

# Dr. Robert Yarbrough, Pastoral Epistles, Session 8, 2 Timothy 1

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This is Dr. Robert W. Yarbrough and his teaching on the pastoral epistles, Apostolic Instructions for Pastoral Leaders and Their Followers, session 8, 2 Timothy 1.

Welcome to our study of the pastoral epistles, and we're entitling these lectures Apostolic Instruction for Pastoral Leaders and Their Followers. We're continuing on in this lecture from lectures in 1st Timothy, and I will mention in a minute if you want a longer introduction to the pastoral epistles, then please go to the 1st Timothy lectures and listen to the first lecture there, and I give a lot of remarks about 1st and 2nd Timothy and Titus seen as a whole.

But in these particular lectures, we're going to handle 2nd Timothy. We're going to pray in just a minute, but I want to begin by summarizing and reviewing and even testing you if you happen to have begun in these lectures in 1st Timothy, then you've already seen this chart, and now we're going to see if you remember what you saw back at the beginning of these lectures. And I said that you can summarize the Bible with this acronym, P-M-E-E-C, P MEEC [Preparation, Manifestation, Expansion, Explanation, Consummation of the gospel]

And this refers to the whole of the Bible under the rubric of the gospel. The gospel has a major, the Bible has a major focus, and that focus is God through the revelation of his son. And we call the message of this saving self-disclosure of God, we call it the good news or gospel, euangelion in Greek.

It's the good news of Christ's saving work. And the whole of the Bible can be seen in the light of that, and I think needs to be seen in the light of that. So, we start with 77 or 78 percent of the Bible, which we call the Old Testament, and the Old Testament is the P-something for the gospel, and that word should be Preparation.

It's the preparation for the gospel. That's not all it is, but that's the core of what it's all about. Secondly, the gospels are the Manifestation of the gospel.

Acts gives us the Expansion of the gospel. And then the epistles, which is where we're locating our focus in these lectures, the epistles are the Explanation of the gospel. What does the gospel look like? Having started in Acts, and Jesus' teaching, and Jesus' message, and even Jesus' person sort of being infused into individuals who believe in him, and a community, and then communities that affirm that he is Lord and Savior.

Acts tells a story of how churches were established across the Roman world, and a mission movement began that's still much in effect today. Okay, what does that look like at the congregational level? What are the teachings? What are the beliefs? What are the practices? What should leaders think and do in the Acts heritage of church existence and church growth? And the answer is found in the epistles, and they are the explanation of the gospel or the explication of the gospel. And finally, revelation is the consummation of the gospel.

It's where things are headed. So I cited this word when I gave this chart originally without the blanks, with all the words there, but now you've reviewed it and you remember that it's preparation, manifestation, expansion, explanation, and consummation. So, I think it's good here to remind ourselves that all of this, all of Scripture, as we will see in 2 Timothy 3.16, all of Scripture is God-breathed.

And as the Old Testament puts it, every word of God is flawless. He's a shield. I say flawless, some translations say tested.

It's found to be without lack. It holds up. It's trustworthy.

And then notice this is, parallel that every word of God and then He. God and His Word are very, very closely related in biblical thought because God in His fatherly essence is invisible. We just saw at the end of 1 Timothy, no one has seen or can't see God in His transcendent glory.

But as John puts it, the one and only Son of God who is in the bosom of the Father, referring to the Son of God, He has explained Him. So, through the Word of God, God is manifest. And just as the Word in the Bible is flawless, God Himself is a shield to those who take refuge in Him.

Let us pray. Lord, grant that through our study of 2 Timothy, we would be found taking refuge in You. As we study Your flawless Word, we confess that we are very flawed.

And so, we need Your cleansing. We need Your patience. We need Your grace, Your leadership.

Thank You for Your promise to give it to those who seek You through Your Son and in Your Word. We commend ourselves into Your good hands. In Jesus' name, amen.

So, a reminder of the method that we follow. We're observing, first of all. We see what is there because seeing what is there precedes or ought to precede a decision about what it says.

I mentioned this yesterday, but I'm posting and perhaps it will be posted on the website where you access these lectures. I checked and this essay is still online. It's an essay by a Swiss scholar who taught in Germany for much of his life.

His name was Adolf Schlatter. He died in 1938. But he was one of the great biblical scholars in the modern history of Germany.

