

Paul the Apostle writes to Timothy:

I thank God, whom I serve with a pure conscience, as *my* forefathers *did*, as without ceasing I remember you in my prayers night and day, greatly desiring to see you, being mindful of your tears, that I may be filled with joy, when I call to remembrance the genuine faith that is in you, which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am persuaded is in you also. Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind. (2 Timothy 1:3 NKJV)

In preparation for writing this, I started by pulling up the Wikipedia article concerning Timothy, the disciple of the Rabbi Paul. As I finished the brief summary there, I found that I was left with the definite impression that the writers had not said anything that even began to describe the character of this impressive man. Perhaps then, we can, with this brief article at least begin to appreciate the faithful Timothy.

As I urged you when I went into Macedonia—remain in Ephesus that you may charge some that they teach no other doctrine, nor give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which cause disputes rather than godly edification which is in faith. Now the

purpose of the commandment is love from a pure heart..." (1 Tim. 1:3-5.)

Three things particularly impressed me about Timothy, and to really grasp their import, it is necessary to understand a little about the city in which he was directed to live. Ephesus was one of the most important commercial and political centers in the Roman Empire. Legends said that the exotic Amazons, a great female warrior class, had founded the city, and there was apparently much wrangling with genealogies to prove that one's family was descended from this formidable group as this enhanced the social and political status of the family.

Ephesus was also the home of the Temple of Diana, also known as Artemis, which was one of the Seven Wonders of the World. Annually, a huge festival was held in honor of Diana, the virgin huntress and goddess of fertility, and this drew great crowds to enjoy the games, feasting, and general revelry. It was considered a prime gathering for single Greeks and Romans looking for a mate.

This all made the city a place of immense commercial wealth and political power. In the first letter to Timothy, as evidenced by the passage cited above, he repeatedly indicates that the struggles for power and prestige had found their way into the local congregation in which Timothy labored. It was also significant that the worship of Diana and the Greek fa-

bles and philosophy that undergirded it exerted wide ranging influence that also reached into the community of Christ.

The temple was served by a caste of male eunuchs along with a group of female virgins. It was also served by some women who are called temple prostitutes, but they were much more than prostitutes. These women were quite well educated in Greek philosophy and would give lectures on its intricacies as well as the mysteries of Dianic devotion. Their sexual practices were intended to promote communion with the goddess. Their dress was beautiful, sensuous, and very expensive, including a special braid for the hair that was encrusted with jewelry. This attire was protected by law.

From 1 Timothy. 2:9, 10, we can see that imitation of this extravagant style of dress was beginning to be imitated by some in Timothy's congregation. Likewise, in vss. 12-15, it is clear that the teachings and controversies of those who wanted to teach the Torah, the books of Moses, wed with some Greek ideas were causing trouble as well.

One of the creation myths that would soon be the foundations of Gnosticism insisted that Eve was embodied by Sophia, an emanation of god and was the one who brought Adam to life and gave him enlightenment, which is a perversion of the Genesis account. The Greek verb, *au-*

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Timothy, an Example of Strength Through God's Favor

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thentein, translated “to have authority” in v. 12, is used only here in the New Testament, and indicates that this teaching was being done to impose a dominant matriarchy that reflected that of the Dianic culture. Clearly, the turmoil that was endemic to the idolatrous society of Ephesus was causing havoc in the Ephesian congregation.

The first thing that impresses me concerning Timothy happens to be one of the first things Paul brings to his disciple's mind in his second letter, chapter 1:3,4, and that is their shared spiritual heritage, the faith of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Paul says that he has served God as his forefathers, the faithful of the Hebrew faith, and reminds Timothy of the heritage that has been passed through his grandmother and mother to him. Timothy had a Greek father, but he chose to follow the path of his Jewish mother. His ancestors had seen first hand the obscene evils of the idolatrous societies of Babylon and Persia, and it had not been that long ago that Judah Maccabeus had led his people in banishing the abominations of Antiochus Epiphanes IV, a son of Greek Zeus worship.

