

Words of Hope for Seasons of Distress A Study of 2 Timothy

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Introduction to the Lectures

- Scholarship for the church
- Questioned the last phrase of the title—“seasons of distress”
 - Sounds awfully negative
 - Also realistic
 - Somewhere between Polyanna and Chicken Little lies the domain of Christian hope
 - Based on 2 Tim 3:1
 - 2 Tim 3:1
 - You must understand this, that in the last days distressing times will come. (NRS)
 - **Last days**
 - Apocalyptic language—a world view—kingdoms in conflict
 - The time between the first and second advents
 - Inaugurated eschatology (D-Day and V-Day)
 - In the meantime...Paul is incarcerated in Rome as a prisoner of the state—conflicting narratives: Jesus is Lord vs. Caesar is Lord
 - **Distressing times**—*chalepos* = hard, rugged, fierce, difficult, trying
 - Used only one other time in NT = Matt 8:28—two demoniacs came out of the tomb and were “so fierce” (NRS), “dangerously violent” (NJB), “violent” (NIV), “so fierce” (ESV), “exceeding fierce” (KJV)]
 - Translations of *chalepos* in 2 Tim 3:1
 - ESV = times of difficulty
 - KJV = perilous times
 - NIV = terrible times
 - NRS = distressing times
 - RSV = times of stress
 - Image of the American flag flown upside down
 - **Will come**—*enistemi*—“to be present” = future tense
 - Rom 8:38 ...nor can things present separate us from the love of God
 - 1 Cor 3:22. . . the world, life or death, the present or the future -- all belong to you (1 Cor. 3:22 NJB)
 - 1 Cor 7:26 in view of the impending¹ crisis (1 Cor. 7:26 NRS)
 - Gal 1:14 who gave himself for our sins to set us free from the present evil age, (Gal. 1:4 NRS)

- 2 Thes 2:2 asserting that the day of the Lord has already come (NIV)
- The settings compared (then and now)
- THEN
 - My conclusion: Paul is the author (co-author?)
 - External: Suspicion of Christians by the state
 - The confession, “Jesus is Lord” could be seen as
 - A nuisance
 - Dangerous—it might arouse the gods
 - A treasonous treat
 - Nero’s pogrom against Christians began in 64
 - Eusebius dates Paul’s death in 67
 - Internal: Tim faced a crisis in the church at Ephesus
 - Opponents/false teachers at work
 - Bad CONTENT (beliefs) = bad CONDUCT (behaviors)
 - Great line from NTW: “Evil is what you get when the mind is twisted out of shape and then the body goes along for the ride” (Romans/Paul for Everyone, 25)
 - His task was to teach, preach, and counsel in such a way that it “enables believers to *think the faith* in order to more fully *live the faith.*”
- NOW: Situation of the contemporary church externally and internally:
 - Context has changed... Dorothy to Toto, “I’ve a feeling we’re not in Kansas anymore.
 - There has been a sea change in the values, manners, and politics in our country.
 - Christians and the church are increasingly marginalized.
 - Richard Neuhaus in 1984, *The Naked Public Square*—political discourse and political doctrine was being thought and spoken without attention to Christianity and its values.
 - Mid-80s the Bible Chair arrangement with UT was discontinued based on the opinion written by the Texas Attorney General that the arrangement violated the separation of church and state.
 - Seems that anything can be taught as long as it’s not Christian
 - 1989 H&W *Resident Aliens: Life in the Christian Colony*—if America was ever a Christian nation, it isn’t now...learn to live as resident aliens...
 - More recently—
 - Charles Chapot, *Strangers in a Strange Land* (how do we serve God in this strange land that now views the Church, her teachings, her people with suspicion or an enemy. Using boxing gloves.
 - Anthony Esolen, *Out of the Ashes: Rebuilding American Culture*. Providence College: Prof of literature—heavyweight—translation of the Divine Comedy; embattled within his university, secularist colleagues and students are calling for his head—he is politically incorrect. The boxing gloves are off and he’s swinging a 2x4.

- Rod Dreher, *The Benedict Option: A Strategy for Christians in a Post-Christian Nation*; the church needs to prepare for the coming Dark Age, inside the church is being hollowed out by pseudo-Christianity, outside religious liberty is being challenged by secularization. Dreher looks to Benedict of Nursia who in the 6th century saw the moral chaos in the collapsing Roman Empire and built communities based on *stability, conversion and obedience* worked out in community through *prayer, work and study*.
 - Need to be in conversation with such “prophets”
 - Example: First Things Lecture
 - Example: Professor Peterson’s presentation at Friends’ Day LINK
 - Resident Aliens/Strangers in a Strange Land
 - Need help with language and how to navigate.
 - = we need guides.
 - Not on a cruise ship, but a battleship under attack.
 - Calls for different strategy
 - Different rhetoric is needed
 - Requires courage—stay focused and grounded in the faith—oppose foolishness...
 - Charles Chaput = *Strangers in a Strange Land* Chapter 1 “Resident Aliens” – “Christians have many good reasons for hope. Optimism is another matter. Optimism assumes that, sooner or later, things will naturally turn out better. Hope has no such illusions.”
 - That is because the gospel is framed by the cross and the resurrection of Jesus.
 - Cf. Luther’s theology of the cross in contrast with a theology of glory.
 - Luther debated and fought righteousness by works (self-righteousness) and especially the sale of indulgences (the church can release an individual from divine punishment in the future by its dispensations; some human action is required in order for the release to occur)
 - Bonhoeffer saw it as “cheap grace” and was a leader in the Confessing Church as it challenged the nationalistic presumptions of the Nazis. There is only one further (guide, leader), he proclaimed. That further is Jesus Christ. Two kingdoms and narratives in conflict.
 - In these last days we should examine narratives, in the church and out of it, to see if it is a theology of the cross or a theology of glory that is being espoused.
- A church (and ministers) in distress have options.
 - Withdraw
 - Retaliate
 - Accommodate (pressure on social and moral matters—two conflicting narratives)
 - Engage
- We need a strategy and direction to face this season of distress with courage.
 - 2 Timothy is a valuable resource