He believed in the Trinity. He believed in the truth of the Bible. He believed in the crucified and risen Christ, unlike most of his contemporaries in the German university.

And he wrote an essay called *The Significance of Method for Theological Work*. And some years ago I translated that essay and I wrote commentary on it. And so, you can access it at that link.

And it's in that essay that Schlatter lines out this idea of seeing what is there, which was a great theme of his approach to the Bible. You could say his hermeneutic observation, seeing what is there, and then making a judgment as to what it says. But he really stresses the need to get outside yourself through training, through patience, through observation, through discipline, through humility, and seeing what you're looking at, instead of imposing what you already think on the words of the Bible and taking the words out of the Bible to fit this moment.

We see that in American politics a lot, especially during elections. A lot of politicians, they know that people out in the street, a lot of them, they have some attachment to the Bible. It's kind of traditional in America.

Plus, there are a lot of Christians in America. So, to get votes, they'll quote Bible verses. But a lot of times the quotation that they use has nothing to do with what they want you to think about them, or it's taken completely out of context.

So, we don't want to take 2 Timothy out of context. We want to read it in its context and then hopefully be faithful to the then and there, faithful to what we saw as we carefully read through it and unpacked it. Then we're going to say what it means to us now.

I mentioned with respect to 1 Timothy that one way of getting sort of oriented into a biblical book is to look at the frequency of the words that are used in that book because it's a good possibility that there's some correlation between the frequency that words appear and the focus of the book. And epistles are written to convince somebody of something. So, there's a focus there.

It's not just sort of free association meandering, but it begins and it ends and there's an intent there. So, if we look at the major words in 2 Timothy, we find something

that we also found in 1 Timothy, and that's a preponderance of words for God. The distribution is different.

So, we find Kurios as Lord 16 times, and often it's debatable, is this referring to the Lord God himself? We would say God the Father. Often in Paul more broadly, when he says Lord, he's talking about the risen Lord. He's talking about Jesus.

But not always. And I'll tell you in advance, a lot of times in 2 Timothy, I don't know if he means God the Father, or God the Son, or if it makes any difference because he believed that they were one in essence. But right after Lord, you've got 13 references to God, and then right after God, you've got 13 references to Jesus and to Christ.

Almost always in the order of Christ-Jesus. One time it's Jesus Christ, and we'll see that in chapter 2. But most of the time, as in 1 Timothy, he uses the Messianic term, Messiach, Christos in Greek, Christos Jesus. The Messianic deliverer, Jesus of Nazareth.

And then we have faith, we have a word, we have truth, we have didomi. And this is actually worth looking at, because all six references to the verb, or uses of the word didomi, are God-giving something. So let me just get English up here, and make it big enough that we can see.

2 Timothy 1.7, and I'm going to quote the New American Standard, God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power, and of love, and of self-control. The NIV renders it, for the spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love, and discipline. In either case, it's God-giving, the spirit.

1.9, he saved us and called us to a holy life, not because of anything we've done, but because of his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time.

1.16, may the Lord give mercy. That's that verb give there, although it's translated show, but it's the verb, the root meaning is give. May the Lord grant that he will find mercy. The Lord will give you insight into all this, and opponents must be gently instructed in the hope that God will grant them repentance, give them repentance.

So, although the verb give in itself has nothing to do with God necessarily, actually in 2 Timothy, the eighth most frequent word and the first verb is, it really should be booked over in the column of God, because it describes the work of God.

It's not a name for God, but in 2 Timothy it's always used with reference to God's work. Then we have the word for work or deed is number nine. Then we have a word for person or man.

We have references today, we have five references to I know, and these are normally things that are known about God. I think one time it's a more generic knowing, but I think four of the times it's an affirmation of something that Paul knows about God or that he and Timothy know or should know about God. Then we have grace and we have love.

And for those of you who have dabbled in Greek, when you think about work in Greek, then you think about the word good work or good works. And I said with respect to 1 Timothy, there are two words for good and you could wonder, well, I wonder which word gets used. And in both 1 Timothy and 2 Timothy, the word that gets used four out of six times is kalos or kalon agon, good work with kalon, and then twice it's agathos.

