

2 Timothy 1

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Tape 8198
Pastor Chuck Smith**

Paul is in Rome. He is a prisoner. He has had his first hearing before Nero. It did not go well. The charges against Paul, though they were religious charges, stirred by the Jews, concerning Jesus, whom Paul preached as the Messiah, bringing many Jews to the faith in Jesus Christ. The Jews knew that these religious charges would not stand in a Roman court. And so they, no doubt, have changed the charges against Paul, as conspiracy against the Roman government, declaring that Paul was abdicating loyalty to Jesus Christ rather than loyalty to Caesar.

Now it was demanded by the Roman Government that people declare that Caesar is lord. The Christians would refuse to do that. They believe that Jesus was Lord. It was the idea that the state ruled over the church. And that seems to be through the years, that conflict between state and church as the state always cries, the separation of church and state, when they fear the church might be having an influence that is greater than theirs on the people.

That separation of church and state, I have noted only goes one direction. They are certainly interested in meddling in the church. And more and more they are trying to bring the church under state regulation. But when the church seems to do something of a public declaration of the gospel, then they get all excited and say, oh no, no, no, separation of church and state! Well, if that be so, then it should go both ways.

The charges against Paul now, are insurrection against Rome. And as the result, all of Paul's friends that were with him in Rome, stand also in jeopardy, if Paul is found guilty of these charges, which he was, false charges, though they be. Paul was found guilty. He was ordered executed by Nero. And he was beheaded by the edict of Nero. But it meant that those who were with Paul, also stood in imminent danger. Being associates of Paul, they could be considered by the Roman Government as conspirators with Paul, to overthrow the Roman Government. And thus, many of those who were with Paul in Rome, defected. And Paul was left to stand alone against the charges that were being made. But because the first hearing went badly, it would appear that the sentence of death, as he said to the Corinthians, was now upon him. He realizes that he will soon be giving his life for his witness for Jesus Christ. He realized that his ministry soon to come to an end.

Thus, with that background, he writes this final letter to Timothy, his young son in the faith, who he had left at Ephesus to sort of correct some of the problems that had developed there in that church. One of the bails of the church through the years, has been the false prophets, those who have risen up and are not true representatives of Jesus Christ.

My heart was pained as I read in the papers today, of course front page, of the Santa Ana Register, as they spoke of the tactics that were used, the fraud and deceit that was used, in soliciting funds from the people. They were promising the people that if you will just give to God, God will pay all your bills—this kind of foolishness! And that is painful because it gives to the world, fodder against the church and against true Christianity! The truth is God isn't broke. God doesn't need your money. And to use all kinds of gimmicks to solicit funds from people, is absolutely wrong! And it hurts.

It's painful to see the name of Christ held up in such a way that it would appear that, well, as Paul said in his last letter to Timothy, they say that godliness is a way to get rich. You give and God will make you rich. That is not so! That is not a way to get riches.

So he is writing to Timothy, who is there, straightening out some of the problems that had arisen in the church of Ephesus because of the false prophets, who had risen up. Their desire was to draw a group of people after themselves, and to bring in their different doctrine and divide the body of Christ. So Paul writes this letter to his son in the faith, Timothy, the last letter of Paul.

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus, Interesting! An apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life. Now Paul was probably at point, under the sentence of life. He is facing death there in Rome, but he is an apostle

of Jesus Christ according to the promise of life.

When Jesus was writing to the church of Smyrna, in Revelation chapter two, the church that was going to experience the heavy brunt of Roman persecution, those who were going to be called to give their lives for their faith in Jesus Christ, Jesus said, to the church of Smyrna, be thou faithful unto death and I will give to you a crown of life! Paul, an apostle by the will of God, according to the promise of life, which is in Christ Jesus.

²*To Timothy, my dearly beloved son: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.* A typical, Pauline salutation, grace and peace. In his pastoral epistles, Timothy and Titus, he adds, mercy, knowing that pastors need mercy! And so to the others, to the churches, it was always only grace and peace, but when he is writing to pastors, he adds mercy—grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

³*I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day;* Paul, no doubt, had a tremendous prayer life. To the churches that he wrote, he so many times, would say, that he was remembering them constantly in prayer, night and day, without ceasing. Over and over to each of the churches he would say to each of the churches that he was praying for them without ceasing. Even some of the churches that he not founded himself, churches that he had only heard about, when he wrote to them, he mentioned his, prayer without ceasing, for them. He, no doubt, had a tremendous prayer life! And now to Timothy, his beloved son, praying for him night and day, without ceasing.