- 2:2 as strategy: “And what you have heard from me through many witnesses entrust to faithful people who will be able to teach others as well.” (NRS)
- Strategic suggestions by David Bartlett (DB) in a section titled “The Pastorals and Ministry Today” (*Ministry in the New Testament*, pp. 179-184). “. . . a ministry that seeks to find light for its practice from the Pastorals will need to reflect on at least these [six] issues:”
 - 1) Structurally [in terms of church organization and structure] the Pastorals are the farthest” right” of any NT writing, but still stand far “left” of most contemporary church practice.
 - DB resists the clergy-laity divide while recognizing the need for strong leaders.
 - “. . . ordination recognizes gifts of leadership but does not bestow them” (181). See my comments on 2 Tim 1:6
 - 2) “A ministry defined by the pastorals will include a strong stress on continuity [tradition]. I do not see here any sense of apostolic succession, there is clearly a succession of both right doctrine and right leadership.”
 - 3) Above all, those who are ordained [DB questions whether “ordination” is the best term for the recognition of gifted leadership] are ordained to teach. The test of their competence is both the genuineness of their call and the correctness of their claims.”
 - 4) DB favors church polity that recognizes and authorizes the leadership of “teaching elders,” and their primary function is to teach right faith and, as a corollary, to discipline those who go astray. . . . “There is a tradition, a faith, to be interpreted and passed on. There is a disciplinary role for a church leader: to name false teaching and to chastise mistaken faith.”
 - 5) The pastorals stress the congruity between right teaching and right practice on the part of those entrusted with the teaching office. This good conduct is appropriate for all Christians, but there are even higher standards for those who teach.
 - 6) “Finally, the Pastorals provide one option for dealing with dissolution within the church and disapproval without.”
 - The structures of church authority
 - To define the constitution and its offices
 - To make sure the standards [of qualification] are sufficiently stringent [especially important in a tradition that does not practice ordination of ministers]
 - The Spirit is cited in the Pastorals
 - But the Spirit seems to be there to primarily do these things:
 - Validate the tradition
 - Sanction the structures
 - The Spirit is not there to:
 - Stir and certainly not to stir revolt
 - Or even much rethinking
 - It is a matter of discerning the times
 - If the threat is:

- Anarchy then perhaps we need to build better barricades
 - Morbidity [diseased, gloomy] then we pray the freeing of the Spirit
 - To state the issue that way is to confess a bias.
 - **“Yet one can only acknowledge that we do live in a time when the church is under stress. The call for stronger order may not be sufficient for our day, but it is understandable. And in the Pastorals that call finds scriptural ground”** (184, emphasis added).
- Unpacking 2 Tim 3:1
 - There is a different change in Paul’s mood in 2 Tim from that found in the other prison epistles, especially Philippians (especially 1:12-30). His optimistic enthusiasm there has settled into a type of realistic resignation.
 - LTJ/YAB (319f.): “In 2 Timothy the mood is much grimmer. Paul does not express any hope of this-life deliverance, but sees his death as imminent (4:6). His mission is under serious assault, both from opponents like Alexander the coppersmith (4:14) and from rival teachers like Hymenaios and Philetos (2:17-18), who are enjoying considerable success (3:1-5, 13; 4:3-4). At this critical juncture, furthermore, Paul feels abandoned by some of his key allies.... [Several factors] suggest that “Paul’s abandonment is as much emotional as physical.”
 - Commenting on 3:1, LTJ [YAB, 403] notes that “Paul uses the future tense [distressing times will come] in the next verse as well [people will be lovers of themselves...; this leads into an extended vice list], but 3:6 makes it clear that the opponents are already bringing on these times. This is *not* so much a prediction of the *future* as a diagnosis of the present” (also see JRWS, Towner/NICNT).
 - Meet the challenge, but don’t despair
 - James Thompson gives us an appropriate perspective: “Paul’s warnings in 2 Timothy 3:1-9 were not intended to reduce the church to despair over its future, for this warning was only the prelude to his instructions for meeting the challenge in 2 Timothy 3:10-17. Deliverance for the church under siege, Paul knew, was a well-equipped leader who could offer an alternative to polluted teachings that were invading the church. Only the teacher who had received the proper education could meet the challenge, Timothy was that leader.”
 - Cf. Eugene Peterson (*Praying with Jesus* (Apr 14/Matt 10:16-23): “We live spiritually and morally in hostile country. We need to be realistic about that. What we must not do is write doomsday endings to this experience. Family strife, social discord, church unrest are not the end. Christ is the end” (emphasis added).
- An affirmation and appeal to those who preach and teach arising from 2 Tim 4:1-5
 - Vv. 1-2 is a solemn charge to Tim and preachers/teachers of all time
 - “Preach the word” *keruxon ton logon*
 - The charge is preceded (3:1-13) and followed (4:3-5) by references to the opponents/troublemakers (the ones with bad CONTENT and bad CONDUCT)

- Jesus came preaching and sent the apostles to preach the good news about the kingdom of God
- It must be done “whether the time is favorable or unfavorable” (in season or out of season)
- Vv. 3-4 sound contemporary
 - Preaching and preachers are not held in high regard
 - Inside the church as well as outside
 - Some of that is self-inflicted
 - Much is not
 - What will we do? With the momentous challenges facing us, Tom Wright says, “How easy it is for preachers then to back off, to give up trying to lead their people into further truth and insight, to trim down the ministry of the word to a few scattered reflections . . . often with the shoulder shrugging comment that nobody likes sermons these days anyways. And how easy, too, for a preacher who knows that what he or she has to say will be unpopular with some members of the church, or will get them into trouble if the local magistrates hear about it, to trim the content of the preaching down to more general platitudes. Paul, of course, will have none of it. Keep going whether the time is right or wrong!” (125)
- Those of us assigned to stand in pulpits and behind lecterns have been given a **sacred trust**
 - You are a witness to use Long’s image. Sent by the congregation to the text and charged to come back with a report of what “was seen.”
 - In a sense, you are a “scout” as well.
 - You find where the good water and food shelter is. You direct.
 - You see what dangers might lie ahead. You warn.
 - Be aware of the many distractions that will lure you away from your first duty of study and proclamation/teaching
 - If your heart or your gifts lie in some other area than preaching then please do not accept the call to preach
 - The other ministries are honorable, good and needed, but like the apostles be insistent and say, “It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables” (Acts 6:2)
- Practical points about the challenge of preaching:
 - “Good preaching like good theology does not derive simply from information but from the struggle to bring the text of our shared lives into direct and sometimes frightening dialogue.” LTJ/KPG (9-10)
 - Tom Long makes three important points about the claim made in a given sermon (*The Witness of Preaching*, 100).
 - Even the smallest biblical text is larger than any single sermon.
 - A biblical text can potentially yield many meanings, and the next time we go to the same biblical text we may well hear a very different claim than we heard this time.