In 2 Timothy, he uses agon with agathos twice and not with kalos at all. So, he's not totally consistent in his use of those adjectives for work. And I'll conclude the introduction to 2 Timothy by saying, again, listen to the 1 Timothy lecture because that's where I really give a fuller picture of what we know about the pastoral epistles, their authorship, their date, and so on and so forth.

2 Timothy is probably written during a second Roman imprisonment. And this imprisonment ends, I was just rereading this morning Eusebius' account of Paul being beheaded. The reports that the ancients passed along were that Peter was crucified upside down and that Paul was beheaded.

2 Timothy is the hardest of the pastoral epistles to argue as non-Pauline. I mentioned in the first lecture that in the Western world, a lot of think that Paul didn't write 1 and 2 Timothy or Titus. But even people who argue that will admit, well, there's a lot in 2 Timothy that's very, very personal, very specific.

It's very personal and interpersonal between Paul and Timothy. And it doesn't make a lot of sense. Why would a forger make up all this stuff that is so plausible as having been real between these two men and colleagues? Why would, this is not necessary for this, whatever the purpose of this thing was to be falsely written?

Why would all this plausible detail be there? So, a lot of scholars say, well, actually this is not pseudepigraphic. This really is Paul writing to a real Timothy. So that's all I'll say as we move into 2 Timothy itself.

And we have an opening and it goes like this, Paul an apostle of Christ Jesus by, and we can translate that through, the will of God. The will of God was the means by which Christ appeared to Paul or Saul on the Damascus Road. And that ended up with Paul, getting this commission to be an apostle.

This was in keeping with the promise of life that is in Christ Jesus to Timothy, my dear son, grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord. Now we see some of the same features here that we see in the earlier greeting. One is Paul's apostleship.

And I have a very footnote here, and I won't read these verses, but I will remind you of them. If you are a good Bible student, you'll immediately recognize references to 1 Corinthians 4, 9-13. Paul talks about how apostles are treated and how they're sort of the scum of the earth and how downtrodden they were, but not defeated, and how despised they were, but they weren't discouraged, and how they were beaten down, but God bore them up.

So, whereas apostle, in more modern understanding, sometimes there's this glorious term and then, these apostles are accused of, being corrupt and they were powerful and they went around and they got rich off the offerings in the churches or crazy things like that. In actual fact, nobody in their right mind would volunteer to be an apostle because it was the end of a life of comfort and a life in which you determine, where you're going to retire and what kind of vacations you're going to take. Apostles really had, you could say, a bitter lot in life unless they lived in a fellowship with each other and the Lord that helped them to see the glory and the beauty and the joy of what they were doing.

And I think that's, how they lived and so they bore it, but what they bore was pretty odious. Also, in 2 Corinthians 4:7-12, Paul says we have this treasure in earthen vessels, but when you read that passage, you can see that the we, most of all, is the apostolic we. It's those like Paul who are ambassadors of the gospel and he's trying to represent this to the Corinthians who are defecting from the gospel and he's trying to call them back to the apostolic message and the apostolic appropriation of the gospel, which many of them are deserting.

But the point he makes in 2 Corinthians 4 is all the downsides of being this earthen vessel and how painful it is and how disadvantageous it is to, creature comforts, but how glorious it is because as he says at the end of it, momentary light affliction, that's an understatement, it's actually not momentary, it's the rest of his life, and it's heavy affliction, but by comparison, he says, momentary light affliction is producing among us a weight of eternal glory. So, there's this apparent misery, but actually, when you get inside of it, it's like Jesus talking about his joy at the end of Passion Week. My joy I give to you.

What joy do you have when you're about to die on the cross for sins? Well, people who walk in fellowship with God know a joy, as Jesus said, that the world does not give, a peace that the world does not give. So, Paul's apostleship and there's one other passage I should mention, 2 Corinthians 11:16 through 12:10, where Paul enumerates his sufferings, how his enemies pursued him and how he was without

food and without safety and without shelter, and then God gave him a vision, but then he gave him a thorn in the flesh to keep him from exalting himself, and he thought, well, I know what I'll do. God answers prayer.

I'll pray, in fact, I'll pray three times as Jesus did in the Garden of Gethsemane, and God said, no, no, no, and he said, the answer to your prayer is my grace, and my grace is sufficient. My grace is going to continue to give you this sense of affliction so that you can continue to affirm your real strength. Your real strength is not your answer to prayer.

