

NOON BIBLE STUDY: 2 TIMOTHY 1 (PART 2)

AS WE BEGAN TO READ PAUL'S SECOND LETTER TO TIMOTHY WE NOTED A STARK CONTRAST IN TONE FROM THE FIRST LETTER. PAUL IS IN HIS SECOND IMPRISONMENT AND AT THE END OF HIS LIFE. IT APPEARS THAT TIMOTHY IS NOT ONLY PAUL'S APPRENTICE, BUT ALSO HIS SUCCESSOR IN MANY WAYS. AT THIS POINT IN THEIR JOURNEY, PAUL IS NOT ONLY CONCERNED ABOUT TIMOTHY'S PROGRESS IN SETTING UP AND SHEPHERDING CHURCHES - HE IS CONCERNED ABOUT THE CONTINUANCE OF THE GOSPEL MESSAGE ITSELF. WE'RE READING PAUL'S LAST WORDS.

2 TIMOTHY 1:13-14 - TIMOTHY'S FIRST ASSIGNMENT

PAUL STARTED HIS SECOND LETTER WITH AN APPEAL TO TIMOTHY FILLED WITH PERSONAL ENCOURAGEMENT AND NOW HE BEGINS TO SPEAK TO HIM ON THE IMPORTANT WORK REQUIRED AT THIS IMPORTANT TIME. HE GIVES HIM A TWO FOLD ASSIGNMENT:

1 - RETAIN THE STANDARD OF SOUND WORDS

RETAIN THE STANDARD - THE LANGUAGE HERE SPEAKS TO TIMOTHY KEEPING TO THE EXAMPLE THAT PAUL GAVE HIM. THE WORD USED HERE FOR "STANDARD" WAS USED BY PAUL IN 1 TIMOTHY 1:16 WHERE PAUL SAYS HE IS AN "EXAMPLE" OF WHAT THE MERCY OF JESUS CHRIST LOOKS LIKE. PAUL HAS MODELED IN HIS LIFE AND TEACHING THE WAY OF CHRIST. TIMOTHY NEEDS TO KEEP FOLLOWING THIS OUTLINE AND MODEL.

SOUND WORDS - THE WORDS THAT TIMOTHY MUST FOLLOW ARE THE WORDS HE HEARD FROM PAUL. THE PHRASE "SOUND" IS RELATED TO MEDICINE AND RELATES TO BEING HEALTHY OR WHOLE. PAUL'S TEACHING IS HEALTHY AND HEALING WHICH LEADS TO HEALED HEARTS AND WHOLESOME LIVING. THE WORDS OF THE FALSE TEACHERS AND THOSE DEPARTING FROM PAUL'S OUTLINE/MODEL WOULD THEN BE SICK, UNHEALTHY, HURTFUL, DAMAGING, ETC.

IN THE FAITH AND LOVE WHICH ARE IN CHRIST JESUS - AS TIMOTHY FOLLOWS PAUL'S TEACHING AND EXAMPLE, HE IS TO DO SO MAINTAINING FAITH AND LOVE. IF HE DOESN'T, HIS OWN MINISTRY WILL BE INVALID. IF YOU REMEMBER IN PAUL'S FIRST LETTER, HE CONTRASTED THE FRUIT OF THE FALSE TEACHERS WITH THE END GOAL AND RESULTS OF HIS TEACHING -

"BUT THE GOAL OF OUR INSTRUCTION IS LOVE FROM A PURE HEART AND A GOOD CONSCIENCE AND A SINCERE FAITH. (1 TIMOTHY 1:5)"

2 - GUARD THE TREASURE (WITH THE HELP OF THE HOLY SPIRIT)

GUARD - "THE VERB (*phylasseō*) MEANS TO GUARD SOMETHING SO THAT IT IS NOT LOST OR DAMAGED. IT IS USED OF GUARDING A PALACE AGAINST MARAUDERS AND POSSESSIONS AGAINST THIEVES" (STOTT, PAGE 29)

ENTRUSTED TREASURE - THE WORD "TREASURE" (NASB) IS THE NOUN FORM OF THE WORD GOOD AND IT IS LINKED TO THE WORD TRANSLATED "ENTRUSTED" GIVING US THE PICTURE OF A GOOD/BEAUTIFUL DEPOSIT THAT HAS BEEN MADE IN TIMOTHY. YOU DEPOSIT SOMETHING VALUABLE AT A BANK THAT YOU EXPECT THE BANK TO KEEP SAFE AGAINST ROBBERS OR THIEVES.