- The claim of the text is very occasion specific; it is what we hear on *this day*, from *this text*, for *these people*, in *these circumstances*, at *this juncture* in their lives.
 - Keep those points in mind as we work through 2 Timothy and seek leads for sermons
 - Two recommended resources and a practical recommendation:
 - Resource: *Preaching Words: 144 Key Terms in Homiletics* by John McClure. It has been described as:
 - Part refresher course in the history of preaching
 - Part overview of contemporary homiletical thought
 - Part preachers' workshop
 - Resource: *The New Interpreter's Handbook of Preaching* edited by Paul Scott Wilson. This text offers practical guidance on methodology while maintaining scholarly integrity.
 - Practical recommendation: Read or reread at least one book on homiletics annually.
- Finishing well.
 - Some of you have, if God wills, decades of preaching still ahead of you.
 - Some of us are likely in our last years of preaching
 - At either place, closer to the starting line, or nearing the finish line, we need to be conscious and intentional about the discipline required to finish well.
 - In 2 Timothy, we find Paul discouraged, but not down, and certainly not out of the race. He is fighting to the very end: I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.
 - May we use 2 Timothy to help us and our congregations do likewise.
 - Two good resources for encouragement on finishing well. One is fiction and the other is a memoir.
 - Marilynne Robinson, *Gilead*
 - Eugene Peterson, *The Pastor*

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<http://bestcommentaries.com/pastoral-epistles/>

T = Technical

P = Pastoral

D = Devotional

S = Special Study

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Introductory Matters for 2 Timothy

- A collection—Pastoral Epistles
 - Order
 - Canonically = 1 Tim, 2 Tim, Titus
 - Some = Titus, 1 Tim, 2 Tim
 - Others = 1 Tim, Titus, 2 Tim
 - As a collection or individually? “Notice how our language gives us away: we speak of the ‘pastorals.’ But a handy means of cataloging often means as well assumptions about the contents or perspectives of three quite different letters. It is obviously prejudicial and trivializing to speak of the ‘outlook’ of the pastorals, or the ‘church order’ of the pastorals, as though all three letters were exactly alike” (LTJ/KPG, 4). LET EACH LETTER BE READ IN ITS OWN RIGHT.
- Authorship
 - Paul (authenticity) growing number of scholars taking this position
 - Amanuensis—role in ancient letter writing
 - Luke as author:
 - C. F. D. Moule, following the work of S. D. Wilson concluded that Luke wrote all three PE. But he wrote during Paul’s lifetime, at Paul’s behest, and in part (but only in part), at Paul’s direction (referenced in BW, 56)
 - Quinn takes a similar position.
 - Cf. Bartlett, “In fact, the relationship between Acts 20 and the Pastorals (especially 2 Timothy) helps us in estimating the historical situation out of which the Pastorals grew. It is possible that the author of Acts 2 knew the Pastorals or vice versa; it is even possible that the author of Acts 20 was

the author of the Pastorals—that the Pastorals represent the third volume of a work that included Luke and Acts” (154).

- Pseudonymous—late first or second century
 - Vocabulary is considerably different from non-disputed epistles of Paul (BW refers to de Silva who asks, “If Paul could use 2,177 different words in the other ten letters, why should he not add another 306 in the Pastorals?” (58).
 - The theology, the argument goes, is much more institutional and conservative.
 - The ecclesiology in particular, is different (fits late first or early second century).
 - Long makes an important observation: “[Paul] is not writing as systematic theologian. He is writing as a pastor to real congregations, congregations in trouble, and the brush fires are starting to spread (6).”
 - A few pages latter, Long changes the metaphor. “. . . maybe we get a different picture of [Paul] once we consult the weather radar. Maybe, just maybe, he is working like mad to nail a blue tarp on the roof of the church in the middle of a thunderstorm. When the howling winds and pounding rains are threatening to destroy the house, it may not be fair to criticize him for not installing a screen porch and skylights. Perhaps he’s just a tightly wound conservative. Or maybe it’s that he believes, as the windows rattle in the gale and the shingles fly off the roof, that the church and the gospel are worth conserving” (10).
 - Not consistent with the chronology of Acts
- Canonical status must be considered
 - Some readily dismiss PE as inferior and the offending portions can be excised from Christian teaching
 - The offending points:
 - *Tradition over charisma* [closed canon vs. open canon or canon within a canon]
 - [A rule of faith vs. freedom from restrictive rules
 - Logos vs. pathos
 - What the Bible says vs. what I want the Bible to say
 - Orthodoxy vs. heterodoxy
 - The historic Christian faith really does matter vs. not tied to history [To some extent the Restoration/Stone-Campbell Movement was set up for this dialectic]
 - Church order: *structure* rather than *spirit* [cf. missional method of church planting]
 - *Polemic* rather than *persuasion*
 - *Sexism*
 - *Hierarchalism* [authority from above]
 - Long, drawing on Ellen Davis’ appeal, in *The Art of Reading Scripture*, for a “charitable reading” (this does not mean pity) of difficult passages.

