

They Be Turned Away From Me: 2 Timothy 1:13-18

Scriptures for Today:

***2 Timothy 1:13-18** Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. 14 That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us. 15 This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me; of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes. 16 The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain: 17 But, when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found me. 18 The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day: and in how many things he ministered unto me at Ephesus, thou knowest very well.*

Introduction

We are back in the book of 2 Timothy which is the 55th book of the bible. 1st and 2nd Timothy are letters written by the Apostle Paul to Timothy, who is also known as Timotheus throughout the New Testament scriptures starting in Acts 16.

Timothy is described by Paul as a minister of God, and a fellowlabourer in the gospel of Jesus Christ. Timothy was someone who was faithful and someone Paul could rely on.

Paul loved Timothy like a son and he's writing these letters to encourage and help him in the ministry at Ephesus where he was serving.

In Paul's first letter, he's giving Timothy instructions on how to have order in the church. Just like we need to have order in this church. We don't want to have chaos and divisions. We don't want to displease God. The same instructions that were written to Timothy are preserved for us to follow today.

Some of those instructions include commands to:

Confront false doctrine.

Establish godly leadership within the church (qualifications of pastors and deacons)

Teach proper conduct in worship, prayer, gender roles, and service.

How to handle widows, elders, discipline, money, and other matters.

All of that was in Paul's 1st letter. Now in his second letter, Paul is charging Timothy to guard the gospel and to finish faithful. To be unashamed and endure hardship even as many turn away.

And remember that all these things that Paul wrote to Timothy are profitable for us today as a church and as individuals. This is the inspired and infallible Word of God.

Recap of 2 Timothy 1:1-12

- Paul opens 2 Timothy by pointing to **the promise of life in Jesus Christ**.
- Paul writes to Timothy as his **dearly beloved son**, showing his deep love and care for him.
- Paul remembered Timothy **night and day in prayer**, showing the importance of praying faithfully for others.
- Timothy had **unfeigned faith** — faith that was real, sincere, and not hypocritical.
- Timothy's faith had been influenced by his grandmother Lois and his mother Eunice, showing the power of **godly generational influence**.
- Paul reminds Timothy to **stir up the gift of God** that was in him.
- Spiritual gifts can become dormant if they are not exercised through Scripture, prayer, service, and preaching the gospel.
- Fear is one of the main things that suppresses service for God.
- God has not given us the spirit of fear, but of **power, love, and a sound mind**.
- Paul tells Timothy not to be ashamed of the Lord or of Paul's imprisonment.
- We serve the One who has **abolished death** and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.
- Paul suffered for preaching the gospel, but he was not ashamed because he knew whom he believed.

You have everything to gain and absolutely nothing to lose by serving God and suffering for him. But if you choose to serve yourself, everything that you gain on this earth will be lost forever. You will lose it all.

As we move into verses 13–18, we see there are two paths that can be taken. Some will choose to turn away, and some will remain faithful. Which one will you choose?

Let's take a look at these next verses...

Verses 13 - 14

2 Timothy 1:13-14 Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. **14** That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us.

Paul is now encouraging Timothy to hold fast the form of sound words which he heard from Paul himself. The phrase **Hold Fast** means to hold tightly, securely. To have a firm grip on something. You're not letting go when you're holding fast. **Sound words** are words that are correct; free from error.

Timothy received the truth of the gospel, he received sound doctrine from Paul. He heard the scriptures since he was a child. Paul is saying don't let go of those sound words.

When you come to church, when you read God's Word, when you listen to preaching, you must make a decision to hold firmly onto those things that you hear and read. You do that in faith and love. Faith is believing what God says without seeing. Once you believe God, hold on to those things that He tells you in His Word.

For example, when God says to flee fornication because your body is a temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you...When He says that you are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit which are God's—and you choose to disobey that direct command—you are not holding fast to sound words. You are letting go of truth and holding onto lies.

Often times we choose to hold fast to other things instead of sound words. We choose music, we choose entertainment, we choose pleasure in all different forms. But why would you want to hold onto something that will never satisfy you? Why hold onto something that is guaranteed to be taken away and will add zero value to your life in the end?

Don't hold fast to other things. Hold fast to sound words, to sound doctrine, hold fast to the truth.

