, Paul recognized a genuine faith, one adhering to the teachings of Christ and the apostles, which in turn produced righteous behavior. Proper belief and proper actions are components of sincere faith.

Paul realized that genuine faith had been modeled for Timothy through his family. It was evident in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice. Though true faith cannot be inherited, it can be demonstrated in convincing ways within the context of a family. Even so, each person must entrust himself personally to Jesus Christ. True faith is individually claimed.

Timothy's father was Greek. His mother and grandmother, however, were Jewish (Acts 16:1). Apparently, they had trained Timothy in reading and memorizing Old Testament texts because Paul later remarked how Timothy had from childhood known the holy Scriptures (2 Tim. 3:15). This had proved a good foundation as he developed into faith in Christ. The genuine faith Paul had noted in Timothy's mother and grandmother, he was convinced now lives in you [Timothy].

1:6. Having established Timothy's heritage of belief in God and confirmed his conviction that Timothy shared in this genuine faith, Paul issued a command. For this reason, I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you.

The reason Paul could remind Timothy of God's gift was because Timothy was an authentic believer. The gift of God, which is in you was probably the Holy Spirit. Every genuine believer

receives this gift from God. This is why Paul told Timothy that he was persuaded of his sincere faith. Timothy had this powerful gift within him, enabling him to perform all that God required.

Even so, Timothy must fan into flame the Spirit's power. This is a present-tense verb. It might better be translated "keep fanning." It was not that the Spirit's flame was weak or needed to be alive by human effort but that the Spirit only works in cooperation with those who desire his enablement. We keep fanning the flame by keeping "in step with the Spirit" (Gal. 5:25), by disciplining ourselves in godliness to produce the fruit which is his nature (Gal. 5:22).

1:7. Having confirmed that Timothy possessed this great gift of God's grace, his own Spirit, Paul pointed Timothy toward the boldness that should belong to every believer: For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline.

Timothy, many interpreters surmise, was a man of quiet disposition—a retiring, timid individual who had been thrust into a leadership role for which he had no predilection. The battle against the false teachers was strenuous, leaving Timothy weary, perhaps even questioning what he was doing. It is possible that he was overwhelmed by these circumstances.

But Paul countered our natural tendencies and excuses by directing us to consider this great gift which we all possess—the Spirit of God. Our natural abilities can only supplement what God calls us to do. The important consideration in all of life's challenges and duties is to remember that God's Spirit resides within us. He is the giver of power, love, and self-discipline.

Power is simply enablement to do what God requires. We are never asked to do anything beyond what God gives strength and ability to accomplish. Love is expressed first to God, then to others. It is the distinguishing quality of Christians, this unnatural love, and it comes only as we allow the life of God's Spirit to live through us.

Self-discipline denotes careful, sensible thinking. It is the ability to think clearly with the wisdom and understanding that God imparts. Fear is a driving force in society today. It is the main subject of the evening news, the underlying premise of advertising and marketing. Fear often spawns confused thinking, irrationalities, and misunderstandings. Thoughts and speculations swirl in our mind when fear enters. This is why Christ calls us to healthy, orderly thought processes.

Perhaps we can look at life and realize our need for God's power (*dunamis*). We need the "dynamite" of God's strength in our daily living, to endure and make wise choices, to live in patience, producing goodness (Col. 1:9-14).<sup>1</sup>

## References

1. Larson, Knute, and Max E. Anders. *I & II Thessalonians, I & II Timothy, Titus, Philemon*. Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2000.

## Author Bio

### **Knute Larson (I & II Thessalonians, I & II Timothy, Titus, Philemon)**

Knute Larson coaches pastors and churches, majoring on leadership, pulpit, making changes, and daily grace — drawing on 43 years as a pastor and eight as a pastoral coach.

### **Max Anders (I & II Thessalonians, I & II Timothy, Titus, Philemon)**

Dr. Max Anders is the author of over 25 books, including the bestselling 30 Days to Understanding the Bible, and is the creator and general editor of the 32-volume Holman Bible Commentary series. He has taught on the college and seminary level and is a veteran pastor. Max provides resources and discipleship strategies at [www.maxanders.com](http://www.maxanders.com) to help people grow spiritually.

### **Robby Gallaty (Growing Up)**

In addition to his leadership at Long Hollow Baptist Church, Robby is also the founder of Replicate Ministries and the author of several books, including Growing Up, Firmly Planted, Rediscovering Discipleship, and the LifeWay Bible study Knowing Jesus.

### **Francis Chan (Multiply)**

Francis Chan is the best-selling author of Crazy Love, Forgotten God, Erasing Hell, You and Me Forever and the host of the BASIC.series (Who Is God & We Are Church). Currently, Francis is planting churches in the San Francisco area and recently launched a countrywide discipleship movement called Multiply with David Platt.

### **Mark Beuving (Multiply)**

Mark Beuving is a professor at Eternity Bible College in Southern California, where he lives with his wife and daughters.

### **Bobby Harrington (The Disciple Maker's Handbook)**

Bobby Harrington is the co-founder of discipleship.org and the founding and lead pastor of Harpeth Christian Church (19 years). He is the chairman of the board for the Relational Discipleship Network and the co-author of DiscipleShift, Dedicated: Training Your Children to Trust and Follow Jesus, and Discipleship that Fits. He has been married to Cindy for over 35 years and they have two adult children who are disciples of Jesus.

### **Josh Patrick (The Disciple Maker's Handbook)**

Josh is the Teaching and Discipleship Pastor at Harpeth Christian Church - "the best job in the world," he says. Josh is driven by a desire to help people catch the vision that knowing Jesus is the greatest reality in the universe. In addition to preaching at Harpeth's Sunday worship gatherings, he creates content for discipleship groups, coaches group leaders, and cultivates discipling relationships with men in the church as well as in the community.