- Long says that “generosity demands that the author of the Pastorals receive a closer and better look, that he not be dismissed as merely a stiffer, more buttoned-up version of the ‘real Paul’” (10).
- To read the Pastorals as Scripture means taking on two roles (Long, 9):
 - “... as the prosecuting attorney putting these texts to the test.”
 - “... as the defense attorney ... in the end, we come around ... to advocate for them.”
- “But to read these documents as Scripture does mean recognizing that the church has included them in the canon of Scripture because, through the centuries, it has heard gospel in them and found its life formed by them more fully into the pattern of Jesus Christ” (Long, 8).
- Cf. de Silva: “The debate over authorship, however, should not be regarded as a debate over authority and value, even though the results of the former debate are frequently brought to bear on the latter question. The church recognized these *texts* as authoritative and reflective of apostolic witness and vision for the church” (*An Introduction to the NT*, 748).
- Circumstances
 - Paul
 - Prison in Rome, 1:17 (assuming release after Acts 28 and a few more years of ministry)
 - Neronian persecution
 - Great fire in Rome in 64; pogrom against Christians (cf. Tacitus)
 - Eusebius puts Paul’s death in 67
 - Arrest
 - Where? (Rome? // Ephesus-Miletus, 4:20 Trophimus at Miletus? // Troas, 4:13-Carpus?)
 - How/why? (Alexander? 4:14; another accuser/delator; a Roman pogrom?)
 - Resources
 - C. S. Wansink, “Roman Law and Legal System,” *Dictionary of NT Background*
 - A. A. Rupprecht, “Legal System, Roman,” *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*.
 - "Persecution of Christians in the Roman Empire" on @Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Persecution_of_Christians_in_the_Roman_Empire?wprov=sfsi1
 - Abandoned (4:16, at first defense...all deserted me)
 - Timothy

- Ephesus (cf. 1 Tim 1:3-4; 2 Tim 4:12-13 I have sent Tychicus to Ephesus. When you come, bring the cloak...)
 - Internal threats—false teachers (aggressive and evangelistic; disruptive and devious)
 - External—Roman authorities (Nero’s government) and opponents like Alexander (4:14).
 - “The church the author of the Pastorals seeks to save is torn apart by theological controversy and moral confusion. [Do enough of our churches have adequate theological knowledge to have a controversy?] That church is attacked from without and subverted from within, and so the author draws the wagons in a circle.” (Long?)
- Helps explain the tone:
 - A fire chief barking orders in the midst of a devastating house fire (cf. 1 Tim 3:15 “how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church)
 - An army commander in a fire fight
 - A navy captain when the boat has been torpedoed
 - A guide who sees some of the party straying into danger
 - A parent who sees a child chasing a toy into a busy street
- Audience/recipient/s
 - Personal letter to Timothy (1:2)
 - Salutation/ “grace be with you (4:22, plural = y’all)
 - Likely that the letter would have a public reading
- Literary form
 - *Farewell address*—urgency and addresses what is important (see LTJ/YAB, 320-324; he gives an extended list of why 2 Tim does not fit the classification of a farewell address).
 - Paul’s address to the elders from Ephesus is an example of a farewell address (Acts 20:17-38).
 - The emphasis falls on the one who is dying, that is, on *who* is passing on.
 - *Last will and testament*—inheritance or mantle is transferred from one generation to the next.
 - “. . . the literary genre of testament [is] the formal setting in which an ancient worthy on his deathbed bequeathed a spiritual message to his descendants. Two major concerns of testamentary literature are ethical paraenesis and apocalyptic forecasts of the future [both are present in 2 Tim]. (New Testament examples of testaments are John 13-17, Acts 20, 2 Timothy [contra LTJ], and 2 Peter (Everett Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*, 2nd edition, p. 428).
 - Note: this literary form was used by Jewish writers in the centuries immediately before and after Christ. It was pseudonymous literature, i.e., written in the name of a famous forefather.
 - Emphasis is on the inheritance or *what* is being passed on.

- Long sees an element of both literary forms, *farewell* and *testament*, in 2 Timothy (184). James Thompson, in *Equipped for Change*, sees the influence of testamentary literature.
- *Paraenetic letter*—“This is a letter type that was available to Paul during his lifetime and does not require that 2 Timothy be a pseudonymous composition. In the rhetorical handbooks of Pseudo-Demetrius and Pseudo-Libanius, we find the type called *epistole parainetikei* (paraenetic letter) (LTJ/YAB, 322). From Malherbe, *Moral Exhortation*, 124: “Paraenesis is moral exhortation in which someone is advised to pursue or abstain from something. It appears in many forms of communication, especially speeches, letters (cf. 1 Peter 2:11-5:11; *1 Clem.* 4-39; *Barn.* 18-20), and tractates which may assume some epistolary features (cf. Heb. 13:1-19; James). Paraenesis is broader in scope than protrepsis [designed to win someone over to a particular enterprise or way of life by demonstrating its superiority—there are elements of this in 2 Tim., e.g., the content and conduct of the false teachers are shown to be inferior to that of Paul’s gospel]. “Malherbe delineates common elements of paraenesis and cites examples from ancient moral philosophers (124-129):
 - Useful rules for conduct in common situations
 - Adopts styles that range from censure to consolation.
 - Content is traditional and not new and merely reminds of what is already known
 - Compliments right belief and behavior [content & conduct] and encourages continuance in that
 - An example/s (often a family member and particularly the father) is presented as worthy of imitation
 - Advice may be diverse in content
 - Brief admonitions can be strung together

LTJ/YAB cites Pseudo-Isocrates, *To Demonicus*. An uncle writes to advise his nephew in place of the younger man’s father, who had died. “Isocrates” takes the place of the father and addresses his nephew like a son. The virtues of the father are delineated and the Demonicus is giving ample advice on piety and virtue. Honor and shame are strong motives for behavior [notice how shame is an important theme in 2 Tim]. A series of models for imitation or avoidance is given. “In 2 Timothy, likewise, we find Paul presenting himself to Timothy as fictive father to “beloved” fictive son. In the beginning of the composition, Paul repeatedly reminds Timothy of the models that he can imitate, especially the example set by Paul himself. Paul then explicates the model by means of a series of maxims. And at the end, he presents himself a final time as a model for imitation. 2 Timothy is the closest thing we possess in ancient antiquity to the rhetorical handbook’s ideal paraenetic letter and is remarkable close to *To Demonicus* in its way of arranging the elements of memory, model, mimesis, and maxims (LTJ/YAB, 222f., emphasis added; Malherbe, *Moral Exhortation*, 125f., includes an extended excerpt from *To Demonicus*).

- An element of *protreptic* discourse is found in 2 Timothy. Protreptic literature “encourage[s] young men to pursue the life of philosophy or, for those already professing the philosophical life, to live up to the ideals of their profession. In such exhortations, the personal vices and the vicious practices of the ‘false philosophers’ serve to highlight the positive ideal” (LTJ/YAB, 323).