Of course, I guess when you are chained to a Roman soldier in the jail, you haven't much to do, but pray! And I wonder if sometimes God doesn't just shove us away, and take us out of the mainstream for awhile in order that we might pray.

Here is Paul sitting in that cell in Rome. Whether or not it was the Mamartine prison, where they take you today, that is across from the forum there, it's a matter of conjecture. But wherever it was, there, sitting in prison in Rome, chained to a Roman guard, Paul is still touching a world for Jesus Christ. That's one of the glorious things about prayer. It is not limited to space. Prayers can travel and do a work for God around the world. Paul is sitting there in Rome, but he is touching the world through prayer.

Praying for Timothy without ceasing, night and day.

⁴*Greatly desiring to see thee, being mindful of thy tears, that I may be filled with joy;* O Timothy, I want so much to see you! Because I remember your tears. I would like to see you that I might be filled with joy. The parting with Timothy was not an easy parting. Timothy was like Paul's own son. Paul perhaps has been arrested and must go back to Rome.

Timothy wanted to go along with him, but it was necessary for Timothy to stay and deal with the problems that existed there in the church in Ephesus. And so the parting was a very tearful parting. Paul remembers the tears with Timothy as they left. And so he said, I greatly desire to see you, because I remember your tears and I desire that I might be filled with joy, the joy of Christian fellowship, the joy of having Timothy with him.

⁵*When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also.* Timothy came from a good heritage. His father was a Greek. His mother was a Jew. His grandmother, Lois, was the first of the family to receive Jesus Christ. She, no doubt, shared them with her daughter, Eunice. Then, along comes Timothy and they raised him up in the Scriptures from the time he was a child. They are teaching him the Scriptures. And he has that faith now in Him. But his faith, the background, the foundation, was laid by his grandmother and his mother, but it came to fruition through the ministry of Paul. And so it was as the result of Paul's ministry that Timothy made his commitment to Jesus Christ, but the foundation had been laid by his grandmother and by his mother.

⁶*Wherefore (he said) I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands.* Now in his first epistle, Paul tells Timothy, don't neglect the gift that is in you. Here he says, stir up the gift.

Now the Greek words are used in stirring up a fire when you've got just the coals and the fire has sort of just dwindled down just to just coals. You take and you stoke the fire. You stir up the coals and then you put fresh wood on it to bring it into flame again.

So Timothy, the gifts that you have, you sort of let them die off into embers. Stir them up! Put fresh fuel on them! Use these gifts that God has given to you that were imparted to you by the laying on of hands.

In the first epistle Paul mentioning the laying on of hands by the elders and through prophecy. Now in the early church they did practice the laying on of hands. The thought or the idea was, God has called me as His servant to represent Him. And so God has called you to represent Him. Now He uses us to accomplish His work. And thus he instructed them to lay their hands on the sick, but as we lay our hands on the sick, there is you know, they made this a crazy, mystical thing, the New Agers have taken this. They talk now about energy and so forth that goes out from your hands. They have made it a whole mystical thing, which it was not every intended to be!

The whole purpose was to be God's instrument and through me because I am God's servant. He chooses to work through men, through my laying on of hands, it is really being God's instrument, His laying His hand on you. I'm just the tool, the instrument.

But the real value as I see it, is that it gives a person a point of contact for the releasing of their faith. Now I believe that true faith is not passive but active. There is, I hesitate, because I guess there is, let's put it that way. There is a passive faith, if such a thing could be. That is where you say, well yes, I believe that God can do it. God can do anything! But believing that God can do it and believing that God will do it, are two different things, many times. Of course, I believe that God can do it, but many times you don't believe that God will do it.

Then to take it one step further, I believe that God will do it now! Now that's real active faith! That's the activating of faith, when I say that God will do it now. So many times, we go on with, well yes, I'm just trusting the Lord. I believe that God going to do it in His good time. But that's still different than, I believe that God is going to do it now!

You remember, there was a lady who made her way through the crowd when Jesus was on His way to the house of Jairus, whose little daughter had just died. And as the crowd was pushing, shoving, trying to get close to Jesus, suddenly, He stopped. He said, who touched me?

Peter said, are You kidding, Lord? These people are pushing and shoving us like crazy. I'm getting upset at this. What do You mean, who touched Me?