Now, Timothy was being told to remain steadfast in the midst of a culture totally saturated with devotion to the most notorious goddess of that day and build a community dedicated to the worship of the One true God of Israel and His son Jesus the Messiah. It

does not take much study of history to learn how the pagan societies viewed those Hebraic monotheists and Messianic believers. They considered them to be stubborn, intellectually inferior, morally uncompromising, and they found their religious practices strange and insulting of their gods. Recognize any of this? It is a fearful thing to try to stand fast when we are seen as cultural and social freaks, right? Timothy must often have felt overwhelmed, especially since he was responsible not only for his own faith but also for leadership of his faith community. Timothy was a man worthy of our respect and emulation.

The second matter that caught my attention regarding Timothy was his youth. In 1 Timothy 4:12, Paul instructs him not to let anyone despise his youth. Think about the factors we have considered above, and then realize that the man chosen by the great apostle Paul to face these intimidating circumstances is not an elder made wise by years and experience, but a young man. This young Jewish teacher might easily and understandably have been cowed by older, established educators, merchants, and matrons of Ephesian society.

It must also be recognized that a young man, single and an outsider in the city would also face all of the social pressures of a person of that age, such as loneliness, the temptations of a sensual environment, and peer pressures. There are indications that Paul realized these pressures, such as when he instructs Timothy to treat young women in the congregation as

sisters “with all purity.” We can all surely relate to the difficulties of youth and marvel at how well Timothy apparently succeeded in the accomplishing of the mission he'd been given.

You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of *this* life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier. (2 Timothy 2:1-4.)

Finally, Paul spends some time in his second letter encouraging Timothy concerning a third thing he would discover in his ministry. If we faithfully represent the One God and His son Jesus in a society dedicated to false gods, the pressures will become intense as the culture turns its social, economic, and political powers against us. Paul employs example after example, including his own and that of Jesus, to tell Timothy in the strongest terms that he must “be strong,” and faithfully carry on his struggle to a successful end.

It can be very discouraging in our struggle to victoriously complete the service of God when we find that life becomes even more difficult, and those who stood with us become fewer. In a just world, our good work would be rewarded with predictable acco-

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Timothy, an Example of Strength Through God's Favor

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lades and material success. This was not the case in the lives of either Paul or Timothy, and both even ended up in jail for their faith. Paul gave Timothy a key that would allow him to be strong while facing his trials. He said to "be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus."

The word "grace" is the Greek word *charis* which refers to finding favor with someone. There are two ways this can give us strength. Our strength must come from the promise that, if we are faithful to God, we will find favor with Him regardless of how the world around us thinks about us or how terribly it treats us. In 2 Timothy 2:11-12, Paul tells Timothy that those who have died with Jesus will live with him, and those who endure as he

did will reign with him. There is a reward of eternal glory far greater than any temporary success that might be gained by living down to the standards of an idolatrous society, that of being among those who rule in the Kingdom of the Messiah which will very soon be established on earth.

The world that has despised us will be forgotten in that day. Timothy was well instructed in the Hebrew Scriptures, and the word favor would also remind him of the lives of several other young people who were faithful in difficult situations and find encouragement in them. He would remember Joseph and Genesis 39:4 and 21, and the fact that God gave him favor with an Egyptian aristocrat and a keeper of the prison in which he was himself being unjustly held, and that this eventually led to his promotion

to the position of Grand Vizier of Egypt. He would also remember the examples of others like Esther and Daniel who were given favor with those who governed them so that they were put in exalted positions to accomplish some critical historical purpose for their God.

The point is that if the King of the Universe shows us favor in His eyes and in the eyes of men, it does not matter what the world tries to do to us as He will make certain we are in the place that we can accomplish the most for His plan in history. The certainty that God's favor through His son Jesus is greater and more sure than anything the world may throw at us will help give strength to faithfully serve Him regardless of how great the trial.

DWK

Bible Principles

Jesus: Mediator and High Priest

Salvation is not just about saving us from past sins. Salvation is the process of changing us from being offensive to God to being his loving children and servants. It's a process that pricks us in the heart and then changes our hearts.

In the Old Testament the law was given to teach people what sin is and the consequence of sin. The priests were to teach this law to the people. The sacrifices were an object lesson that the result of sin is eternal death and eternal separation from God. The purpose of the law, then, was to change people's heart and behavior. However, because of the hardness of the hearts of the

people and their continuing rebellion, they did not change. So God promised that he would, through his power, change their hearts:

I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws. (Ezekiel 36:25-27)

It was not enough that the people should be cleansed from their sin, they needed a new heart also so that they would be moved to obey God.