“The dimension of 2 Timothy that **does not obviously fit within the frame of the personal paraenetic letter** is the polemic against false teachers. If the point of the letter is the reinforcement of moral behavior in Paul’s delegate,

why so much attention to the opponents? Doesn't Paul's attack on the false teachers suggest that this letter's interest has a wider scope and perhaps even a wider audience? The results of two lines of research help clarify this difficult and appropriate question. The first is the recognition that much of the language used to characterize the opposition takes the form of conventional slander used in Hellenistic schools between rival teachers of every stripe, including battles between rival Jewish schools. The primary social function of such vituperation was the disparagement of opposing teachers in order to recommend one's own teaching as superior. The satirist Lucian of Samosata provides many unforgettable pictures of just this sort of verbal mudslinging between teachers (e.g., *The Eunuch, Philosophies for Sale*), and the literature of Hellenistic moral discourse is replete with such attacks against the words and behavior of rival sects [doesn't this sound familiar in American political discourse?]. **This is not, however, the function of 2 Timothy**, for Paul does not direct his charges against the opponents themselves; instead, he alternates characterizations of them in third-person language—using largely conventional rhetoric—and direct exhortation to Timothy in second-person language: 'but you. . . .' [*su de*, "but you" is used five times in the PE: 1 Tim 6:13; 2 Tim 3:10, 14; 4:5; Titus 2:1] **The false teachers become the negative model that Timothy is to avoid**" (LTJ/YAB, 323; emphasis added).

- Trustworthy (faithful) sayings:

ESV, NIV: trustworthy saying
 NJB: doctrine
 RSV, NRS: the saying is sure
 YLT: steadfast is the word

NRS 1 Timothy 1:15 The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the foremost.

NRS 1 Timothy 3:1 The saying is sure: whoever aspires to the office of bishop desires a noble task.

NRS 1 Timothy 4:9 The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance.

NRS 1 Timothy 5:13 Besides that, they learn to be idle, gadding about from house to house; and they are not merely idle, but also gossips and busybodies, saying what they should not say.

NRS 2 Timothy 2:11 The saying is sure: If we have died with him, we will also live with him;

NRS Titus 3:8 The saying is sure. I desire that you insist on these things, so that those who have come to believe in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works; these things are excellent and profitable to everyone.

- Outline

I. 1:1–5 Greeting and Thanksgiving

II. 1:6–2:13 Appeal to Timothy

1:6–2:7 For Faithful Witness in the Face of Opposition

2:8–10 In the Light of Paul's Example

2:9–13 A Faithful Saying (hymn or creedal statement)

III. 2:14–4:5 Warnings Against False Teachers

2:14–26 Avoid Their Vain Ways

3:1–9 A Prophecy Concerning False Teachers and Its Application

3:10–17 The Reason and Way to Counter False Teachers

4:1–5 An Exhortation to Faithful Ministry (As for you...)

4:6–8 His Approaching Death (As for me...)

IV. 4:9–18 Paul's Situation and Prospects

4:9–16 His Need For Timothy to Come

Words of Hope for Seasons of Distress

I. 1:1-5 Greeting and Thanksgiving (Long gives vv. 3-5 this heading: A Theological Tradition That Is Older and Deeper Than the Religious Impulses of the Present Moment)

- 1:1
 - Why would a friend use such formality and an official title? [Punctuated with a colon versus a comma]
 - Some see this as evidence that it is not from Paul.
 - GK (58), on the other hand, notes that the letter contains instruction and even mandates (cf. 1 Tim 1:3—“Remain in Ephesus like I told you.”)
 - Not just a friendly letter.
 - Tim is also receiving apostolic authorization (GK, 59) (cf. the plural second person pronoun in 4:22)
 - **Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus**
 - **Apostle** = special authority as one sent by JC to act and write on this behalf (GK, 363)
 - Cf. Acts 1:1 “all that Jesus [began] to do and teach (NIV, “began is supplied based on the present tense = continuous action; i.e., the church is entrusted with and continues to carry forward Jesus’ words and deeds = the heart of ministry). Cf. “The care of words as well as the care of souls is responsible ministry.”
 - The “authority card” (see my blog post: <http://info.austingrad.edu/christianstudies/words-of-hope-for-seasons-of-distress-and-free-registration-for-sermon-seminar>)
 - **of Christ Jesus** = possessed by, he is not his own, he follows orders and direction of the one who sent him
 - **By the will of God**
 - Cf. Acts 9:15-16: chosen instrument to carry my name before Gentiles, before their kings, before the children of Israel...how much he must suffer
 - Long (186f.) God’s *command* is how ministry starts. God’s *will* is how it is sustained [this also applies to the Christian life in general]
 - Gently challenges the often heard statement that “God has a plan for your life.”
 - It’s not as simple as that. Not some rigid, secret script requiring a code breaker

