

“By the Book ≈ II Timothy 2: 1 – 13” [6.10.07]

In the last (7) days; have you felt somewhat weak - - maybe beaten or discouraged;
Of late do you feel like the enemy is not only attacking but gaining ground?

Do you ever question your Christian walk? Maybe you feel that your walk-relationship is closer to theory than practice this morning.

If so, you have a distinct understanding of why the Apostle Paul chose to write his last letter to Timothy.

Paul was no stranger to disappointment; Can you imagine how brutal Satan must have been in his attempts to beat and break him down?

Just peer into his prison cell as he writes II Timothy; see Paul for yourself...

- Bent & frail; shackled to the arm of a Roman guard
- Behold the apostle of God...
 - Dead broke - - no family - - no property - - nearsighted - - & worn out.
 - YOU KNOW that he must have lived with some tough regrets
 - He persecuted & killed Christians before he became a Christian leader
 - In I Timothy 1: 15 he introduced himself as the worst sinner in history
- At times his ♥ was so heavy - - Paul’s pen drug itself across the page;

“Oh, what a miserable person I am! Who will save me from this life that is dominated by sin?”
[Romans 7: 24]

Only heaven knows how long Paul stared @ this question before he found courage to defy logic & write:

Romans 7: 25

“I thank God for saving me through Jesus Christ our Lord!”

Paul knew that in times of bitter disappointment; that there was only one tangible thing to hold on to = God’s grace!

And that is the purpose of II Timothy!

Let’s ® II Timothy 2: 1 or p. 914 in the pew Bible

- I. Paul’s admonition = “Timothy...be strong”
 - A. Humanly speaking...Timothy was not known for his strength; he had several factors that worked against him as a new leader w/in the church.
 1. For one thing, Timothy was still relatively young.
 - a. Paul exhorts Timothy in his 1st letter; “Don’t let anyone look down on you because you are young.” [I Tim 4: 12]

- b. We don't know his precise age but scholars believe he was still in his late 20's or early 30's by now.
2. Apparently Timothy was also prone to illness.
- a. In his 1st letter, Paul refers to his 'frequent ailments' without specifying what they were.
 - b. In I Tim 5: 23 he advises Timothy; "Don't drink only water. You ought to drink a little wine for the sake of your stomach because you are sick so often."

Timothy's lack of strength vividly shows up in that he was...

3. Timid by temperament.
- a. He seems to have been naturally shy – Myers Briggs analysis probably would have described him as an introvert.
 - b. Evidently Timothy was easily discouraged & intimidated in ministry.
 - c. I Corinthians 16: 10 – 11 records,
 "When Timothy comes, don't intimidate him...don't let anyone treat him w/contempt."

← ← [Personal experience] NO bonus being an introvert in ministry

- B. There's little doubt that Timothy was @ this juncture of his life was in a time personal crisis & weakness.
 - 1. Possibly he was in a time where he was questioning his value & personal contribution to ministry.
 - 2. Paul knew from personal experience that he needed to stir up the gift of God that was in him & to tap into the available resources of...
- C. ® II Timothy 1: 6 – 7 = Paul encouraged Timothy to remember the power of his God

These were Timothy's qualifications for leadership:
 Young in years - - Frail in physique - - & Naturally shy!

BUT - BE ENCOURAGED; Timothy was strong in grace☺

- II. My basic job description is found in ...
 - A. ® II Timothy 2: 2
 - B. Passing what on to others = Doctrines of biblical inerrancy

[Every year] the Barna Group explores the 'state of America's faith;' this year's poll of more than 1,000 adults indicates that while Americans are remaining spiritually active, the percentage of those who hold to orthodox biblical views has fallen to its lowest level in decades.

1. ← ← [insert] Barna research
2. While millions of Americans feel personally committed to God they are apparently 'renegotiating' the definition of God
3. The ultimate result is that the shift away from biblical perspectives will cause America's youth to conclude that the Christian faith does not represent "deep - consistent truths about the spiritual and natural world."
4. We can never underestimate the importance of passing along this book {Bible} to faithful and reliable persons that will insure next generation understands God's grace.
5. Ministry is like a relay race = hand offs are crucial!
6. [insert] Lloyd Morgan state relays

® II Timothy 2: 3 – 7

III. (3) Attributes of a reliable witness = practical examples

- A. # 1 - - a soldier is devoted [Keeps the main thing the main thing]
- B. # 2 - - an athlete is disciplined [not above the rules]
 1. Reliable witnesses aren't perfect but are expected to avoid major violations...to be faithful their spouses...no illegal drug use...pornography...expected to tell the truth...& pay their bills
 2. Understand this discipline of witnessing is 24/7
 3. [insert] Anything less than 100% of our attention is like...
- C. #3 - - a farmer is diligent [enjoys the harvest]
 1. Honorable livelihood
 2. Works hard – patiently waits for the harvest
 3. ☺ I love our local farmers

® II Timothy 2: 8 - 10

IV. Examples that the "...the word of God can't be chained."

- A. Pilgrim's Progress
- B. Church in communist 'Red China'
- C. Ivan & Nadia in Kherson – Ukraine

® II Timothy 2: 11 – 13

REMEMBER: Our future hangs not on the strength of our faith; but the strength of God's faithfulness!