

Fanning into the Flame

2 Timothy 1 :1-7

Online Sermon:

http://www.mckeefamily.com/?page_id=3567

From the dark, dreary, cold underground chamber in Rome's Mamertine prison apostle Paul puts to pen what would be his very last communication with the outside world.¹ Though he had been in prison before, flogged severely, had received from the Jews forty lashes minus one, had been beaten with rods and pelted with stones, three times shipwrecked and was constantly in danger of being killed by bandits, Jews and the Gentile people (2 Corinthians 11:21-29); apostle Paul had always been at peace that his promised persecution (Acts 9:15-16) would not lead to his demise! This time was different for his court appointment had been set (2 Timothy 4:16-18)² and in his heart Paul knew that emperor Nero who had the reputation of being exceptionally cruel to believers would not be satisfied until he had severed his head from his body! In this dark

¹ Taken from a YouTube video series "The Mechanics of Expository Preaching by Dr. Steven J. Lawson.

² David Platt, Daniel L. Akin, and Tony Merida, [*Exalting Jesus in 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus*](#) (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2013), 2 Ti 1:1-7.

³ R. Kent Hughes and Bryan Chapell, [*1 & 2 Timothy and Titus: To Guard the Deposit*](#), Preaching the Word (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2000), 168-169.

⁴ Alfred Plummer, "[The Pastoral Epistles](#)," in *The Expositor's Bible: Ephesians to Revelation*, ed. W. Robertson Nicoll, vol. 6, Expositor's Bible (Hartford, CT: S.S. Scranton Co., 1903), 393.

chamber with "a single hole in the ceiling for light and air"³ Paul was incredibly lonely due to most of his friends having abandoned him! Barnabas and John Mark had long left him,⁴



Demas had left him because he loved this world, Crescens had gone to Galatia and Titus to Dalmatia (4:10).⁵ He only had Luke by his side. It near wintertime (4:21)⁶ and from his cold, lonely dungy prison Paul was

faced with the daunting task of writing what would be his last will and testament. While he longed to see many of his Gospel coworkers it was his own true and beloved⁷ child Timothy, the "disciple that whom Paul loved,"⁸ that he most yearned to see and speak truth into his life! It was not just because Paul was instrumental in Timothy's conversion at the tender age of

⁵ R. Kent Hughes and Bryan Chapell, [*1 & 2 Timothy and Titus: To Guard the Deposit*](#), Preaching the Word (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2000), 168-169.

⁶ Taken from a YouTube video series "The Mechanics of Expository Preaching by Dr. Steven J. Lawson.

⁷ Alfred Plummer, "[The Pastoral Epistles](#)," in *The Expositor's Bible: Ephesians to Revelation*, ed. W. Robertson Nicoll, vol. 6, Expositor's Bible (Hartford, CT: S.S. Scranton Co., 1903), 392.

⁸ Alfred Plummer, "[The Pastoral Epistles](#)," in *The Expositor's Bible: Ephesians to Revelation*, ed. W. Robertson Nicoll, vol. 6, Expositor's Bible (Hartford, CT: S.S. Scranton Co., 1903), 392.

fifteen⁹ or the fact that Timothy co-authored so many of his letters;¹⁰ but the fact that he had no one like Timothy whom he trusted to handle the most delicate and confidential missions and because he always put the interests of Jesus Christ first in his life (Philippians 2:20-24).

As his spiritual father Paul trusted his son Timothy with what was most sacred, taking his place in proclaiming and defending the Gospel message!

In the face of great heresy Paul knew Timothy was tiring out so despite his own bleak circumstances Paul wrote the words of encouragement that his son desperately needed to hear to fan the flames of his dedication to the Lord!

Reflection: Do you often feel like the ministry God has called you too is so difficult that you are getting worn out? Would you like to be mightily used in God’s kingdom to do good deeds that point to God the Father in heaven? Do you have a spiritual mentor and are you mentoring someone else so that

⁹ Alfred Plummer, [“The Pastoral Epistles,”](#) in *The Expositor’s Bible: Ephesians to Revelation*, ed. W. Robertson Nicoll, vol. 6, Expositor’s Bible (Hartford, CT: S.S. Scranton Co., 1903), 392.

