

2 Timothy 1:

There is a somber tone to 2nd Timothy. It is believed Paul may have been released a short time after 1st Timothy was written but then recaptured and sentenced to death. Unlike his house arrest in the past he is probably in a cold dungeon. These are in fact, Paul's last recorded words. If he had anything else to say to Timothy it had to go in this letter. The time can be narrowed down to 66-68 A.D.

Verse 1,2 ...according to the promise of life... That means even more when we understand Paul is awaiting his execution (4:6). "To Timothy, my dear son:" Although from the content of the letters Timothy seems to be a weak person in need of encouragement the Apostle Paul holds him in his heart as his dear son. He believes the prophetic word about his gift and potential.

Verse 3 Paul makes no difference here with the Old Testament forefathers and his service. How wonderful to have a clear conscience when any moment may be your last. Paul always thanked God for Timothy. He must have been a bright spot for Paul since most had deserted him – see 15.

Verse 4 Maybe this was the tearful goodbye in Acts 20. That would have been a tough last memory of his face. Greeting a brother like that again would be a real joy. I love to see Christian family I haven't seen for a long time and find out what the Lord has done in their lives since I last saw them.

Verse 5 It's wonderful to see these three generations of faith. Paul says faith is alive – living in you. It is not just an idea or concept but a living thing.

Verse 6,7 Because he has this rich spiritual heritage Paul expects him to fan with a bellows those coals that need stoking until they ignite. Paul had a real conviction that when he laid hands on Timothy, that Timothy received an important gift that the church needed. How do you fan into flame a gift? It sounds like Timothy was reluctant or timid about expressing his gifts. Could that be true of you? But what is the answer to this timidity or fear – the spirit that God gives us of power, love, and a sound mind (self discipline).

Verse 8 Timothy is encouraged not to be ashamed of the Lord or Paul. The Jews were probably putting down both Jesus and the Apostle Paul. Timothy would face a verbal attack if he stood up for either in his community. Paul says, "Go ahead, don't be afraid, speak up and associate yourself with Jesus and me." We have nothing to be ashamed of but everything to speak out about, and the same is true in relation to our brothers. We may face rejection but so did Christ and Paul. Suffering for the cause of Christ is a necessary ingredient for future glory. Ro 8:17 The power of God will help us do it and endure it.

Verse 9 We are called to a holy life. Many would stop at, 'saved us' but we must go on to all that God has in mind for us. What is the purpose of his calling? You received grace before the beginning of time. Tonight we wont go into predestination, election, free will, but note that God chose you to be a recipient of grace before creation began. What a thought!

Verse 10 Grace has been revealed in Christ Jesus. That grace resulted in the destruction of death and immortality coming to light. Immortality is always in reference to the body. Paul has in mind here the resurrected Lord he met on the road to Damascus. Though his outward body dies in the arena, yet his inward man will be clothed with immortality. 1Co 15:54 As Paul is about to face this he encourages Timothy who will be sad at the loss of his mentor. He is also encouraging a bold testimony without fear of the consequences to this physical body. That was at the root of Peter's denial. We don't know what we will do because most of us have not faced that. The young girl at Columbine High School did. Are these realities so firmly planted in our hearts that we can boldly proclaim Christ without timidity or fear? Will we walk in the spirit of power, love and self-discipline today, so that should that time come, we will walk in it then too?