Your real strength is your reliance on Christ, and Paul said, when I am weak, then I'm strong, strong in what he wanted to be strong in, which was being an apostle. We see also in these opening verses the prominence, look at the yellow, the prominence of God and the prominence of Christ Jesus, and here Christ Jesus is called our Lord, so that's one reason why, I tend to privilege Lord as the likely reference in Paul's writings. Lord likely refers to Christ, but sometimes, it doesn't, especially when he says, the Lord says something, and then he quotes the Old Testament.

Well, there it's obvious he's talking about the Lord, who's the Father, who speaks through the Holy Spirit in the words of the Old Testament. In these verses, we also are reminded of the covenant language that we find here. It's our Lord, God is a personal God.

I mentioned earlier that in the ancient world, there were a couple hundred named gods, and deities, gods, and goddesses, and spirits, and people believed in many gods, or disbelieved in the many gods, but in the church, as in the community of Israel, there was one God, and scholars of Greco-Roman religion say that none of these gods was a personal God that you had a relationship with. They were gods of the sea or gods of an area, and they might offer you some protection, or they might be able to, like, give you certain favor if you said certain things, or gave certain offerings, or underwent some experience. You might have, some kind of connection with God that would in some way be favorable to you, or you could placate a certain God so that God would not harm you, but we are quite accustomed in the Bible to people communing with God.

Abraham is called a friend of God, and God in the Bible is personal. He calls us by our names. He individually creates people.

He calls us into being, and then, although we have all turned away from Him, He saves us. He seeks us out one by one, and there is this covenant language that we don't want to miss here that's not only with respect to this God and this Christ Jesus but also between Paul and Timothy. Timothy, my dear son.

My dear son. Now, he was not Timothy's father, but in the household of faith, we have relationships that are not only like father, son, brother, sister, or sister, sister, brother, brother, or what have you. They're actually deeper, because notoriously sometimes our family relationships are very threatened, or they're non-existent.

Families can have a lot of discord and even separation and hatred in them, but in the household of faith, as the Proverbs says, there is a friend who is closer than a brother. There are people that we share faith in Christ with, and they are actually closer to us than people in our own families. And so, this is another feature of the language that it was echoing here.

Finally, I'll mention that when he says, in keeping with the promise of life that is in Christ Jesus, this is a bookend to 2 Timothy. Just as hope and grace were bookends in 1 Timothy, in 2 Timothy, Paul is about to die. He's pretty sure, and he's probably right.

But from the beginning and throughout, and at the end, he affirms life. And he knows that the end of his earthly life is not the end of his existence. In fact, it's the beginning of something even greater than the great things that God has shown him in this world.

So, there's a very positive opening. And now we find out what he wants to say. And in the NIV, we have the heading, Thanksgiving.

I thank God, whom I serve as my ancestors did, with a clear conscience. Why does Paul keep saying this to Timothy, this clear conscious thing? And I think I may have touched on this earlier, but I'll do it again. And why does he mention ancestors? Well, he's of Abrahamic descent.

He's from the tribe of Benjamin, to be specific. He had been a Pharisee of Pharisees. He was deeply steeped in the Jewish tradition.

And we know from the span of his writings, he had a lot of detractors. And he had people that wanted him dead, even. And their argument would be, you're a traitor.

And actually, I have this as an observation down here, so I'll just jump to it. A clear conscience is repeated because fellow Jews regarded Paul and Timothy as traitors. Or worse, Jesus was not just a traitor.

He was a false prophet in the eyes of the establishment that said, we've got to put him to death. He's misleading the people. Because the Old Testament taught, Moses taught, that false prophets should be put to death.



And so they said, you're a false prophet, that's, we're going to put you to death. So I think Timothy needed to be reminded that you can be a Jew who affirms that Jesus is the Messiah, and you can do it with a clear conscience. Because all over the Roman world, you would be a minority among the minority.

And then he says, as night and day, I constantly remember you in my prayers. There's more covenant language. Recalling your tears, and we don't know why he had been crying.

But knowing that Timothy was under duress. Or it could just be the last time they said goodbye, Timothy wept. We don't know why he wept.

But he says, I long to see you so that I may be filled with joy. I'm reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother, Lois, and in your mother, Eunice, and I am persuaded now lives in you also. The other observation I'll make here is that apostolic godliness displays gratitude.