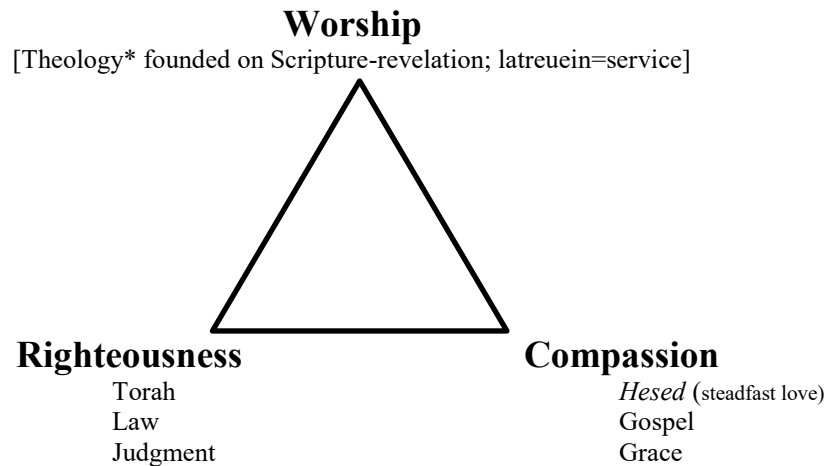
- It's rather to have one's life and work gathered up into what God is doing—what God wills—for the whole creation
 - Cf. Wilson's approach to each sermon having one mission presented based on the text...
- **For the sake of the promise of life**
 - Context of the promises is always Messianic salvation
 - Christ fulfills the promises
 - **Life**
 - Cf. 2:10 but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. (1:10 NRS)
 - Paul is under a death sentence, but claims life and speaks of life in CJ
 - GK (364) "zoe is used in the NT 'of the supernatural life belonging to God and Christ, which the believers will receive in the future, but which they also enjoy here and now' (BAGD s.v. 2). What Paul says here in brief form he says more extensively in Romans 6:"
 - By spiritual union with Christ (v. 5)
 - We are now "alive to God in CJ" (v. 11 emphasis added)
 - "And so walk in newness of life" (v. 4) [notice the element of moral formation and character building]
 - We have as "the outcome eternal life" (v. 22)
 - "in CJ our Lord" (v. 23)
- **1:2**
 - **To Timothy**
 - GK (6-8) gives detailed historical and biographical information
 - Or see other commentaries and Bible dictionaries
 - Trivia: Tim is mentioned in all Paul's letters except Eph, Gal, and Tit
 - **My beloved child**
 - *Teknon* (child) is a term of affection; here includes the spiritual relationship
 - LTJ/KPG (15): By assuming the role of a father, Paul also takes on the obligation of instructing Timothy in the moral life. It is his responsibility to shape the values and attitudes of his adoption."
- **Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord**
 - **Grace**
 - Opens with grace and closes with grace in 4:21
 - The whole letter is framed by grace
 - Cf. Smedes comments on how Paul took casual bromide of greeting and baptized it with Christian meaning
 - **Mercy**
 - Except for 1 Tim this word is not in other Pauline greetings
 - Is this because Tim has special need for a word of mercy in his circumstances? GK (66)

- The word would resonate with Tim’s Jewish background
 - Paul sensed Tim’s discouragement; assurance of God’s favor was needed [there are people in the pew living here each Sunday]
 - Distinction between grace and mercy
 - Grace is God’s ongoing forgiveness and enabling. GK refers to Lenski’s distinction: *grace* extends pardon while *mercy* is God’s sympathetic concern
 - Mercy always deals with pain, misery, distress which are often the result of sin
 - **Peace**
 - Common Semitic greeting—*shalom* (the irony of Edi Amin greeting Jewish hostages with *shalom*)
 - Peace for Paul
 - Greek context = tranquility and harmony
 - OT *shalom* = stability, welfare, health
 - For Paul, like the Gospels and Acts,
 - The primary emphasis is humans can have peace with God through CJ (Rom 5:1)
 - However, it also enables:
 - The church to live at peace internally (much needed in Ephesus) and externally (but Paul and Christians are suffering)
 - The church works hard to extend that peace to a hostile world (cf. the Amish at Nickel Mines, PA)
- The source of this **grace, mercy, and peace** is from **God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord**
- **SERMON LEAD**
 - Who are your partners in discipline, service, worship?
 - See Appendix A: Sample Sermon—Words of Hope for Seasons of Distress
- <http://info.austingrad.edu/christianstudies/words-of-hope-for-seasons-of-distress-and-free-registration-for-sermon-seminar>
- **1:3**
 - Paul’s prayers (LTJ/YAB, 340)
 - Demonstrates how the relationship of Paul and his readers were shaped by religious convictions
Also serves rhetorical purposes
 - Anticipates themes he will develop later in the letter
 - Begins the process of persuasion
 - “. . . in this short opening prayer, Paul establishes three themes of the letter that are intimately connected to its character as a personal/paraenetic letter. Such letters seek to reinforce the moral character of the recipient through the creative invocation of memory, the presentation of models for imitation, and instruction through discreet moral maxims.”
 - First, Paul serves as Tim’s exemplar through his:

- Own prayer and worship of God
- Loyalty to his ancestral traditions and to his colleagues in the faith.
- Personal attributes of sincerity and affection
- Second, Tim should imitate such qualities; thus we find stressed Tim's own:
 - Sincere faith
 - Inherited tradition of piety
- The need for growth in character
 - Paul has an implied concern in "I am sure lives in you as well" v. 5
 - I.e., Tim may be deficient in some of these qualities
 - If everything was fine, would a reminder be necessary?
- **I am grateful to God**
 - The object of the thanksgiving is God
 - The reason for gratitude takes longer to emerge
 - Apparently it is Tim's faith stated in v. 5 (Towner, 448)
 - "The thanksgiving is intensely personal, even intimate. We notice how the second-person pronoun is repeated seven times in one sentence . . . The intimacy embraces Paul's *personal feelings* expressed by his constant memory of his delegate, his desire to see him, his diligence in prayer for him, his expected 'filling up' of joy at seeing him, and his explicit statement of confidence in him" (LTJ/YAB, 340).
 - Paul's gratitude can't be suppressed by incarceration and chains.
- **Whom I worship**
 - *Latreuo*: service in the context of fulfilling religious duties or obligations.
 - NRS does not follow most translations which have "serve"
 - The word does carry the sense of public service to God
Emphasis seems to be on action or fulfilling a function
 - The word group "can be employed noncultically as well as cultically . . . connoting service, is not restricted to regular gatherings but can also be used of serving God in quite general ways (2 Tim 1:3; Heb 9:14). Paul uses sacrificial terminology ('present,' 'sacrifice,' 'holy,' 'acceptable') to speak of the people of God giving their entire lives to God as 'reasonable worship' (Rom 12:1; cf. Phil 2:17; 4:18)" Jeremy Begbie, "Worship" in *Dictionary for Theological Interpretation of the Bible*.
 - Cf. *proskyneo*: often implies the posture of worship; e.g., fall down, bow, kiss the feet/hem of garment.
 - Towner/*NICNT* 448f.
 - Cf. similarity of this greeting with that in Rom 1:9 (read vv. 8-12); in 1 Tim it is more personalized with the second person singular pronoun
 - Identifies two dimensions of Paul's ministry/service/worship