Jesus said, I felt virtue going out of Me. So a woman came, kneeling and trembling. She confessed, Lord, I'm the one who touched You. I've been hemorrhaging for twelve years. I've spent all of my money on doctors. They couldn't cure me. But I knew that if I could just touch the hem of Your garment, I would be made whole. I'm the one that touched You.

And Jesus, said, oh woman, great is your faith! Be it done unto you even as you will. And the hemorrhaging stopped.

Now, she had set a point of contact for the releasing of faith. In her mind that she had set this point, I know if I can just but touch, even the hem of His garment, that's all I need. That I'll be healed if I can just touch Him. That became a point of contact for the releasing of her faith, so that when she touched, immediately the hemorrhaging stopped. She released the faith. I'll believe He'll stop it now, the minute I touch! And faith was released and she was healed.

We read how that when Peter walked down the street, they would set sick people along the sidewalk or along the street. When Peter would pass by, the shadow of Peter falling on the people, they would be healed. Not that there was anything spiritual or dynamic in Peter's shadow, but it gave a point of contact for the releasing of faith. So as Peter would walk down the street, they would take a look, find out where the sun was, find out where the shadows were falling, and set their friends so, you know, the shadow of Peter would fall on them. As it did—ooh, yes. They released faith and were healed.

You remember when Jesus came to the man, who was at the pool of Bethesda. The story was that every once in a while, an angel would come down and trouble the waters of the pool of Bethesda. And the first one into the pool after the waters were troubled, would be healed, so there were all types of sick people that

would sit around the edge of the pool, waiting for the water to be troubled so that they could plunge in and be the first one in. Because their faith was set to be activated by the troubling of the water. I just have to be the first one in! And Jesus saw a man lying there, who was lame. He said to him, would you like to be healed? And he said, well, I have a problem. I'm lame. Whenever the waters get troubled, I have a hard time getting in and someone always gets there ahead of me.

Now, Jesus didn't say what's your problem, man? He said, would you like to be healed? And the guy shares his problem. That's not what Jesus asked. But there was that feeling and because it was a place of the releasing of faith, the first one in would be healed.

With Paul, they would take his sweat bands and place them on people and they would be healed. Again, a point of contact.

So the laying on of hands becomes a point of contact for the releasing of faith. So they laid hands on the sick. The elders would pray for them, laying hands on them. It gave the point for the releasing of faith.

Jesus said, according to your faith, be it done unto you. And it is good to have that point of contact where we release our faith in the laying on of hands, gives to us that point of contact.

Now, also, the laying on of hands was a practice of sending people forth into the ministry. It indicated a partnership in their ministry. So when the Spirit spoke through the prophets in the church of Antioch and said, separate unto Me, Paul and Barnabas for the ministry where I have called them, they fasted and prayed. The next day they laid hands on them and they were sent forth to Cypress to begin taking the gospel into all the world. But the laying on of hands—we're in partnership with you. And the imparting to them, they laying on of hands, that ordaining process. Ordaining you to do the work of God.

Now as Timothy was being ordained into the ministry, there was that laying on of hands by the elders. Prophecy was given. Timothy was given gifts for the ministry. We're not told what they were. But somehow Timothy had sort of let them lie dormant. He hadn't been exercising them. So in the first letter, Paul said, don't neglect them. Now he gets a little stronger. Stir them up! Begin to use them again.

⁷For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; It probably was that Timothy was a little hesitant, a little fearful to exercise these gifts. But he said God hasn't given us the Spirit of fear.

but of power, Use that power of God's Spirit, the gifts that you have.

and of love, and of a sound mind. ⁸*Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God;* Use the power of God that He put upon your life! Use those gifts, perhaps the gift of evangelism, because he is encouraging not to be afraid, to witness for the Lord.

Don't be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord nor of me, His prisoner. But be a partaker of the afflictions of the gospel. If persecution comes, handle it! Don't hold back because of fear of persecution, fear of rejection.

The Bible tells us that the fear of man is a snare. It's a trap. And we see many people who have been trapped because of the fear of man. The fear of man bringeth a snare. But who so puts his trust in the Lord, shall be saved.

Speaking of the power of God, he said, ⁹*Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works,* By grace are you saved through faith, that is not of yourself, a gift of God and not of works, lest any man should boast! For we are His workmanship. So He has saved us, saved us from the wrath to come, saved us from the consequences of our sin. For sin is destructive. All sin is destructive.