14 That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us.

The good thing that was committed unto Timothy was the truth, the gospel, sound doctrine, and the ministry that he had been entrusted with.

Paul is saying keep, guard, or protect those things. Do not waver from them. And the fact that Paul is telling Timothy this shows us that it is possible for believers to waver in doctrine. It is possible to not hold fast to sound words. That's why it is of the utmost importance for us to be faithful stewards of the truth and of the gospel that was committed to all of us. We do not want to allow false teachings to creep in and corrupt the simplicity that is in Jesus Christ.

That's why there are over 45,000 so-called "Christian" denominations today. Because believers at some point stopped holding fast, they stopped keeping that which was committed unto them. And slowly but surely, man started to add things on top of God's Word.

So how do we keep the good things which are committed unto us? How do we keep the truth, the gospel, sound doctrine? We keep it by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us. We don't keep it by our power. If we were on our own and had to maintain truth, the truth would have long been gone.

Thank God the truth still stands today because the Holy Spirit is the one who keeps truth. God's Word is truth, it's eternal, and it's preserved by His power.

When we quench the Spirit of God our flesh will not keep the good things that are committed to us. The flesh is what gets corrupted and wavers. It is very easy for us to believe false doctrine because we are so man centered.

Most of the time if there is someone who we respect and look up to we can easily go along with everything that they say without checking things for ourselves. That happens all the time. Whether it's your favorite news anchor, a celebrity, or a pastor. The longer that you just go along with things, the further you can get away from the truth. You want to avoid that at all costs.

But the Holy Spirit is the one who keeps the truth. When we quench the Spirit over and over again, we can get to a point where we can turn away from the things of God. I'm not talking about losing salvation because that's impossible. I'm talking about turning away from God in your flesh.

Verse 15

2 Timothy 1:15 This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me; of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes.

So remember earlier in this letter, Paul was telling Timothy to not be ashamed of the testimony of Jesus. To not be ashamed of Paul being a prisoner. *(For example: If one of us was imprisoned for preaching the gospel, would the rest of us be ashamed and act like we never knew that person? Would we run and hide and disassociate from them?)*

Paul wanted Timothy to be a partaker of the afflictions of the gospel. He's encouraging him to hold fast to sound words and to keep the good things committed to him by the Holy Ghost. Paul wanted Timothy to endure and to continue in the things of God. Because many people were turning their backs on Paul and they were turning their backs on Jesus Christ.

"This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me"

For one reason or another, all the believers in Asia turned away from Paul. They were ashamed of him. They did not continue in the things that they were taught. Just like there are many people that we preach the gospel to that do not continue in the things they are taught. Or they might come to church for a short while and then they turn away from us.

In Matthew 13 we see the parable of the Sower. Jesus is describing different types of people that receive or don't receive the word of God.

Matthew 13:20-21 But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; **21** Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.

This individual received the word of God with joy. But as soon as things got difficult—as soon as trials and persecution came in their life because of God's Word—they were offended and they disappear.

A person can receive the gospel, be saved forever, but if they do not hold fast to sound words and if they don't continue in the things they are taught, they will not stand. They will fall away... Not to hell... But to the destruction of the flesh that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

Paul was reminding Timothy, "thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me" Phygellus and Hermogenes were most likely at one point committed to Paul and the work of the church, but it didn't last long.

That will happen here at this church as well. People will come and go. Some will be ashamed of the gospel and allow fear to control them. Some will allow the cares of this world to choke them and they will become unfruitful, but just like Paul encouraged Timothy, I want to encourage you all to continue in the things of God. Don't give up on church, don't give up on Jesus Christ. Don't turn away from Him after everything He's done for you.

When you think about what He went through for us. A sinless man. The all-powerful mighty Creator who humbled himself below EVERYTHING. Think about the worst human being that you could ever imagine. The scum of the earth. Jesus made himself lower than the worst human being that ever existed so that you could have everlasting life.

You have a choice because God doesn't make you serve Him. But when you think about what He did, you should give yourself no other choice but to serve Him. Don't spit in His face, don't turn away, don't go after other things.

Verses 16 – 17

2 Timothy 1:16-17 The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain: **17** But, when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found *me*.

Here we see the opposite of Phygellus and Hermogenes. Onesiphorus was not ashamed of the fact that Paul was imprisoned. Instead of turning away from him, he turned toward Paul and sought him out diligently. He refreshed Paul and encouraged him.