- The experiential place = the human spirit (presence and power of the HS? Cf. 1 Tim 1:6f.)
 - The content of the service/worship is proclamation of the gospel
 - Towner = “. . . it is clear that the verb [*latreuo*] ‘I serve [worship] carries the full-orbed meaning that it does in the Romans thanksgiving’ (449).
 - *Latreuo* in NT is heavily influenced by the LXX where the word describes the ministry [service] and worship of priests who offered the sacrifices to God
 - The term also came to denote Christian life as righteous service to God
 - The present tense of the verb GK (366) quoting Robertson who notes that this “emphasizes the continual unbroken habit of life.”
 - David Worley emphasized the *service* aspect of worship over that of *experience*; see (*Learning to Love God: A Guide to Understanding the Bible*)
- **As my ancestors did**
 - Paul deliberately attaches his ministry to the worship of Israel by placing himself in the lineage.
 - “In doing this, he follows the standard cultural practice of establishing one’s credentials by association with the authoritative and accepted history” (Towner, 449).
 - Cf. Stephen’s speech (Acts 7)
 - Cf. Paul’s speeches (Acts 13 (synagogue), 22 (mob at temple), 26 (before Festus); to some degree he references a traditional history of pagan’s instinct to worship in Athens, chapter 17)
 - “Ministry defined by the Pastorals will therefore look less to management theory and demographic projections and more to our fathers and mothers in the faith, finding in those older traditions the resources we need for our own time” (Bartlett, 181).
 - Excursus on the Triadic Notion of Faith by Paul Hanson in *The People Called: The Growth of Community in the Bible*

TRIADIC NOTION OF FAITH



Christian worship should help us keep righteousness and compassion in an appropriate balance/tension. However, that is not always easy to do.

*The tasks of the minister-theologian (Wallace Alston, Jr.) CITATION

1. Give the Bible to the people/church until it becomes their story of their/our lives.
2. Acquaint them with the faith of the church—successes and failures. We don't have to reinvent the church anew every generation.
3. Teach them to think theologically in everyday circumstances.

“Some churches excel in zeal, but are deficient in openness. The ministry of some churches may reflect dogmatic clarity [liberal or conservative], but can be short on humility that acknowledges the variety of the church. Other churches can reach out from shallow soil. All are welcome not because faith matters so deeply, but because we want to be nice. Faith without clarity grows flinty [hard and judgmental]; charity without faith turns to mush [permissive and promiscuous]. Clergy reflect the churches where they serve. Paul seeks to keep the tension between openness and rigor alive” (Bartlett, 196f.).

Ecclesial sectarianism vs. social/cultural sectarianism.

Responses:

1. Accommodation
2. Retaliation
3. Withdrawal
4. Engagement

- **Excursus on “ancestors”:** From Joseph Ellis in *His Excellency: George Washington*

In his preface, Ellis describes the elusiveness of Washington's legacy in the American story. He has been seen as the silent forefather canonized by some, and vilified by others. Recent research has made Washington more accessible. So Ellis asks:

“Are we ready to listen? This is not just a rhetorical question. For reason best explained by Shakespeare and Freud, all children have considerable difficulty approaching their fathers with an open mind. Washington poses what we might call the Patriarchal Problem in its most

virulent form: on Mount Rushmore, the Mall, the dollar bill and the quarter, but also an icon – distant, cold, intimidating. As Richard Brookhiser has so nicely put it, he is in our wallets but not in our hearts. And speaking of our hearts, a volatile psychological chemistry bubbles away inside all children in simmering pools of dependency and rebellion, love and fear, intimacy and distance. As every parent can testify, initially our children believe we can do no wrong; later on they believe we can do no fight – indeed, in Oedipal terms they actually want to kill us. For most of American history our response to Washington in particular and the Founding Fathers in general has been trapped within the emotional pattern dictated by these primal urges, oscillating in a swoonish swing between idolization and evisceration. In Washington’s case the arc moves from Parson Weems’s fabrication about a saintly lad who could not tell a lie to dismissive verdicts about the deadest, whitest male in American history.

“This hero/villain image is, in fact, the same portrait, which has a front and back side that we rotate regularly. It is really a cartoon, which tells us less about Washington than about ourselves. The currently hegemonic narrative within the groves of academe cuts in the Oedipal direction, making Washington complicitous in creating a nation that was imperialistic, racist, elitist, and patriarchal. While there are some important exceptions to the rule, the reigning orthodoxy in the academy regards Washington as either a taboo or an inappropriate subject, and any aspiring doctoral candidate who declares an interest in, say, Washington’s career as commander in chief, or president, as inadvertently confessed intellectual bankruptcy. (A study of the ordinary soldiers in the Continental army or the sales at Mount Vernon would be more fashionable.) When not studiously ignored, Washington is noticed primarily as an inviting target for all the glaring failures of the revolutionary generation to meet our own superior standards of political and racial justice. This approach is thoroughly ahistorical and presentistic; but so, for that matter, is its opposite, the heroic-icon tradition.” (p. xi f.)

○ **Excursus on traditional communities and their impact on shaping lives.**

From Tom Brokaw, *A Lucky Life Interrupted: A Memoir of Hope*

Brokaw, the news desk anchor emeritus of NBC Nightly News, recalled traveling to Claremore, OK to attend the funeral for the mother of his son-in-law, Allen. A tour of the town was given by Allen. Brokaw writes, “It was a mix of melancholy and merriment” [cf. Paul’s mix in the greeting of 2 Tim]. They had dinner at a restaurant famous for its high-calorie count dishes smothered in gravy and batter-fried everything. One of the “big ‘ol boy patrons left with a stack of carryout cartons. He had a .45-caliber pistol strapped on his waist . . . Brokaw mused that if that had happened in NY City people would be diving under the tables. However, he was not surprised since he’d grown up in the west and continues to spend a great deal of time there. Then he notes, “Fifty years ago I fled small town life as swiftly as I could for the bright lights of the big city. At age seventy-five I have an **ever greater appreciation of these communities, which, at the end, remember and honor where you began**” (emphasis added).