I challenge you to go through the commandments of God and the things that He told them they should not do, are things that if you do them, have a destructive effect upon you, physically or emotionally or spiritually. Sin destroys! But we are saved from the consequences of our sin. Not only has He saved us, He's called us with a holy calling. He's called us to be holy. He's called us to live a righteous life, not according to our works.

but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, God's love, God's gift of love, was something that was ordained before the foundations of the world were ever laid.

God created man for meaningful fellowship. God prepared the earth, the environment for man to live

upon the earth, to be sustained upon this planet. And then God created man, placed him on this planet in order that God might have a meaningful, loving, relationship with His creation. He created us not as robots, as automaton—automatic responses. But He created us as free moral agents with a capacity of choice. Giving to us the capacity of choice, it was essential to give us something to choose. Thus, God placed in the middle of the garden, the tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, with the command not to eat of it.

In order that choice might be meaningful, that tree had to be very attractive. And I believe that it was. I think that the fruit on that tree, probably looked more delicious than any of the other trees in the garden. Do you really love Me? Do you love Me enough to obey My commands? And to know that tree is dangerous. It is destructive. God says, if you will eat of it, you will surely die! It's destructive! And so is all sin! The destructive nature of sin, but God knew that man would eat and bring death upon mankind. God wasn't shocked when Adam ate. He knew he was going to.

But you see, God had even a deeper program. He wanted to reveal to man, just how much He did want fellowship and how much He did love him!

And so from the beginning, God planned to show the depth of His love to mankind, even to those who sinned. So when man sinned, He would send His only Begotten Son, to bear man's sin, to die in man's place, to take the penalty and the punishment for man's sins, that God might show His grace and love to man through the gift of His Son, Jesus Christ.

Jesus said greater love has no man than this, than a man will lay down his life for his friend. Then He laid down His love for us, showing us the extremes of God's love for us. So He has saved us and He's called us, not according to our worth, but according to His own purpose. And His grace, which was given to us in Christ Jesus, before the world ever began, the eternal counsels of God.

¹⁰*But is now made manifest* It always existed, but it is now made manifest. Up until this point, it wasn't manifested.

It was manifested *by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death*, Death was the consequence of sin. God said to Adam, in the day you will eat thereof, you will surely die! A spiritual death, as we made mention this morning, God is a superior trinity, the Father, Son and Spirit. Man in an inferior trinity of spirit, soul and body. Now, when God created Adam, there was this fellowship and communion, the purposes of God, for creating man, fellowship and communion. And that existed when God first created Adam because God's Spirit combined with man's spirit. There is where man met God. There is where man communed with God and worshipped God. Jesus said, God is a Spirit. They that worship Him must worship Him in Spirit and in truth. So here is where man connects with God, in the realm of the Spirit.

But when Adam sinned, his spirit died. God said in the day you eat of it, you will surely die. His spirit died. And Adam then became as an animal, living only in a body conscious existence. He lost that consciousness and awareness of God, that blessed communion with God. That died with his spirit. Death entered the world, spiritual death. So that man, now, was only a twofold being, rather than a three-fold being. He is now only body and soul or body and mind. And the mind is now filled with only the body needs.

What is the very first body consciousness that Adam had? Adam and Eve recognized or realized they were naked. Now, that's body consciousness. So they decided to sew fig leaves together, to cover their nakedness. Have you ever noticed how scratchy fig leaves are? I don't think that that was very comfortable. But that's so typical of man's efforts by works, to cover the guilt of his sin. There are so many people that are trying to be justified of the evil or the sin that they have done, by their works. By their righteousness, but by the works of righteousness, can no one be justified. But there was the very first endeavor to cover their sin by their works.

You remember God gave them coats of skin to cover their nakedness. It's interesting, it means that animals had to be slain. There had to be death in order to cover their nakedness. But from that time on, Adam to his progeny could not pass on a spirit because that had died.

But Jesus came to abolish the spiritual death and to bring us spiritual life. And so when Nicodemus, one of the rulers of the Jews came to Him and said to Him, Master, we know that You are a teacher, that has come from God, because no one can do the miracles that you have done except God is with him. And Jesus

said to him, except you be born again, you cannot enter the Kingdom of God.