¹⁰ Mark Allen Powell, “Introducing the New Testament: A Historical, Literary, and Theological Survey (Grand Rapids, MI, Baker Academic), 401.

¹¹ John R. W. Stott, [Guard the Gospel the Message of 2 Timothy](#), The Bible Speaks Today (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1973), 24.

they might benefit from your grace, mercy, love, and wisdom that you have acquired from the Holy Spirit?

The Writer

“Paul, and apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, in keeping with the promise of life that is in Christ Jesus” (1)

In great humiliation by men and lying in the dark, cold prison¹¹ Paul begins his last will and testament to his son Timothy and the church by reminding them of the supremacy of the Gospel message.¹² Paul states that the words given in



his letter comes to them with the authority of a divinely inspired apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ!¹³ His apostleship was not based on self-appointment, “personal qualifications, political skill, or other purely

immanent factors”¹⁴ but was based solely on the will of God who set him apart and called him by grace to reveal the

¹² David Platt, Daniel L. Akin, and Tony Merida, [Exalting Jesus in 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus](#) (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2013), 2 Ti 1:1–7.

¹³ David Platt, Daniel L. Akin, and Tony Merida, [Exalting Jesus in 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus](#) (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2013), 2 Ti 1:1.

¹⁴ Robert W. Yarbrough, [The Letters to Timothy and Titus](#), ed. D. A. Carson, Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; London: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company; Apollos, 2018), 348.

Gospel message to the Gentiles (Romans 11:13; Galatians 1:15, 16).¹⁵ Although he considered himself the “least of the apostles,” due to having earlier in his life persecuted the church (1 Corinthians 15:9), the truth remained that Paul was “in the camp of the twelve apostles” whom God had appointed with authority to speak divine truth.

The church of Ephesus where Timothy was pastoring¹⁶ at was “under siege from heretics”¹⁷ which spurred apostle Paul to boldly state his last will and testament was that Timothy would “fill his immense Gospel sandals”¹⁸ and preach in keeping with the promise of life that is in Christ Jesus (1:1).

The heart of the Gospel message is in the person of Jesus Christ who “abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel (1:10).”¹⁹ Jesus Christ is the only

¹⁵ John R. W. Stott, [Guard the Gospel the Message of 2 Timothy](#), The Bible Speaks Today (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1973), 24.

¹⁶ R. Kent Hughes and Bryan Chapell, [1 & 2 Timothy and Titus: To Guard the Deposit](#), Preaching the Word (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2000), 168–169.

¹⁷ R. Kent Hughes and Bryan Chapell, [1 & 2 Timothy and Titus: To Guard the Deposit](#), Preaching the Word (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2000), 170.

¹⁸ R. Kent Hughes and Bryan Chapell, [1 & 2 Timothy and Titus: To Guard the Deposit](#), Preaching the Word (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2000), 170.

¹⁹ David Platt, Daniel L. Akin, and Tony Merida, [Exalting Jesus in 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus](#) (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2013), 2 Ti 1:1.

way, truth, and life” (John 14:6) and as such the only source of a person being born again and eternally adopted into God’s family as heirs! The loyalty²⁰ and faith Paul has in Jesus was so intense that his last wish upon this earth was that Timothy, his son, might take over for him and “guard, suffer for, continue in, and proclaim the Gospel message”²¹ lest in a single generation and amid so many Romans gods²² the truth might become lost in a sea of indifference or become outright rejected by the many.

The Recipient

“To Timothy, my dear son: Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.” (2)

While apostle Paul’s last will and testament was written as “an open letter” to the church of Ephesus²³ his primary focus was to encourage his true son Timothy in the

²⁰ Gordon D. Fee, [1 and 2 Timothy, Titus](#), Understanding the Bible Commentary Series (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2011), 219.

²¹ David Platt, Daniel L. Akin, and Tony Merida, [Exalting Jesus in 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus](#) (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2013), 2 Ti 1:1–7.