I think we would want to say Paul was close to the Lord. And what's a symptom of that? Well, Thanksgiving. He's about to die, but he's thankful.

The end of 1st Timothy. If we have contentment, if we have food and clothing, we'll be content. He's living that out.

He's content even on the eve of his death. We also see a prayerfulness. We see love in the form of the affirmation of others, affirmation of Timothy's mother and grandmother, and affirmation of Timothy.

And then we see a longing for the joy of fellowship in Christ. So, these are some of the tokens of the gospel that we can observe. And they're all the more remarkable in the life of somebody who, if I were in jail and I were on death row, I don't know if I would be able to write with this kind of light touch and this kind of optimism and this kind of other-directedness.

But Paul had reached that point where he had a perspective on his situation. So, he doesn't sound desperate, threatened, or fearful. Now we have an appeal for loyalty to Paul in the gospel.

For this reason, I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God. Again, the yellow is God language, and the red that you see are commands. I remind you to fan into flame.

Now he does it diplomatically. He doesn't actually command, for this reason, fan into flame. He says diplomatically, for this reason, I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God.

That word for gift there is charisma. We get the word charismatic from it. But it's something that God gives to us, which is in you through the laying on of my hands.

For the spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love, and self-discipline. So, he wants Timothy to be stabilized, to recall the gift that he was given, to remember the teaching of the Holy Spirit that he's received, that the Holy Spirit stabilizes us, he encourages us, he gives us a spirit of strength and sufficiency, and so forth. So do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord or of me, his prisoner.

Rather, join with me in suffering for the gospel by the power of God. And then as in 1 Timothy, where he first encourages Timothy and then he goes over into his testimony, here he encourages, he rallies Timothy, and then he goes over into not so much Paul's personal testimony, but we could say a soteriological reminder, a reminder of the doctrine of salvation, a reminder of why Paul needs to remind Timothy to stay strong. Timothy has been saved by God.

He is in a situation that apparently is threatening, but he's there because God has called him there. So, there's hope. He has saved us and called us, in some translations say, with a holy calling, with a calling to a distinct set-apart life.

The NIV understands it as called us to a holy life, and that works too. A life, here holy means set-apart, dedicated to God's service and to the gospel call, not because of anything we have done. So, salvation is not by works or by human achievement or performance, but because of his own purpose.

Do you understand God's purpose? I don't understand God's purpose. God is God. He has his own purposes.

So, our salvation is a mystery. Now, I know the steps I went through to appropriate and say yes to the message, but I can't say, well, I'm saved because I. We are saved because of the Lord. God had a purpose.

In the mystery of his benevolence, he gave us something we did not deserve, which was he saved us because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given to us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time. It's pretty hard to earn something that was granted to you before you were born, but that's how he pictures redemption.

I mentioned in an earlier lecture that Paul pictures redemption before time and at the time that God promises it, at the time that Christ died to enable it, at the time that we are experiencing it, and at the time that we will finally be glorified and perfected when we go and stand before the Lord. So, salvation is past. It's present and it's future in Paul, and he can talk about it in any of those places.

It's a totality. But here he first talks about it before the beginning of time, but now he also says it's been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. Again, kind of foreshadowing Paul's own death.

He's aware that light and immortality have been brought to light by the gospel. And this is referring to his resurrection, but to be resurrected, he had to die. And he didn't just, like, fall asleep and die or die of COVID or something.

He died willfully for our sins. God made him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf so that we could become the righteousness of God in him, 2 Corinthians 5:21. So he destroyed death by taking death down.

The wages of sin is death. There was a lot of sin that had to be died for. He did it.

He died for the sins of God's people. He took our sins to the grave. He bore God's wrath in our place.

And then he rose, showing death has been defeated, God's promise to erase our guilt and to give us his grace and a future in the world to come. All these things are real and true because of Christ, the promised one, the anointed one, Jesus, Jesus of Nazareth. And this good news, of this good news, I was appointed a herald, an announcer, and an apostle, and a teacher.

That's why I'm suffering as I am. You see, he's in jail. Yet, this is no cause for shame because I know whom I have believed.

And I'm convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him until that day, that day that he stands before God and gives an account. What you have heard from me, keep. It reminds me of the end of 1 Timothy.

He says, guard what's been entrusted to you. Same kind of thing. Paul says I'm convinced that God can guard what I've entrusted to him.

