

2 Timothy

I. Introduction

- A. **2 Timothy 1:1-5** . . . Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, according to the promise of life in Christ Jesus, [2] to Timothy, my beloved son: Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord. [3] I thank God, whom I serve with a clear conscience the way my forefathers did, as I constantly remember you in my prayers night and day, [4] longing to see you, even as I recall your tears, so that I may be filled with joy. [5] For I am mindful of the sincere faith within you, which first dwelt in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am sure that it is in you as well.
- B. From **2 Timothy 1:3-2:13**, Paul is primarily focused on urging and encouraging Timothy, and by extension, church leaders directly and the rest of us indirectly, to remain courageous in proclaiming God’s truth – in the church, in our homes, with our friends and neighbors, and in our workplace – in spite of the threat of being criticized, rejected, persecuted, imprisoned, or even put to death.
1. And I remind you that Paul is encouraging this level of commitment as someone who experienced all of this in his ministry.
 2. My purpose for bringing this up is to plant the importance of this message in your mind, because it will be easy to lose sight of this fact as we focus on specific truths and principles found in this section of **2 Timothy**.
- C. Today, we are going to examine seven truths found in **vs 3-5** that can have a significant effect on living a godly life – **if** we will live according to them. These seven truths are: (1) the importance of thanking God, (2) the value of maintaining a clear conscience, (3) the practice of frequent prayer, (4) the joy of meaningful relationships, (5) the necessity of sincere faith, (6) the potential effects of passing our sincerity of faith to the next generation, and (7) the value of discerning the kind of faith those around you have.
- D. Prayer

II. Nuggets of truth that can have a significant effect on living a godly life

- A. **The importance of thanking God** – **Vs 3** begins with “**I thank God.**”
1. I want to begin talking about the importance of thanking God by reminding you that according to **Romans 1**, the first steps of

- turning away from God – which can lead to turning against God, and finally to rejecting God – include two common failures.
- a. **First**, there is the failure of not honoring God as the Supreme Being – that is, not holding Him in high esteem because of His position as creator and Lord of the universe.
 - b. **Second**, there is the failure of not giving Him thanks – that is, not being genuinely grateful for all the good He has done and is doing, and as a result, not giving Him the thanks He deserves.
2. These two failures – not honoring God and not giving Him the thanks He deserves – are symptom of pride coupled with a distrust of God that grows out of the belief that God is not perfectly good because He is not treating you the way you want Him to treat you.
 - a. This combination of pride, distrust, and a low view of God feeds ingratitude and a victim mentality that most often blinds us the reasons God deserves our gratitude and thanks.
 - b. However, there are some who fail to give God thanks because they, like children, give no thought to saying thanks.
 3. It is for these kinds of reasons that genuine, humble, and heartfelt thanks requires at least these two things.
 - a. **First**, it requires the recognition and conviction that every good thing given, and every perfect gift comes from God, and that apart from God, we would have nothing.
 - b. **Second**, it requires intentional and humble God directed expressions of heartfelt appreciation and gratitude for who God is and what He has done and is doing.
 4. Those who have both these requirements at work within them find it easy to sincerely give thanks in everything, and they want to express their gratitude frequently.
 5. As the psalmist said, “I will give You thanks with all my heart; I will sing praises to You before the gods. I will bow down toward Your holy temple and give thanks to Your name for Your lovingkindness and Your truth” (**Psalm 138:1-2**).
 6. May we, from the heart, be thankful to God, and may we express our gratitude often.
- B. The value of maintaining a clear conscience – “**whom I serve with a clear conscience the way my forefathers did.**”
1. The reality is, you have to be conscientious in order to maintain a clear or good working conscience. To be conscientious as a Christian means making it your aim to live according to (1) the dictates of your

- conscience, (2) the word of God, (3) the leading of the Holy Spirit, (4) the principles and ways of love, and (5) true justice.
2. We veer from the path of maintaining a clear conscience when in some way we disregard our conscience, or truths to live by as found in the word of God, or the leading of the Holy Spirit, or the ways of love, or godly justice.
 - a. The failure to maintain a clear conscience results in a failure to love as God calls us to love (**1 Timothy 1:5**), the polluting of our mind and conscience (**Titus 1:15**), a loss of confidence that God will receive us when coming into His presence (**Hebrews 10:22**), damage to our testimony as a Christian (**1 Peter 3:16**), the inability to serve God honorably and according to His will (**Hebrews 9:14**), and the possibility of becoming a false teacher (**1 Timothy 4:1-2**).
 - b. On the other hand, maintaining a good conscience leads to such things as consistency in godly living, loving more nearly as we ought to love, confidence in coming into God's presence, a good testimony before God and man, and serving God honorably and according to His will.
 3. In **Acts 24:16**, Paul says that he does his best to always maintain a blameless conscience – both before God and before men.
 - a. This takes serious and daily effort, thought, preparation, focus, honest self-evaluation, and much prayer.
 - b. The reality is, though gaining and maintaining a clear conscience is a combination of God's doing and our doing, without our efforts we won't have a clear conscience.
 - c. Therefore, may we value a clear conscience. May we want to maintain a clear conscience. And may we put in the work required to maintain a clear conscience.
- C. The practice of frequent prayer – “**As I constantly remember you in my prayers night and day...**”
1. The Bible exhorts us to pray without ceasing (**1Thessalonians 5:17**), to pray at all times (**Ephesians 6:18**), to watch and pray so we don't give in to temptation (**Matthew 26:41**), to pray and not lose heart or become discouraged or feel hopeless (**Luke 18:1**), and to be devoted to prayer (**Romans 12:12**).
 2. To pray according to these exhortations requires being intentional, faithful, constant, and dedicated to prayer. And to pray like this, we cannot allow our praying to be only or mostly circumstance driven.