"THE GOSPEL IS A TREASURE - A GOOD, NOBLE AND PRECIOUS TREASURE - DEPOSITED FOR SAFE KEEPING WITHIN THE CHURCH. CHRIST HAS ENTRUSTED IT TO PAUL, AND PAUL NOW ENTRUSTS IT TO TIMOTHY (STOTT, PAGE 29)."

TIMOTHY IS NOT A DISTRACTED AND OUT OF SHAPE SECURITY GUARD WITH ONLY A SEGWAY AND A WALKIE TALKIE - THE SPIRIT OF GOD IS AT WORK TO HELP TIMOTHY PROTECT THIS TREASURE.

PAUL APPEALS TO TIMOTHY TO KEEP GUARD OF WHAT HAS BEEN ENTRUSTED - AN IMPORTANT TASK COMING FROM A MAN WHO IS LITERALLY LOCKED UP AND UNDER GUARD AS HE WRITES THESE WORDS.

ACTS 19:1-10, 11-20 - PAUL'S THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY

PAUL IN ASIA FOR 2 YEARS - EVERYONE IN ASIA (AKA "ASIA MINOR", ROMAN PROVINCE) HEARD THE GOSPEL! EPHESUS WAS ONE OF THE MAJOR CITIES OF ASIA, AND THE FOURTH LARGEST CITY IN THE ROMAN EMPIRE AND BECAME HOME TO A THRIVING CHRISTIAN CHURCH. THE GOSPEL MESSAGE WAS POSSIBLY FIRST PROCLAIMED THERE BY APOLLOS WITH HELP FROM PRISCILLA AND ACQUILLA (ACTS 18:18-28) AND PAUL CAME THROUGH SOON AFTER AND WORKED WITH A SMALL GROUP OF DISCIPLES TO PROCLAIM AND DEMONSTRATE THE POWER OF GOD IN A POWERFUL WAY.

PAUL WAS CONCERNED ABOUT THE FUTURE OF THIS REGION EVEN BEFORE HE WAS ARRESTED THE FIRST TIME AND SAID AS MUCH WHEN HE CALLED FOR A GATHERING OF THE LEADERS FROM EPHESUS:

ACTS 20:17-38 - PAUL MEETS WITH EPHESIAN ELDERS

Q - WHAT WAS PAUL'S CONCERN?

WE BEGIN TO SEE A THREAT TO THE CHURCHES OF THIS REGION RELATING TO FALSE TEACHING AND MOVING AWAY FROM THE GOSPEL WHICH PAUL PROCLAIMED. HE CHALLENGES THE LEADERS OF EPHESUS TO BE ON GUARD AND ON THE ALERT FOR THEMSELVES AND THEIR PEOPLE. THIS MAY HAVE BEEN AROUND 57 AD. 2 TIMOTHY WAS WRITTEN BETWEEN 64-67 AD.

2 TIMOTHY 1:15-18 - THINGS HAVE CHANGED

PAUL'S MINISTRY IN ASIA WAS VERY EFFECTIVE AND PRESUMABLY PAUL HAD SIGNIFICANT RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER CHRISTIANS IN THAT REGION. AND YET AT THIS TIME IN HIS LIFE AND MINISTRY, THE CHRISTIANS OF THE PROVINCE OF ASIA HAD "TURNED AWAY FROM (HIM)." (V. 15). HAVE THEY TURNED AWAY FROM PAUL BECAUSE HE IS IN PRISON? HAVE THEY TURNED AWAY FROM PAUL'S TEACHING? HAVE THEY TURNED FROM CHRIST? WE DON'T HAVE THE SPECIFIC DETAILS FROM PAUL IN THIS SECTION, BUT WE DO GRIEVE THAT THE FAITHFUL APOSTLE IS IN PRISON AND REMARKS TO TIMOTHY "YOU ARE AWARE OF THE FACT THAT ALL WHO ARE IN ASIA TURNED AWAY FROM ME."

AND THEN HE MENTIONS TWO PEOPLE SPECIFICALLY - PHYGELUS AND HERMOGENES. THESE MAY HAVE BEEN LEADERS OF THE GROUP THAT TURNED AWAY OR MAYBE TWO OF PAUL'S FELLOW WORKERS WHO TURNED AWAY. WHAT A HEART BREAKING MOMENT FOR PAUL.