You need to guard what's entrusted to you. Keep is the pattern of sound teaching. And this is not just textbook information.

This is not like a pedantic, okay, I'll keep that in mind. I'll go over it every day. I'll go over my timetables or my verb paradigms or something.

Keep this sound teaching with, and in Greek, it's the faith and the love that are in Christ Jesus. So, you keep this teaching in a relationship with God and a love that involves God, it involves God's people, it involves God's purposes in the world

because it's found in a relationship with Christ Jesus. It's actually a full and rich and gratifying command.

Keep that pattern of sound teaching. Guard the good deposit. And that deposit can also mean, the word can mean treasure.

Guard this glorious treasure that was entrusted to you, this word of redemption. Guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in us. And generally speaking in Paul, when we translate in English, in us, if it's talking about Christ, it's talking about the church, something in us, almost always you could translate that among us because the plural is distributive.

And so of course it has to be in the individual in order for it to be in everybody. But sometimes in English, because it's in you and you can be me and not us, in Greek there's a distinction. And he does not say in you, individual, singular.

He says here in us, it's plural. So keep in mind that this is also ecclesial. The Holy Spirit dwells among his people, not just in us individually.

First, we see that Timothy's sense of calling is integral to his ministry's steadfastness. Paul wants him to be encouraged and to stand fast. He calls on him again to remember he didn't get himself into this.

God called him into it. Hands were laid on him. Projections were made.

That was not a delusion. And it's important for us to remember our roots. And so, he calls them to that.

Secondly, the Holy Spirit does not instill cowardice, whether it's the cowardice of fear and fleeing, or whether it's the cowardice of laziness and refusal to get engaged. Rather the Holy Spirit thrusts us forth with strength, love, and a clear head. And if we're not finding those things, then we need to continue to seek them from God, because that's what God gives.

Thirdly, gospel service may lead us into duress and not isolate us from it. Verse 8 says, join with me in suffering for the gospel. Sometimes people think about salvation, and they think about blessing, and they think about God coming to them and solving their problems, and that does happen.

But sometimes when we respond to God's call, we get into a lot of hot water. And that's up to God, where he leads us, and what use he wants to make of us, and what we may either enjoy as a fantastic benefit, or what we may endure as very challenging difficulty. Fourthly, the saving work of the gospel transcends earthly

complications, and it confirms that even death can't separate the believer from the love of God in Christ.

If you go back to verses 9 and 10, he talks about God's eternal purposes, which none of us could witness or have known about, and then about how God's purposes have been revealed through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who destroyed death, and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. This all transcends earthly complications, earthly opposition, the rise and fall of kingdoms, and the rise and fall of countries, something bigger than that is the real news going on in the world, the kingdom of God. 5. Paul's own call and its results should rally Timothy when Paul talks in verses 11 and 12 about his appointment, and why he is suffering, why he's not ashamed, how he knows whom he has believed, and how he's sure that he's able to keep what's been entrusted to him against that day.

Paul's example is a direct encouragement to Timothy, especially in that Timothy and Paul would both be acutely aware that Paul is passing on a legacy to Timothy in this letter. If we talk about track and field, we have relay races, and you pass the baton to somebody in a relay race, and Paul is passing a baton. He had a call.

He had challenges. God bore him up. Paul is convinced that all of this is God's doing, and he affirms everything that God has granted.

Timothy should too. Finally, faithfulness to what we receive with the help of Christ and the Spirit is the foundation of ministry fruitfulness. Faithfulness to what we received in the Spirit.

Guard the good deposit that was entrusted to you with the help of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of the risen Christ, who dwells among us and dwells in us. This is the foundation of ministry fruitfulness. Now, this presupposes a deep grounding in this pattern of teaching and this deposit.

It presupposes a living out, a confirmation of it in our daily experience. It presupposes a life of extension of this pattern of sound teaching. So, it's easy to doubt and be destabilized when you don't have a very deep grasp of sound teaching.

But Timothy, as he's being written to here, has at least about 15 years of new member training, so to speak. And so, Paul can be confident in passing along this intel to him and urging him to stay strong. As we get to the end of the chapter, we have examples of disloyalty and loyalty.

And you may recall that the pattern here is kind of like 1 Timothy, where there's a greeting and then there's a challenge and a testimony to how God had been sufficient in Paul's life. And then, a warning about Hymenaeus and Alexander. Well, it's a little different here, but there are some similarities.