- a. Now without question, there is nothing wrong with circumstance driven prayer, for even Jesus encourages such praying. Good examples of circumstance driven prayer would be our morning Bible reading and prayer, our meal-time prayers, or prayers made when situations are such that we feel compelled to pray.
 - b. However, as you grow in godliness, and as you come to know God more intimately and personally, you will realize there is a special kind of joy in just being with God – and it is this change in your relationship with God that progressively moves your praying from being circumstance driven to being driven by a desire to fellowship with Him because you enjoy just being with Him.
 - c. This does not mean you won't ask for things or cry out to God in the midst of a trying situation or maintain a scheduled prayer time. But it does mean you will want to talk with God in between those times just as you want to talk to Him at those times.
3. My point is, the practice of frequent prayer may start out as a duty or Christian discipline, but if you will let it, and if you will treat it as such, it can grow to become an activity of love – a love that longs to be with God just as it longs to gain God's help or give God thanks.
- a. It is in this way that prayer becomes more like talking with a loving Father or a dear friend then presenting requests to the God of the universe.
 - b. Therefore, I urge you to nurture the thinking that prayer can be fellowship with God just as much as asking something of God or giving thanks to God.
- D. The joy of meaningful relationships – **Longing to see you, even as I recall your tears, so that I may be filled with joy . . .**
1. Without question, we are the healthiest we can be – mentally, emotionally, socially and spiritually – when we make God our **first and foremost source** of joy, and sense of well-being, and security, and hope, and that marvelous feeling of being loved.
 2. And yet, God made males and females, because – according to Him – it is not good for us to be alone (**Genesis 2:18**). In other words, God made us social beings with a natural inclination toward close, meaningful, and lasting relationships.
 - a. God created us in such a way as to enable us to participate in relationships of all kinds, yet to desire relationships of mutual love and trust – including the special bond of marriage and the bond of love that exists between believers in the Body of Christ.

- b. In creating us social beings, God made it possible for us to find joy, happiness, security, a sense of well-being, and love in our human relationships – not to replace what we get from God, but in addition to what we get from God.
 3. In my opinion, God’s intention is that our relationship with Him and with those near and dear would bring us great joy. Therefore, may we make God our supreme source of joy while enjoying to the fullest the close and meaningful relationships with the people around us.

E. The necessity of sincere faith – **For I am mindful of the sincere faith within you.**

1. If we were to categorize Christian faith in just two ways, we could categorize it as sincere faith and insincere or incomplete faith.
 - a. Sincere faith makes a sincere effort to live according to what the Christian claims to believe.
 - b. Incomplete faith claims to believe what a Christian ought to believe but does not live according to **ALL** it claims to believe. In other words, incomplete faith only lives according to some of what it claims to believe, while treating other parts of what it claims to believe as if it doesn’t believe those parts.
2. One reason sincere faith is so necessary is because only sincere faith enables us to become the Christians God intends us to be, empowers us to be, and His word teaches us to be.
3. Therefore, as Christians, we need sincere faith in God, in His word, in His ways, in His kingdom, and in His return.

F. The potential effects of passing our sincerity of faith to the next generation – **which first dwelt in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice,**

1. God does not guarantee that even the best and most godly parents can pass their level and quality of faith on to their children.
2. However, we should make it our aim to do so – for the outcome may be a child like Timothy – whose godly life extends the effects of your sincere faith for generations.
3. It is well worth noting that in Timothy’s family, this sincerity of faith and godly living was passed from mother to daughter to daughter’s son. And though Timothy’s mother may not have affected many people outside her home, her influence on Timothy has affected many believers down to today. The reality is, we are still being influenced by Timothy’s grandmother’s sincere faith.

4. However, one reminder is important here: passing sincere faith on to our children and grandchildren requires making it our aim to live as godly of a life as we know to live – for we cannot pass on what we do not have ourselves.

G. The value of discerning the kind of faith those around you have – **and I am sure that it is in you as well.**

1. We interact with people every day, and many of them we interact with on a daily basis. How well do we know them? How well do we want to know them?
2. Like us, they face the challenge of wrestling with life's problems, of being crippled by their own fears, of having to work through times of sickness, of having to deal with difficult or damaged relationships, of facing financial troubles – just to name a few of the challenges that come with life.
3. How we deal with life's challenges depends on what we believe, which directly affects what we value and fear, which directly affects what we desire or hope for – which directly affects how we deal with life's challenges.
4. One of the ways we can love and serve those around us is to listen long enough to gain some insight into what they believe, value, fear, and desire.
5. When you understand this about a person, you are much better equipped to offer the kind of help that goes beyond encouragement, support, or relief to changing what is in their heart, what they believe, what they value and fear, and what they desire – which will have a lasting effect on how they deal with the challenges of life.
6. Therefore, may we love those around us enough to listen long enough to understand them and their situation(s), so that the help we offer goes beyond the surface to the deeper issues of the heart.

III. Conclusion

A. These seven truths can have a significant effect on living a godly life – **IF** we will live according to them. Once again, these seven truths are: (1) the importance of thanking God, (2) the value of maintaining a clear conscience, (3) the practice of frequent prayer, (4) the joy of meaningful relationships, (5) the necessity of sincere faith, (6) the potential effects of passing our sincerity of faith to the next generation, (7) the value of discerning the kind of faith those around you have.