AT THE MOMENT THE FATE OF THE ASIA/EPHESIAN CHURCH IS CONCERNING. POTENTIAL LEADERS ARE NOT RETAINING THE STANDARD AND SOUND WORDS OF PAUL NOR GUARDING THE TREASURE THAT IS THE GOSPEL - THAT'S WHY PAUL IS WRITING THIS LETTER. PHYGELUS AND HERMOGENES HAVE TURNED AWAY FROM PAUL - TIMOTHY, LIKELY UNDER GREAT PRESSURE IN THESE DAYS, CANNOT.

THERE IS A THIRD PERSON MENTIONED IN THIS SECTION, AND IN A VERY DIFFERENT CONTEXT AS PHYGELUS AND HERMOGENES - ONESIPHORUS.

WE LEARN A FEW THINGS ABOUT THE CHARACTER AND ACTIONS OF ONESIPHORUS. CONSIDER THE DESCRIPTION OF THIS MAN:

- 1 - OFTEN REFRESHED
- 2 - NOT ASHAMED OF PAUL'S CHAINS
- 3 - EAGERLY SEARCHED FOR ME AND FOUND ME
- 4 - RENDERED SERVICES IN EPHEBUS

1 - OFTEN REFRESHED - MORE THAN ONCE. TO REFRESH SOMEONE IS TO HELP THEM RECOVER AND CATCH THEIR BREATH AGAIN.

2 - NOT ASHAMED OF PAUL'S CHAINS - OTHER TURNED AWAY, ONESIPHORUS DID NOT. HE WASN'T EMBARRASSED BY PAUL, NOR DID HE INTERPRET PAUL'S ARREST AS A MINISTRY FAILURE.

3 - EAGERLY SEARCHED - TWO WONDERFUL WORDS HERE - EAGERLY AND SEARCHED. HERE'S HOW THE NLT TRANSLATES THIS VERSE: "WHEN HE CAME TO ROME, HE SEARCHED EVERYWHERE UNTIL HE FOUND ME." THAT'S A BEAUTIFUL PICTURE OF FRIENDSHIP. IT'S VERY EASY TO GIVE UP WHEN IT DOESN'T WORK OUT THE FIRST TIME, YET ONESIPHORUS LOOKED ALL OVER ROME AND IN THE DUNGEON PRISONS OF ROME UNTIL HE FOUND PAUL.

4 - RENDERED SERVICES IN EPHEBUS - THIS ISN'T THE FIRST TIME THAT ONESIPHORUS HAS BEEN A BLESSING. THIS SEEMS TO BE A PATTERN OF LIFE FOR HIM AND HIS FAMILY.

WE HAVE QUITE THE CONTRAST HERE BETWEEN PHYGELUS AND HERMOGENES AND ONESIPHORUS.

FRIENDSHIP, LOYALTY, LOVE AND THE EMBODIMENT OF JESUS' FOUNDATIONAL COMMAND: "IN EVERYTHING, THEREFORE, TREAT PEOPLE THE SAME WAY YOU WANT THEM TO TREAT YOU, FOR THIS IS THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS (**MATTHEW 7:12**)."

THE DEVOTION AND LOVE OF ONESIPHORUS LEADS PAUL TO PRAY FOR HIM (AND HIS HOUSEHOLD) TWICE IN THIS SECTION - THAT THE LORD WOULD BE MERCIFUL TO HIM.

THIS REMINDS ME OF JESUS' TEACHING IN MATTHEW 25. MATTHEW 24 OUTLINES JESUS' MOST EXTENSIVE TEACHING ON THE SIGNS OF HIS COMING AND THE END OF THE AGE AND MATTHEW 25 GIVES THE SECOND HALF OF JESUS' TEACHING FROM THE MOUNT OF OLIVES - GUIDANCE ON HOW TO BE READY AND PREPARED FOR THOSE PERILOUS TIMES. THE SECTION ENDS WITH THE PARABLE OF SHEEP AND GOATS, SEPARATED BY A SHEPHERD.