²² Ray Van Neste, “1–2 Timothy, Titus,” in *The Baker Illustrated Bible Background Commentary*, ed. J. Scott Duvall and J. Daniel Hays (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2020), 1206.

²³ Craig S. Keener, [The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament](#) (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 1 Ti 1:2.

faith. While it was not uncommon for rabbis and philosophers of antiquity to call their disciples sons,²⁴ there are other many other possible reasons why Paul calls Timothy his son. First,



calling him his “true son” “legitimizes”²⁵ in the eyes of the church that Timothy was to be treated as one who was about to fill the immense gospel sandals of apostle. Second, it is an expression of affection that often

comes from an older man mentoring a younger one!²⁶ Third, since Timothy embraced the Good News and was converted during Paul’s visit to Lystra on his first missionary journey he likely saw Timothy as his “spiritual son.”²⁷ Fourth, to the church of Philippi Paul calls himself Timothy’s father because

²⁴ Ray Van Neste, “1–2 Timothy, Titus,” in *The Baker Illustrated Bible Background Commentary*, ed. J. Scott Duvall and J. Daniel Hays (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2020), 1206.

²⁵ I. Howard Marshall and Philip H. Towner, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, International Critical Commentary (London; New York: T&T Clark International, 2004), 686.

²⁶ I. Howard Marshall and Philip H. Towner, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, International Critical Commentary (London; New York: T&T Clark International, 2004), 686.

²⁷ John R. W. Stott, *Guard the Gospel the Message of 2 Timothy*, The Bible Speaks Today (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1973), 26.

he did not look at his own interests but instead was jointly shared²⁸ with Paul the often intense and exasperating but critical and joyful work of the Gospel message (Philippians 2:20-21).²⁹ And finally, since the word “true” in ancient times can also refer to a “natural child”³⁰ it is possible and dare I say likely that apostle Paul saw Timothy, while not of his flesh and blood, nevertheless his child.

*No matter what meaning one assigns to apostle Paul’s addressing Timothy as his son, there is no doubt that Paul carries Timothy in his heart, for Paul is truly Timothy’s guide, mentor, teacher, supporter and above all his spiritual father.*³¹

From his cold and lonely prison, the thought of his beloved young disciple so greatly warmed his heart that he “penned his often-given triple blessing”³² to his son Timothy of “grace,

²⁸ Robert W. Yarbrough, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, ed. D. A. Carson, Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; London: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company; Apollos, 2018), 349.

²⁹ David Platt, Daniel L. Akin, and Tony Merida, *Exalting Jesus in 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus* (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2013), 2 Ti 1:2–7.

³⁰ Clinton E. Arnold, *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary: Romans to Philemon*, vol. 3 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), 449.

³¹ Taken from a YouTube video series “The Mechanics of Expository Preaching by Dr. Steven J. Lawson.

³² R. Kent Hughes and Bryan Chapell, *1 & 2 Timothy and Titus: To Guard the Deposit*, Preaching the Word (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2000), 170–171.

mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord” (1:2). While this was Paul’s usual greeting³³ in this letter it was also meant to be profound words of a spiritual father to his dear son. In the face of heretical factions and persecutions that were threatening the Gospel message in the church Paul prays that his son might receive supernatural divine grace that only God can give and mercy and God’s healing balm for his soul so that he might face his ministry challenges and disappointments with the power and peace of God that surpasses all understanding!³⁴

A Message of Thanksgiving

“I thank God, whom I serve, as my ancestors did, with a clear conscience, as night and day I constantly remember you in my prayers. Recalling your tears, I long to see you, so that I may be filled with joy. I am reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you.” (3-5)

³³ George W. Knight, [The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text](#), New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Carlisle, England: W.B. Eerdmans; Paternoster Press, 1992), 365.

³⁴ Taken from a YouTube video series “The Mechanics of Expository Preaching by Dr. Steven J. Lawson.

³⁵ Chris Green, [2 Timothy: Finishing the Race](#), ed. Paul Barnett, Reading the Bible Today Series (Sydney, South NSW: Aquila Press, 2013), 55.

