

II Timothy - Part 3: Guard the Gospel

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I. Introduction.

A. This is a genuine letter of Paul to Timothy. The internal and external arguments authenticate it.

B. Paul was a prisoner in Rome when he wrote it. Paul wrote it under the imminent shadow of execution. It is his last will and testament to the church.

C. Timothy to whom it is addressed is being thrust into an area of leadership beyond his natural ability.

1. He was comparatively young.
2. He is prone to sickness.
3. He is timid by temperament.
4. He was more prone to lean than lead.

D. Paul's preoccupation in writing to Timothy is the gospel—the deposit of truth that has been revealed to God. His days of gospel preaching were over, so what would happen to the gospel is what Paul is primarily concerned with in this letter. The gospel is now committed to Timothy.

E. Paul is concerned with guarding the gospel, suffering for the gospel, continuing in the gospel, and preaching the gospel.

II. Characteristics of Paul and Timothy.

A. Paul claimed to be an Apostle of Christ.

1. Christ appointed Apostles with Him to see His works and hear His words in order that they might be special witnesses. They were granted a special form of inspiration in order to reveal God's truth. Paul was later added to this select circle.
2. The origin of his apostleship: the will of God.
3. The object of his apostleship was the promise of the life that is in Christ Jesus. The gospel offers true life in Jesus Christ.

B. Timothy was led to Christ by Paul.

1. Grace and mercy and peace were given to him.
2. Paul thanked God for Timothy assured that He made Timothy for a specific purpose.
3. His upbringing influenced him considerably—his godly mother and grandmother were believers and trained him up in the Old Testament Scriptures.

4. His spiritual friendship also influenced him—in the Apostle Paul he had an outstanding teacher friend. Paul never abandoned Timothy after leading him to Christ.

5. Timothy was given some divine gift from God. It was an ordination gift, which may have been the ministry itself. A man is what God has made him by calling him to a certain ministry and endowing him with certain gifts.

6. Timothy was influenced by personal discipline. Paul exhorts him to stir up the fire within him.

C. There is the presence in both Timothy and Paul of divine sovereignty and human responsibility. There was laboring and stirring but God was also working. We must apply ourselves with active discipline to cooperate with the grace of God if we are ever to become the men and women God wants us to be.

III. The truth of the gospel and Timothy's responsibility.

A. Timothy is not to be ashamed of it.

1. He is not to be afraid of Christ. He is not to be afraid of Paul.

B. What the gospel is.

1. It is impossible to speak of the gospel without speaking of salvation in the same breadth.

2. Salvation is more than forgiveness of sins. It is a holy calling which he justifies, sanctifies and glorifies.

3. The source of salvation comes from before time began. Grace was given before time demonstrating that it is not of any good works. This is election.

4. The death and resurrection are the historical ground of grace—Christ abolished death through it. Death is the wages of sin—and Christ has claimed victory over it even though it is still alive. The gospel is the promise of life.

C. Responsibility towards the gospel.

1. It is taken for granted that it must be first received.

2. Secondly, it must be communicated. While there are no Apostles and Prophets today there are preachers and teachers today.

3. Thirdly, one must suffer for it. People are opposed to the gospel because God saves not by virtue of good works. The natural man hates to have to admit his helplessness and his sinfulness.

4. Fourth, the gospel is a deposit to be guarded. We must not allow the gospel to be lost or damaged.

Application questions

1. What is the nature of divine sovereignty and human responsibility according to the speaker? How does this practically work out.

2. What is the gospel?

3. How are we to respond to the gospel? What are three ways it can be communicated?