When Jesus came, he called for the people to repent and then to follow him. The rich man was told not just to leave his riches, but also to follow Jesus. He called for people to leave families, professions, and homes. He told them that unless they left all and followed him to the cross they were not worthy of him. Belonging to Jesus means a change in heart and a changed life forever.

We are no different than the people of ancient Israel. Unless God,

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Jesus: Mediator and High Priest

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through Jesus, changes us, we stay sinful and rebellious. It is only through giving up all and following Jesus that we are changed. Jesus did not just die so that our sins would be forgiven. He lives so that he may give us life:

For if, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life! (Romans 5:10)

Jesus lives now as our High Priest and Mediator. He works with us to change us into loving children of God. He helps us overcome temptations to sin, he stands beside us in times of trouble, and, as the priests of old, he teaches us the ways of God.

Paul wrote to Timothy concerning the strength that Jesus gave him:

But the Lord stood at my side and gave me strength, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it. (2 Timothy 4:17-18)

Jesus, because he was tempted in all ways as we are, is able to help us in our temptations. We are not alone on the mountain of temptation or in the Garden of Gethsemane:

For surely it is not angels he helps, but Abraham's descendants. For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make

atonement for the sins of the people. Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted. (Hebrews 2:15-18)

For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. (Hebrews 4:15-16)

The night before Jesus was crucified he promised the disciples that, although he was leaving, he would still be with his disciples: that just as the Father had been with him, that Jesus would be with those who followed him.

"A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but you will see Me. Because I live, you will live also. At that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him." (John 14:19-21)

The change of the disciple's heart and life is described as a transformation. It is the same Greek word as that used when Jesus was "transfigured" on the mount. It is a process whereby we are changed into Jesus' likeness. We become like him.

But whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. Now the Lord is the

Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit. (2 Corinthians 3:16-18)

The changed disciple is described as a "new creation". God through Christ is creating a new us:

For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.

So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.

We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. (2 Corinthians 5:14-21)

In this easy to read and power filled book the author addresses two very important questions in this Biblical meditation on the death of Jesus:

*Why did Jesus have to die?
What is Jesus doing now?*

The answers to these questions that Dr. Launchbury finds in the Bible may surprise you. He starts the book by examining some of the historical theories of salvation such as the substitution theory. Although the concept of substitution, that is, Jesus died in our place, is widely taught and accepted, there are many serious problems with the concept.

For example, it is unjust. How can the just God punish one person for another's sin? Especially since it is stated very clearly in the Bible that "the soul who sins is the one who will die". Another problem that is pointed out is that if Jesus paid for our sins by his death, then why is there any need for God to forgive our sin? Again, the Bible is very clear: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9)

The author concludes that there are just two reasons for Jesus' death:

To change us; and
To perfect Jesus himself.

The chapter headings such as "Mercy, Not Appeasement", "To Change Us", and "In the Image of God" give the reader a glimpse of the different meditations of the author on the question of "Why did Jesus have to die?"

The second question is as important as the first. We know from the Bible that Jesus is a mediator and high priest and that he makes intercession for us. What does that mean? The author outlines the process of salvation as:

- God declares our sin and proclaims his love;
- We agree and want to be different;
- He forgives us and liberates us from our guilt;
- We trust in his forgiveness and participate in his work of making us different;
- He completes the work that he does in this life through resur-

rection and judgment.

Jesus is part of every one of these steps!

As the author states, "Jesus is key to every phase of our salvation". Salvation is a process and Jesus is working with us each step of the way to change us from a sinner with no hope to a believer who is transformed into his likeness: "And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit." (2 Corinthians 3:18)

The author in his concluding paragraphs states "We need to be changed, not only by his death, but also by his life. While we participate in the transformational training of Christ, God relinquishes all right to bring retribution to us. He is at peace with our intent. We live the forgiven life."

[Change Us Not God](#) by Dr. John Launchbury is available on-line from Amazon.com.

Free Booklet Offer

We would like to send you a very helpful booklet entitled "The Bible Hope." This little booklet consists of fourteen essays, each essay looking at Bible Hope from differing perspectives and different parts of the Bible. Strengthen your hope for eternal salvation with these powerful writings.