To his dear son Timothy who was struggling to withstand onslaught of heretical teachings and persecution that would make any person crumble in frustration, fear, and grief;³⁵ Paul thanks God that Timothy will prevail in defending and passing the Gospel message down to the next generation.

Though this seems like an impossible calling Paul tenderly reminds his son Timothy that though he was on “trial for holding to a new and illegal religion”³⁶ in Rome’s eyes, he thanked God that his conscience was clear for ever since his calling on the road to Damascus he fought the good fight (4:7) and joined in the service of his Jewish fathers³⁷ by preaching the Messiah as the fulfillment of all Jewish hopes.³⁸

To help him in this fight Paul tells his son that he is the recipient of intercessory prayer that was continuous (1

³⁶ Chris Green, [2 Timothy: Finishing the Race](#), ed. Paul Barnett, Reading the Bible Today Series (Sydney, South NSW: Aquila Press, 2013), 54.

³⁷ Clinton E. Arnold, [Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary: Romans to Philemon](#), vol. 3 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), 481–482.

³⁸ Chris Green, [2 Timothy: Finishing the Race](#), ed. Paul Barnett, Reading the Bible Today Series (Sydney, South NSW: Aquila Press, 2013), 54.

Thessalonians 5:17), literally every minute³⁹ for even when he was asleep Paul relied on the Spirit to intercede for Timothy with “groans that words cannot express” (Romans 8:26)!⁴⁰ With intensely personal⁴¹ and an emotionally tender heart⁴²



Paul says he remembers Timothy’s tears when they said farewell in Macedonia, in Miletus (Acts 20:37),⁴³ when he was taken off to the prison in Rome⁴⁴ and now in his spiritual testing.⁴⁵

With great empathy Paul says how much he longs to meet his son again so that he might be filled with joy, for his love for his

son Timothy was boundless! In the meantime, though he faced a ruthless regime bent on instituting terror⁴⁶ amongst his dwindling churches who were in turn starting to question his leadership,⁴⁷ Paul knows his son Timothy can do his part in ensuring the continuity of the Gospel message for his faith is strong!⁴⁸ Though his father was Greek and likely an idolater, Paul reminded his son that the faith that penetrated the heart and will, fears and hopes, love and desires, joy and passions of both his mother and grandmother now lived within him!⁴⁹ Since both of these mighty women were likely long passed away, getting his son Timothy to recall such pious persons⁵⁰ in his life would have greatly encouraged him to join Paul, in keeping on fighting the good fight in faith that the risen Savior would continue to protect His own!

³⁹ R. Kent Hughes and Bryan Chapell, [1 & 2 Timothy and Titus: To Guard the Deposit](#), Preaching the Word (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2000), 171.

⁴⁰ R. Kent Hughes and Bryan Chapell, [1 & 2 Timothy and Titus: To Guard the Deposit](#), Preaching the Word (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2000), 172.

⁴¹ Robert W. Yarbrough, [The Letters to Timothy and Titus](#), ed. D. A. Carson, Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; London: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company; Apollos, 2018), 352.

⁴² Ralph Earle, [“2 Timothy,”](#) in *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Ephesians through Philemon*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelain, vol. 11 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1981), 394.

⁴³ John D. Barry et al., [Faithlife Study Bible](#) (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2012, 2016), 2 Ti 1:4.

⁴⁴ David Platt, Daniel L. Akin, and Tony Merida, [Exalting Jesus in 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus](#) (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2013), 2 Ti 1:2–7.

⁴⁵ Robert W. Wall, [“2 Timothy,”](#) in *The Bible Knowledge Background Commentary: Acts–Philemon*, ed. Craig A. Evans and Craig A. Bubeck, First Edition. (Colorado Springs, CO: David C Cook, 2004), 664.

⁴⁶ Chris Green, [2 Timothy: Finishing the Race](#), ed. Paul Barnett, Reading the Bible Today Series (Sydney, South NSW: Aquila Press, 2013), 55.

⁴⁷ Chris Green, [2 Timothy: Finishing the Race](#), ed. Paul Barnett, Reading the Bible Today Series (Sydney, South NSW: Aquila Press, 2013), 55.