First of all, he says, that everyone in the province of Asia has deserted me. So, there's been a defection from Paul and his gospel. This also happened when Paul was in his first imprisonment.

He was in Rome, we think. He was at Philippi. And he talks about how many were opposing him by preaching the gospel sort of parallel to Paul.

And he says doing it for unscrupulous motivations, kind of to make him look bad. Or at his expense, they were founding rival churches. And Paul says, well, as long as they're preaching Christ, I'm going to rejoice.

And they may hate me. But God will sort that out if they're preaching Christ. And something similar goes on here.

Everyone in the province of Asia has deserted me, including Phygelus and Hermogenes. And we don't know anything else about these people. We just know that they deserted Paul.

Then, more positively, may the Lord show mercy to the household of Onesiphorus, because he often refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chains. One scholar observes here that the language may suggest that Onesiphorus has now passed on, that he's now dead. But on the contrary, in verse 17, when he was in Rome, he searched hard for me until he found me.

May the Lord grant that he find mercy from the Lord on that day. How many ways he helped me in Ephesus. We just don't know the details of these things.

But these are snippets of information that would be relevant to Timothy, and would help Timothy to understand Paul's situation. He's seeing people defecting from the gospel. That's going to affect Timothy too.

But positively, you have the loyal gesture of Onesiphorus, and the sacrifice he made, and the courage that he showed, and the good things that he did. This can be an encouragement to Timothy, just as the negative news can be an encouragement to Timothy to be aware of dangers he might face, and also be an incentive to pray with and for Paul. On the one hand, he's deserted.

On the other hand, he's encouraged. These are both things that Timothy could share in a prayer fellowship with Paul, which I'm sure they lived in. We conclude the chapter with the observation of how in the apostolic ministry, and in the pastoral ministry, then and now, people can be such huge let-downs.

And the older you get, the more you see people doing things, and making decisions that you didn't expect. You might have been in school with them. You might have been in seminary with them.

You might have been on church staff with them. And then there are developments that are surprising. This is where we have to believe in God's purpose, and we have to make sure that we are tethered to the Lord, and that we are deeply committed to the teaching we've received.

I think a verse that occurs to me, maybe more than any other verse, although I can't verify that. I don't have a mechanism that tallies the hits of the Bible verses in my psyche. But I find myself often thinking, that the gates of hell will not prevail against the church.

And that's not because I look around and I see such wonderful things, at least in North America, the church, I see a lot of negative things. Or I see people falling away. But I have to have the conviction that I think Paul had, that even if everybody deserts him, if he's been faithful to Christ, they have a problem, he does not have a problem.

Because he belongs to Christ, and Christ will be faithful to his purposes in Paul's life and in the church. But people can also be huge encouragements. And especially as pastors, we're often aware of problems.

And the Bible says, weep with those who weep. And so, you can carry a burden for other people. And it's well and good that we do this as shepherds of their souls.

But we have to be careful. And this sometimes has to do with personality types. Some personality types kind of like to wallow in sadness.

There's a book right now by Susan Cain that's popular called *Bittersweet*. And the whole book is about the mentality of some people who just like sad things. Jeremiah might have been like that.

I don't know, Paul might have been like that. That's a personality type. Some people are very happy, and some people, there's a word in English, lugubrious.

It even sounds sad. Are you a lugubrious person? And if you are, then you'll fixate on the negative. I know a person who says characteristically, well, I hope that.

In every new circumstance in life, you can see the threatening side of it. And it's toxic in the church if we're always fixed on the downside of things. We've got to remember that God also encourages us with people.

And he has encouraged Onesiphorus. And if you think of how short 2 Timothy is, and what a big paragraph this is, dedicated to somebody, that's, he's talked about in the past tense. But he's talked about enough that you can see how he buoyed Paul up, and how he conveys this so it will be encouragement to Timothy.

We can be reminded, that when we have encouraging people in our lives or encouraging circumstances in our lives, let's not fail to give thanks and praise God and find encouragement from God in these people and circumstances. This is all I'll say about 2 Timothy chapter one.

This is Dr. Robert W. Yarbrough and his teaching on the pastoral epistles, Apostolic Instructions for Pastoral Leaders and Their Followers, session 8, 2 Timothy 1.