And Nicodemus questioned this, what do You mean, born again? How can a man be born again when he is old? You can't enter a second time into your mother's womb and be born. Jesus said, no, that which is born of the flesh is flesh, but that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit. You need to have a spiritual birth, Nicodemus. Don't marvel that I would say, that you've got to be born again. There's got to be a spiritual birth. How? Jesus said, well, as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so the Son of Man is going to be lifted up on a cross, that whosoever would believe in Him would not perish but have everlasting life. For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him would not perish. That is, would not die. But would have everlasting life. Jesus abolished death! He made it possible for the Spirit to be born in each of us—a new birth! A Spiritual birth.

And Paul said, you, has he made alive, who were dead in your trespasses and sin. Who in times past, you walked like the world, according to the course of this world, which is being directed by the prince of the power of the air. That works now in the children of disobedience, among whom you all once had your manner of life because you were living after the desires of your flesh and the desires of your mind. You were by nature, by nature, the children of wrath. But you've been born again. You've got a new nature. You've got a new life. If any man is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old things are passed away, everything becomes new. So the Spiritual birth. He has abolished death by giving us life, eternal life, Spiritual life.

and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel: He has brought to us life and immortality.

Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians, chapter fifteen, that I show you, he said, a mystery. We will not all of us, die. But we will all be changed in a moment, in a twinkling of an eye at the last trump. For the trump of God shall sound. The dead shall be raised incorruptible. Then, he said, we shall be changed for this corruption, talking about our bodies, has to put incorruption. And this mortal, talking about our mortal bodies, must put on immortality. And then shall be brought to pass the saying, oh death, where is your sting? Oh, grave, where is your victory? No longer do we need to be subject unto bondage until the fear of death. No longer is death the king of terror, as Job called it. But now, Jesus, the King of life, has brought to us, eternal life! Life and immortality through Jesus!

¹¹*Whereunto I am appointed a preacher,* One who proclaims the Good News. This is the gospel. God has appointed me to share this Good News with all mankind.

I'm a preacher, *and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.* I'm a preacher. I'm also an apostle. And I am also a teacher of the Gentiles. So Paul wore three hats. One, he was a preacher. And you read that Paul would go into a city. He would preach Christ unto them. And when many had come to the faith, Paul would remain and would teach them.

One of the great weaknesses of the church today, is that they have oftentimes, proclaimed the message. And they proclaim the message of salvation. And they proclaim the message of salvation, but they never go on to teach the people what it is walk in the Spirit. What it is to grow up into maturity in Jesus Christ. People are left for years in a state of spiritual infancy. As Paul refers to it in his letter to the Corinthians, as babes in Christ. They are still bound up in the desires of the flesh and in the things of the flesh, never growing up into maturity. They are still playing with rattles and toys, rather than growing up. They are still on the bottle, not eating the meat.

So Paul was a teacher, that's first. And an apostle, that is, an ambassador, one who has come to represent his nation. We are here as His representative, our Lord's representative. We are ambassadors for Christ. We are His representatives to the world around us of the heavenly kingdom and of the glories of that heavenly kingdom. And how that our kingdom desires to make peace by bring men into submission to the King of kings and the Lord of lords. But then he is also a teacher, an instructor there in the church.

¹²*For the which cause I also suffer these things:* For the which cause, Paul said, because I am a preacher, an apostle, a teacher of the Gentiles, for this cause because Paul had gone to the Gentiles with the gospel, I also suffer these things. That is, the imprisonment, the charges, the sentence of death.

nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to

keep that which I have committed unto him against that day. The word, committed, there, is word for a deposit in trust. You go down to the bank. You open up a savings account and you give or you deposit money into that savings account, trusting that the bank will be faithful in paying you interest and when you need the money, you can go collect it. That's the idea of the Greek word, something that has been entrusted in faith.

What has Paul entrusted to the Lord? His life. I've committed my life. I'm not ashamed of the gospel. I know in whom I have believed.

And that word, know, is *gnosko*. I know by experience. I've experienced what it is to walk with the Lord, to have the joy of His fellowship. I know in whom I have believed, and am persuaded, convinced. He is able. I can't do it, but He is able!

Writing to the Ephesians, after he had prayed for them, he said, now unto him is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think. I know that He is able to keep that which I have committed. My life is committed to God.

Writing to the Philippian church, he said, I find myself with mixed emotions for I have a desire to die and to be with Christ, which is far better, nevertheless, I am pulled because I know that you still feel a need of me. I've been your teacher. I've been the one that brought the gospel. I've taught you the things of the Lord. And you still feel a need of me. So I am pulled by that need that is here, but oh, I'd rather just depart and to be with Christ, which is far better.