⁴⁸ Jay Twomey, [The Pastoral Epistles through the Centuries](#), ed. John Sawyer et al., Blackwell Bible Commentaries (Malden, MA; Oxford; Chichester, West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 115.

⁴⁹ R. Kent Hughes and Bryan Chapell, [1 & 2 Timothy and Titus: To Guard the Deposit](#), Preaching the Word (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2000), 173.

⁵⁰ Jay Twomey, [The Pastoral Epistles through the Centuries](#), ed. John Sawyer et al., Blackwell Bible Commentaries (Malden, MA; Oxford; Chichester, West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 116.

Reflection. Are you teaching your kids the Scriptures? Do they see in you, mom, or dad, a “sincere faith” in Christ?⁵¹ Do you feel like your body has been broken with age to such an extent that you believe you can no longer faithfully serve God? If so, then Paul ought to come to your attention for no matter how crippled your body might be or dire and dreary the circumstances you might face you can always pray and with the faith of a tiny mustard seed move mighty mountains in God’s kingdom. Do you believe this to be true? Are you struggling with the call God has for your life? Despite having the Holy Spirit living inside of you are you struggling to see beyond your natural abilities and see the divine fruit God wants you to bear?

The Message to Fan the Flame

“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 the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline.” (6-7)

⁵¹ David Platt, Daniel L. Akin, and Tony Merida, [Exalting Jesus in 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus](#) (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2013), 2 Ti 1:2–7.

⁵² David Platt, Daniel L. Akin, and Tony Merida, [Exalting Jesus in 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus](#) (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2013), 2 Ti 1:2–7.

⁵³ Chris Green, [2 Timothy: Finishing the Race](#), ed. Paul Barnett, Reading the Bible Today Series (Sydney, South NSW: Aquila Press, 2013), 57–58.

⁵⁴ Taken from a YouTube video series “The Mechanics of Expository Preaching by Dr. Steven J. Lawson.

In the face of persecution from heretical leaders while battling his own physical weaknesses (1 Timothy 5:23), timidity (1:7) and lack of spiritual maturity that often comes



from being so young (1 Timothy 4:12);⁵² Timothy had become so “depressed and demoralized”⁵³ that his passion for ministry had “cooled off”⁵⁴ and was likely thinking about abandoning his calling altogether!⁵⁵ From his dark, dreary prison Paul knew all too well how easily the burdens of ministry could wear away at one’s soul. To overcome the sense of cowardice that had overwhelmed his soul⁵⁶ Paul tells his son to fan into the flame the gift of God which he had received through the laying on hands. He reminds his protégé⁵⁷ that God provided him a mentor, gave him a God-fearing mother and grandmother to teach him and above all God indwelt

⁵⁵ Ray Van Neste, [“1–2 Timothy, Titus,”](#) in *The Baker Illustrated Bible Background Commentary*, ed. J. Scott Duvall and J. Daniel Hays (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2020), 1213.

⁵⁶ Chris Green, [2 Timothy: Finishing the Race](#), ed. Paul Barnett, Reading the Bible Today Series (Sydney, South NSW: Aquila Press, 2013), 56.

⁵⁷ Jay Twomey, [The Pastoral Epistles through the Centuries](#), ed. John Sawyer et al., Blackwell Bible Commentaries (Malden, MA; Oxford; Chichester, West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 120.

him with the Holy Spirit⁵⁸ who has granted him the spiritual gifts and power needed to fulfill his ministry calling!⁵⁹ Though his passion for ministry had dwindled to merely embers it would become vibrant again⁶⁰ the moment his son intentionally gives fuel to the fire through faithfully embracing his God-given giftedness for ministry!⁶¹ To fan into the flame the gift of God his response of being persecuted by the Romans and the heretical leaders that have infiltrated the church cannot be one of fear,⁶² which is the opposite of faith,⁶³ but a complete reliance on the Holy Spirit who gives His own power, love, and self-discipline. Though Timothy was tempted to disqualify himself from his God-ordained ministry because of his shyness, physical weakness, and youth;⁶⁴ he must remember that it is precisely those who are “unusually dependent on Christ” that His power is perfected in their weakness.⁶⁵

⁵⁸ David Platt, Daniel L. Akin, and Tony Merida, [Exalting Jesus in 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus](#) (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2013), 2 Ti 1:2–7.