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New Testament

To the Believers in Corinth

Both the First and Second letters written by Paul, Sosthenes and Timothy to the church in Corinth are part of the readings in this quarter. Acts chapters 18 gives us the history of the preaching work in Corinth. Paul spent at least a year and a half in this city, perhaps as much as three years, in teaching and preaching both to Jew and Gentile. He was joined in this work by Aquila and Priscilla his wife and also Silas and Timothy. The Corinthian church was probably one of the largest churches as Paul is told by the Lord:

One night the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision: "Do not be

afraid; keep on speaking, do not be silent. For I am with you, and no one is going to attack and harm you, because I have many people in this city." (Acts 18:9-10)

Paul and those who worked with him must have become very close to the Corinthian believers. The letters reflect this in many places:

I praise you for remembering me in everything and for holding to the teachings, just as I passed them on to you. (1 Corinthians 11:2)

For I wrote you out of great distress and anguish of heart and with many tears, not to grieve you but to let you know the depth of my love for you. (2 Corinthians 2:4)

These letters have many well-known, beautiful, and important

chapters:

- 1 Corinthians 11 – Paul gives directions for celebrating the Lord's Supper
- 1 Corinthians 13 – The greatest of these is love.
- 1 Corinthians 15 – The resurrection—death swallowed up in victory.
- 2 Corinthians 3 – Being transformed
- 2 Corinthians 12 – Grace sufficient in weakness

Paul and Timothy conclude the second letter to the Corinthians:

Finally, brothers, good-by. Aim for perfection, listen to my appeal, be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you. (2 Corinthians 13:11)

Now, Two Opportunities to be part of a Bible Study Group!

Friday Mornings

Join with us Friday Mornings at 11:00AM at the Hampton Inn and Suites (across the street from the Patrick Henry Mall) where we are studying the Bible readings for the week according to the schedule on the cover of this newsletter.

Tuesday Evenings

We meet every Tuesday at the Hampton Inn and Suites, 12251 Jefferson Ave, across the street from the Patrick Henry Mall. The Tuesday evening class starts at 7:00 PM and ends at 8:30 PM.

We will begin a new series of studies on the four Gospels starting Tuesday evening, April 3rd Please join us.

Thoughts on the Daily Readings (Continued)

Old Testament

Deuteronomy

This is the fifth book of Moses and concludes the history of the children of Israel as they wandered in the desert for 40 years. The book, as the name implies, is a repetition of the law and many of the events found in Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers. Before his death, Moses warns and encourages the people to serve only the LORD and obey him in everything.

Joshua

Joshua leads the Israelites into the Promised Land. With God's

strength and help they conquer the cities in the land including Jericho and Ai. Finally the land is divided and allotted to the different tribes.

Judges

After the death of Joshua, a series of judges (rulers) led Israel under God's direction. The book of Hebrews in the New Testament lists several of these rulers as examples of faithful people. Among them are Samson, Deborah, Gideon, Barak, and Samuel.

I and II Samuel

The books of Samuel continue the history of Israel from the time

of Samuel, the last Judge, through the reigns of King Saul and King David. The history of David from the time he is anointed by Samuel as a young boy to the time he becomes an aged king is a fascinating story to follow.

Job

This book is unique in the Bible for many reasons. It is a treatise on the subject of suffering. While there is some narration at the beginning and end of the book, most of it is a series of conversations between Job, several of his friends, and finally with God. The author, location, and date of the book are unknown.



Learn to Read the Bible Effectively

This *free* six week seminar is sponsored by the Christadelphians and will be held on Thursday evenings

**April 5th thru May 10th
7:00 PM to 8:30 PM**

At the
Hampton Inn and Suites
(Across Jefferson from Patrick Henry Mall)
12251 Jefferson Ave.
Newport News, VA 23602

**Register by telephone at 898-5069 or by
e-mail at info@dailybiblereader.com.**

Attend this seminar and Learn to Read the Bible Effectively!

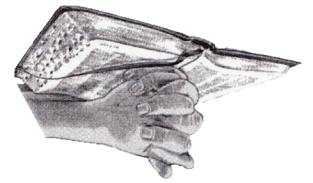
If you find reading the Bible difficult or frustrating at times, then this seminar is for you. Six concise and informative sessions are delivered in a friendly, comfortable environment. They are aimed at equipping you with the skills and determination to understand Bible teachings for yourself and benefit from a new appreciation of the Bible. Whether you are familiar with the Bible or are new to reading it, you will walk away with loads of information and new energy to begin reading more effectively.