That's how we all need to be as the body of Christ. When someone is in trouble, when someone is hurting, when someone is in need, we should be refreshing one another.

Onesiphorus was a great example of someone who put others before himself. He prioritized serving God above his own needs. When you fear God instead of fearing man it gives you the opportunity to be used greatly by God.

Imagine if everyone here only focused on serving themselves. Then nothing would ever get done. There would be no food to eat after service. We wouldn't have clean bathrooms to use.

We wouldn't have this building to gather in. This church wouldn't even exist if we all just served ourselves. We all need to be more like Onesiphorus and seek after opportunities to serve instead of sitting back and waiting for others to serve us. Or we can be like Phygellus and Hermogenes and completely turn or run away from the things that God called us to. But you don't want to do that.

Look what Paul prayed for because of the faithfulness of Onesiphorus.

"The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain:"

Because He chose to do the right things, to serve God—not turning away—Onesiphorus and his house received mercy. Everyone needs mercy throughout their entire lives. Because we always mess up in our sinful flesh.

If you want to receive mercy in this life, then you should serve others before yourself. Prioritize God and when you do mess up, God will more than likely show you more mercy because He is a good God who loves His children.

2 Timothy 1:18 The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day: and in how many things he ministered unto me at Ephesus, thou knowest very well.

Paul also mentions here how Onesiphorus may find mercy of the Lord in that day. I believe that day is referring to the time when Jesus returns, and every man's work shall be revealed by fire of what sort it is (gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble).

This is not a judgement to determine heaven or hell. This is a judgement that will determine if you receive reward or suffer loss.

Because Onesiphorus ministered unto Paul in many things, he's saying, may he find mercy of the Lord in that day. May he receive great reward and may he suffer the least amount of loss possible. That's what we should all want for each other so that we have an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

In 2 Timothy 1:13-18, We see there are two paths a believer can take after receiving the truth. Timothy was charged to **hold fast** the sound words he had been taught and to **keep** the good thing committed unto him by the Holy Ghost. Paul gives real examples of what happens when people either let go or remain faithful. Phygellus, Hermogenes, and all of Asia turned away from Paul when things became difficult, but Onesiphorus was not ashamed. He sought Paul out diligently, and refreshed him in his affliction.

So this passage brings the issue right down to us: God has committed His Word, His gospel, His doctrine, and His work to us. The question is not whether the truth is worth holding onto—the question is whether we will hold onto it.

Application Questions:

1. What are you holding firmly onto in your life?

Paul told Timothy to hold fast or hold firmly to the sound words which he heard.

We all have a choice to make every day. We can hold fast to the good things that have been committed to us. We can keep those things by the Holy Spirit of God. Or we can hold fast to the things of this world. Ask yourself what am I holding firmly onto that I need to let go of? You can't hold onto the things of God and the things of the world at the same time. It doesn't work.

2. Are you turning away from Jesus?

Paul reminded Timothy of those who were turning away from him. Because of the affliction and bonds that come along with being a servant of God, many chose to walk away from serving the Lord.

You don't want to find yourself in that same position. Be prepared to suffer trials and persecution. Don't be ashamed of Jesus. Don't stop coming to church when things get hard.

3. Are you refreshing your brothers and sisters in Christ?

Onesiphorus did not turn away. He sought after Paul and refreshed him when he was in bondage.

That's something that we should all have a desire to do more of. We need to be more encouraging more helpful, more refreshing to all of our brothers and sisters in Jesus.

4. Are you seeking to serve? Or are you waiting for others to serve you?

Onesiphorus did not wait for Paul to get out of prison. He didn't wait for Paul to come to him. He took the initiative and found Paul. He prioritized serving God before himself. He didn't fear what man could do to him. He was not ashamed of Jesus Christ.

If we all follow that example, and seek to serve others before ourselves, imagine what God could accomplish through us if we all had that mindset.

God has committed something precious to us: His Word, His gospel, sound doctrine, and opportunities to serve Him. What will you do with those things? There are two paths you can take. You can follow Phygellus and Hermogenes and turn away, or you can follow Onesiphorus and be a faithful servant and hold fast to the good things of God. Make that choice. Don't try to be in the middle ground. Let's Pray