MATTHEW 25:31-46 - "BUT WHEN THE SON OF MAN COMES IN HIS GLORY, AND ALL THE ANGELS WITH HIM, THEN HE WILL SIT ON HIS GLORIOUS THRONE. 32 "ALL THE NATIONS WILL BE GATHERED BEFORE HIM; AND HE WILL SEPARATE THEM FROM ONE ANOTHER, AS THE SHEPHERD SEPARATES THE SHEEP FROM THE GOATS; 33 AND HE WILL PUT THE SHEEP ON HIS RIGHT, AND THE GOATS ON THE LEFT.

34 "THEN THE KING WILL SAY TO THOSE ON HIS RIGHT, 'COME, YOU WHO ARE BLESSED OF MY FATHER, INHERIT THE KINGDOM PREPARED FOR YOU FROM THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD. 35 'FOR I WAS HUNGRY, AND YOU GAVE ME SOMETHING TO EAT; I WAS THIRSTY, AND YOU GAVE ME SOMETHING TO DRINK; I WAS A STRANGER, AND YOU INVITED ME IN; 36 NAKED, AND YOU CLOTHED ME; I WAS SICK, AND YOU VISITED ME; I WAS IN PRISON, AND YOU CAME TO ME.'

37 "THEN THE RIGHTEOUS WILL ANSWER HIM, 'LORD, WHEN DID WE SEE YOU HUNGRY, AND FEED YOU, OR THIRSTY, AND GIVE YOU SOMETHING TO DRINK? 38 'AND WHEN DID WE SEE YOU A STRANGER, AND INVITE YOU IN, OR NAKED, AND CLOTHE YOU? 39 'WHEN DID WE SEE YOU SICK, OR IN PRISON, AND COME TO YOU?' 40 "THE KING WILL ANSWER AND SAY TO THEM, 'TRULY I SAY TO YOU, TO THE EXTENT THAT YOU DID IT TO ONE OF THESE BROTHERS OF MINE, EVEN THE LEAST OF THEM, YOU DID IT TO ME.'

41 "THEN HE WILL ALSO SAY TO THOSE ON HIS LEFT, 'DEPART FROM ME, ACCURSED ONES, INTO THE ETERNAL FIRE WHICH HAS BEEN PREPARED FOR THE DEVIL AND HIS ANGELS; 42 FOR I WAS HUNGRY, AND YOU GAVE ME NOTHING TO EAT; I WAS THIRSTY, AND YOU GAVE ME NOTHING TO DRINK; 43 I WAS A STRANGER, AND YOU DID NOT INVITE ME IN; NAKED, AND YOU DID NOT CLOTHE ME; SICK, AND IN PRISON, AND YOU DID NOT VISIT ME.' 44 "THEN THEY THEMSELVES ALSO WILL ANSWER, 'LORD, WHEN DID WE SEE YOU HUNGRY, OR THIRSTY, OR A STRANGER, OR NAKED, OR SICK, OR IN PRISON, AND DID NOT TAKE CARE OF YOU?'

45 "THEN HE WILL ANSWER THEM, 'TRULY I SAY TO YOU, TO THE EXTENT THAT YOU DID NOT DO IT TO ONE OF THE LEAST OF THESE, YOU DID NOT DO IT TO ME.' 46 "THESE WILL GO AWAY INTO ETERNAL PUNISHMENT, BUT THE RIGHTEOUS INTO ETERNAL LIFE."

ONESIPHORUS DECIDED IN THE PERILOUS MOMENT HE WAS IN TO REMAIN FAITHFUL TO HIS BROTHER AND SHOW LOVE AND MERCY. HE WAS EARNEST IN HIS FRIENDSHIP AND CARE FOR PAUL, EVEN IF IT MIGHT HAVE COST HIM AND AS OTHERS TURNED AWAY.

THIS IS A GREAT EXAMPLE FOR US OF HOW TO BE READY FOR THE COMING OF CHRIST - WE MUST MAINTAIN OUR FAITH AND DEVOTION TO LOVE AND SERVICE OF OTHERS, EVEN WHEN IT'S HARD, EVEN WHEN IT'S COSTLY. AS THE DAYS GROW DARK, THE LOVE OF MANY WILL GROW COLD (MATTHEW 24:12)- IT CANNOT BE THIS WAY FOR US. THOSE WHO LOVE AND MODEL CHRISTLIKENESS WILL FIND THE MERCY OF THE LORD IN THOSE DAYS AND ON THE LAST DAY WELCOMED BY THE GOOD SHEPHERD.