So commitment. He said I want Christ to be magnified in my body. And if by life or by death, it really doesn't matter to me. I just want Christ to be magnified! And that is what comes from commitment. There are issues that worry us, issues that create anxiety in our hearts many times. But what we need to do is just commit them to the Lord, those things that we don't understand, those situations that we can't seem to change. Those uncertainties that are in our future. We don't know how the ball is going to bounce. We don't know what the outcome is going to be. We can sit there and worry about it the rest of our lives or we can just say, well Lord, it's in Your hands. And whatever, You know best! Do that Lord! You work out Your purpose in my life. And thus I can live with confidence even though things may not go as I want them to go. I know that God is in control. He is doing what is best, for all things are working together for good to those who love God and are called according to His purpose.

And so commitment. I know in whom I have believed. I am persuaded. He is able to keep that which I've committed. I've committed my life. I've committed my future to the Lord. Whatever he wants, that's what's going to be. And if my head is severed by Nero's edict, fine. To be absent from this body is to be present with the Lord! Because Jesus has abolished death. He has given us life and immortality.

And so Paul declares, ¹³*Hold fast the form of sound words*, And these are the sound words, the words of commitment. Hold fast to that commitment that you have made.

which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. Hold on to these things, Timothy. The words that I've shared with you. Hold them fast in faith and in love, which is in Christ Jesus.

That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us. The good things of the gospel of God's grace, the good things of the power of God in our lives, the gift that were given to you by the Holy Spirit, keep them by the Holy Spirit who dwell in us.

¹⁵*This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me;* When Paul went to Rome, there, no doubt, went a company of people with him from Ephesus. He gives some of the names. They've now, for fear, turned away from Paul. As we mentioned earlier, the hearings did not go well. The sentence of death was given on Paul. He will have his appeal, but things don't look good.

And so, he mentions, *of whom are Phygelus and Hermogenes.* They've turned away from me. They have sort of deserted me. It's interesting, two names. This is the only time they are mentioned in the Bible. We don't know anything about them, except that through the years, they are known as deserters. Poor fellows. They, no doubt, were afraid to stand with Paul. And so as Paul mentions them, they go down in history as men who deserted Paul in the time of pressure.

But on the other hand, ¹⁶*The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain:* God bless him! God bless his house! He came and visited me often. He

encouraged me. He refreshed me. He wasn't ashamed of the fact that I was there in chains.

¹⁷*But, when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found me.* Now, Onesiphorus was from Ephesus. He went to Rome, probably on business. But he knew that Paul was in prison, so he went searching for Paul, diligently searched. Now, that was dangerous thing because Paul was considered at this time an enemy of the State. But Onesiphorus searched for Paul diligently and he found him.

May ¹⁸*The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day:* Jesus said, blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy. Jesus had said, I was in prison and you didn't visit me. They said, Lord, when did we see You in prison and not visit? And he said, in as much as you did it not to the least of these my brethren, you did not it to me. And so Onesiphorus was faithful. He found Paul. He refreshed him. May the Lord grant unto him that he would find mercy of the Lord in that day.

and in how many things he ministered unto me at Ephesus, thou knowest very well. He showed great kindness to Paul when Paul was there in Ephesus. Timothy was aware of this man and of his help that he gave to Paul in the things of the ministry. And now Paul speaks about him, having diligently sought him out in Rome and refreshed him there. God bless him! And may God have mercy on this man, and bless him for what he has done!

So we come to the close of chapter one. Next week we'll continue in chapter two. This is an excellent epistle. There are a lot of good instructions. I encourage you to read over chapter two until you get a good grasp on it. You know it's amazing. I know it with me. A lot of times, I don't really grab a particular passage until I've read it through maybe twenty-five or thirty times. Then I suddenly see something in it that I hadn't seen up to that point. Wow, is that there? I've read this thing over and over. I didn't see that before. And it's something that takes a lot of chewing. It takes a lot of intense kind of meditation and study. So I encourage you. Read it and re-read it. And re-read it until the Lord begins to open up some of these, rich nuggets, to you in your own personal devotions and study. You'll be blessed if you do.

Father, we thank You for the opportunity and the privilege of studying Your Word. And Lord, we pray that You will give to us wisdom and understanding, especially this week as we go to the polls, as we cast our vote for men to represent us and women to represent us, give us great discernment and give us great wisdom. And Lord, we do pray for righteous government, men of high standards, men of high values, that we might live Godly and peaceable lives. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.