See page 7 for details

April 5th THRU May 10th

AN EXCITING 6 WEEK SEMINAR

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Daily Bible Readings for April, May and June
Read the Entire Bible in One Year

Day	APRIL		MAY		JUNE	
	Old Test	New Test/Psa	Old Test	New Test/Psa	Old Test	New Test/Psa
1	Deut 13,14	Mark 6	Judges 3,4	1 Corinth 11	Job 38,39	Psalm 59
2	Deut 15,16	Psalm 33,34	Judges 5,6	1 Corinth 12	Job 40-42	Luke 17
3	Deut 17,18	Mark 7	Judges 7,8	1 Corinth 13	I Sam 1. 2	Luke 18
4	Deut 19,20	Mark 8	Judges 9,10	Psalm 48	I Sam 3. 4	Psalm 60. 61
5	Deut 21,22	Mark 9	Judges 11,12	I Corinth 14	I Sam 5. 6	Luke 19
6	Deut 23,24	Psalm 35	Judges 13,14	I Carinth 15	I Sam 7. 8	Luke 20
7	Deut 25,26	Mark 10	Judges 15,16	Psalm 49	I Sam 9.10	Luke 21
8	Deut 27,28	Mark 11	Judges 17,18	I Corinth 16	I Sam 11. 12	Psalm 62. 63
9	Deut 29,30	Psalm 36,37	Judges 19,20	Psalm 50	I Sam 13. 14	Luke 22
10	Deut 31,32	Psalm 38,39	Judge 21 Ruth 1	Psalm 51. 52	I Sam 15. 16	Luke 23
11	Deut 33,34	Mark 12	Ruth 2-4	Luke 1	I Sam 17. 18	Luke 24
12	Provb 17,18	Mark 13	Provb 29,30	Luke 2	I Sam 19. 20	Psalm 64. 65
13	Provb 19,20	Mark 14	Provb 31	Luke 3	I Sam 21. 22	Psalm 66. 67
14	Provb 21,22	Mark 15	Job 1-3	Psalm 53	I Sam 23. 24	II Corinth 1
15	Joshua 1,2	Mark 16	Job 4,5	Luke 4	I Sam 25. 26	II Corinth 2
16	Joshua 3,4	Psalm 40,41	Job 6,7	Luke 5	I Sam 27. 28	II Corinth 3
17	Joshua 5,6	1 Corinth 1	Job 8,9	Luke 6	i Sam 29-31	Psalm 68
18	Joshua 7. 8	1 Corinth 2	Job 10,11	Psalm 54,55	Eccles 1. 2	Psalm 69
19	Joshua 9,10	1 Corinth 3	Job 12,13	Luke 7	Eccles 3. 4	II Corinth 4
20	Joshua 11,12	Psalm 42,43	Job 14,15	Luke 8	Eccles 5. 6	II Corinth 5
21	Joshua 13,14	1 Corinth 4	Job 16,17	Psalm 56	Eccles 7. 8	II Corinth 6
22	Joshua 15,16	1 Corinth 5	Job 18,19	Luke 9	Eccles 9.10	Psalm 70. 71
23	Joshua 17,18	Psalm 44	Job 20,21	Luke 10	Eccles 11. 12	II Corinth 7
24	Joshua 19,20	1 Corinth 6	Job 22,23	Luke 11	II Sam 1. 2	II Corinth 8
25	Joshua 21,22	1 Corinth 7	Job 24,25	Psalm 57	II Sam 3. 4	II Corinth 9
26	Joshua 23,24	1 Corinth 8	Job 26,27	Luke 12	II Sam 5. 6	II Corinth 10
27	Provb 23,24	Psalm 45	Job 28,29	Luke 13	II Sam 7. 8	Psalm 72
28	Provb 25,26	1 Corinth 9	Job 30,31	Psalm 58	II Sam 9. 10	Psalm 73
29	Provb 27,28	1 Corinth 10	Job 32,33	Luke 14	II Sam 11.12	II Corinth 11
30	Judges 1,2	Psalm 46. 47	Job 34,35	Luke 15	II Sam 13.14	II Corinth 12
31			Job 36,37	Luke 16		

See pages 6 & 7 for some thoughts on the daily readings.

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