⁵⁹ David Platt, Daniel L. Akin, and Tony Merida, [Exalting Jesus in 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus](#) (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2013), 2 Ti 1:2–7.

⁶⁰ John R. W. Stott, [Guard the Gospel the Message of 2 Timothy](#), The Bible Speaks Today (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1973), 30.

⁶¹ R. Kent Hughes and Bryan Chapell, [1 & 2 Timothy and Titus: To Guard the Deposit](#), Preaching the Word (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2000), 174.

⁶² Taken from a YouTube video series “The Mechanics of Expository Preaching by Dr. Steven J. Lawson.

⁶³ I. Howard Marshall and Philip H. Towner, [A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles](#), International Critical Commentary (London; New York: T&T Clark International, 2004), 699.

In response to the aggressive false teachers and Roman persecutors who are trying to create within him a fearful soul⁶⁶ Paul says to embrace the love of the Spirit who will enable him to drive out the fear (1 John 4:18), stand tall and persevere.⁶⁷

To be effective in ministry requires levelheadedness and self-discipline⁶⁸ and thankfully Paul says his son the Holy Spirit has granted all this and so much more.

With tenderness and compassion Paul is telling his beloved son Timothy that because of the Holy Spirit he can fan the flames of his passion and accomplish the mission God has assigned him!

⁶⁴ David Platt, Daniel L. Akin, and Tony Merida, [Exalting Jesus in 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus](#) (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2013), 2 Ti 1:2–7.

⁶⁵ R. Kent Hughes and Bryan Chapell, [1 & 2 Timothy and Titus: To Guard the Deposit](#), Preaching the Word (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2000), 174.

⁶⁶ Chris Green, [2 Timothy: Finishing the Race](#), ed. Paul Barnett, Reading the Bible Today Series (Sydney, South NSW: Aquila Press, 2013), 57.

⁶⁷ A.T. Robertson, [Word Pictures in the New Testament](#) (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1933), 2 Ti 1:7.

⁶⁸ R. Kent Hughes and Bryan Chapell, [1 & 2 Timothy and Titus: To Guard the Deposit](#), Preaching the Word (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2000), 175.

Reflection. Have you become timid of the opposers of ministry in your life? Are you using your gifts passionately to serve God in whatever divine task He has assigned to you? Are you resting on His promises, relying on His power and love to make His strength perfect in your weaknesses? Do you know of someone in ministry who is about to give up and needs to be encouraged, and if so, have you spent any time encouraging them?

Conclusion

From the dark, dreary, cold underground chamber in Rome's Mamertine prison apostle Paul wrote what would be his last communication to the outside world. While there were



many people Paul loved it was to his son Timothy that he would write his last will and testament. Facing imminent death at the hands of Nero, Paul knew what it was like to be tempted to give into the fear of persecution and become so depressed that

the flame of one's ministry becomes but mere embers!

Timothy like so many of believers today need to be encouraged that despite our weaknesses in temperaments, physical abilities, and often lack of wisdom the Lord's grace is sufficient for us,

for His power is made perfect in our weakness. Like Timothy we often struggle to withstand the onslaught of heretical teachings especially when they infiltrate the church. In response we are not to have a spirit of fear or timidity but one that rejoices in the truth that He who asks us to serve in His kingdom grants us the power, love, and self-discipline to be effective in the ministry assigned to us! While it would be easier to be a coward and run away from what God wants us to do, we are to intentionally ask for sanctifying, strengthening grace to sustain us by our sincere faith in the Lord, Jesus Christ. In remembering the tears wiped from our eyes by the Spirit of God when the obstacles of ministry overwhelmed us, let this compel us to be like apostle Paul and come alongside fellow believers and share with them the comfort we have received from the Lord. It is not easy to serve God while living in a world that is not our home but it is possible to do so with passion and joy when we invite the Spirit to fan into the flame the gift of God! Amen!