Cf. J. D. Vance’s positive reference to traditional communities in *Hillbilly Elegy*. Vance speaks openly about how his immediate family was dysfunctional because of his mother’s drug habit, serial marriages and relationships, and perpetual unemployment. He grew up living on the edge of poverty in a culture of ‘learned helplessness’ and not believing that his choices had no effect on the outcome of his life because it was socially predetermined. The one stabilizing factor for him

was his grandmother and grandfather whom he affectionately called Mamaw and Papaw. Vance also noted research that verifies that there are a few states with a number of traditional communities doing well because the social fabric is strong. “Unless you have a Mamaw and Papaw to make you stay the course you might never make it out [of poverty and social degradation]. It means that you don’t have people to show you by *example* what happens when you work hard and get an education. . . . So I wasn’t surprised that Mormon Utah—with its strong church, integrated communities, and intact families—wiped the floor with Rust Belt Ohio [where Vance grew up]” (173)

- I recall Tony Ash, 15 to 20 years ago, asking this group how many remembered the names J. D. Thomas, J. W. Roberts, Frank Pack . . . How many now remember Tony Ash? The implications.
- **With a clear conscience**
 - One is conscious of the rightness or wrongness of one’s actions before God
 - Does not imply absence of sin; does imply the intentions of one’s life/heart
 - Cf. Acts 23:1; 24:16; 1 Tim 1:5, 19; 3:9; 4:2
- **When I remember you night and day in my prayers**
 - **Remember:** LTJ/KPG, p. 15f: “Paul’s use of memory tells us something about its nature as well as about the nature of prayer. The memory he invokes is a form of anamnesis [to remember, recall]: not the mechanical recall of information from the past but the recollection of meaningful stories which shape the individual and communal human identity. In this sort of memory the past is made alive and powerful for the present. It can therefore help shape the future. Memory works the same way in prayer. By ‘remembering’ the other before the Lord, we can make them present with us before God. Thus, Paul’s remembering Timothy’s tears means that he stands with him, sharing his suffering before God. We would expect, then, that Paul would select from Timothy’s past precisely the memory needed to shape his identity and commitment in the present. Timothy’s tears suggest that he is fearful and sorrowful” (emphasis added). LTJ thinks this is because Paul is uncertain about Tim’s continued loyalty to the faith of his ancestors. Paul wants this part of Tim’s past to be powerfully present. The aim is to rekindle the gift. Cf. this to worship—we rehearse our story in song, prayer, at the table, in reading and reflecting the Scripture, in service, i.e., worship.
 - **Night and day in my prayers:**
 - GK (367) notes that the phrase “night and day” occurs 15xs in the NT (order varies).
 - It testifies to the regularly recurring cycles of Paul’s prayer life
- **1:4**
 - **Recalling your tears**
 - Cause?
 - Natural response to the separation of friends
 - A spiritual state of depression and fear.
 - Q/W (580) Drawing on Spicq, they suggest it is an allusion to Paul’s arrest by imperial officers in the presence of Tim and the enforced separation
 - **I long to see you so that I may be filled with joy**

- This is a state of being more than a feeling—it signifies the presence of the Spirit even in the conditions of suffering and affliction (LTJ/YAB, 338).
- **1:5**
 - **I am reminded of your sincere faith**
 - **Reminded**—the third way of expressing memory in this sentence
 - **Sincere**—will Tim continue in that?
 - **A faith** (LTJ/YAB, 342): Faith in 2 Tim emphasizes:
 - Continuity with ancestors—faith of Abraham ... faith of Jesus ... faith of Christians (cf. Rom 3-4)
 - Also stresses continuity through Tim’s loyalty to Paul and their shared ancestral tradition with fidelity to the worship of the living God
 - Faith itself has a continuity in that it is not so much and initial decision as it is an ongoing process of response to God (cf. conversion). It has a quality of character
 - Can be implanted and nurtured by human relationships
 - Is passed down from generation to generation
 - Faith is a virtue that can grow through the seasons of a person’s life
 - **That lived first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice**
 - **Lived/enoiken** lit. = “live in a geographical location;” fig. = dwells (cf. Rom 7:17 sin dwells in me; Rom 8:11 HS dwells in you; Col 3:16 let the word of Christ dwell in you)
 - Barth answering why he believed. “Because my mother told me.”
 - Cf. the role of “mother” in the memoirs of Stanley Hauerwas (*Hannah’s Child*), Eugene Peterson (*The Pastor*), Richard Lischer (*Open Secrets*).
 - JT (112) Those mothers and fathers of faith gave us a compelling reason to believe.
 - **And now, I am sure, lives in you**
 - Words of encouragement
 - Some degree of doubt about it?
- **Sermon leads**
 - **Reminder to be careful**—not everyone has pleasant memories of family, It is assumed that Tim’s father did not share the faith [or had he died?] Either way Tim had a heritage of faith
 - **JRWS: The Shaping and Making of Timothy**
 - His Parental Upbringing
 - His Spiritual Friendship
 - His Special Endowment
 - His Personal Discipline
 - Practical application of what I did at a family reunion; headstone at parents’ graves and give thanks...
 - **Sermon Sample** in Appendix B—“Notice the Scarred Hands and Remember the Stories”

II. 1:6–2:13 Appeal to Timothy

- **1:6–7 For Faithful Witness in the Face of Opposition**

- **1:6**

- **For this reason I remind you to rekindle**

- If everything was good, why the need to remind?
- There appears to be a need to refresh the qualities of his initial commitment.
- GK (382) says we should notice how the imperatives follow one after another
 - Made more urgent by what God has done
 - And what Paul has suffered
- Most, if not all of us, go through such seasons where the fire burns low
- Cf. Eugene Peterson’s chapter on the “Bad Lands” in *The Pastor*.
- Cf. Landon Saunder’s Staley Lectures on Preaching at ACU: “Wilderness”

- **The gift of God that is within you**

- What God requires, God provides
- God does not appoint without empowering (JT, 114)
- Ministry/church leadership is a sacred calling
- It is not our own, but belongs to God.

- **Through the laying on of my hands**

- Ordination/commissioning
- An ancient practice extending authority and power for the service
“For an ancient Mediterranean audience, the laying on of hands was part of the imagery of succession, symbolizing the transfer of authority or power from the leader to one who comes after. . . Again, note the importance of the church as a community of faith. The gifts of the Spirit function best within this community. In the early church, the laying on of hands was practiced when the church set someone apart for a special ministry or service (e.g., Acts 6:6; 13:3). In this way, the community both affirmed the call of God on people’s lives and charged them to fulfill the ministry to which they had been called.” G/S
- The “call” to ministry
 - **Calvin** = two-fold call:
 - 1) personal.
 - 2) the church.
 - **H. Richard Niebuhr** in *The Purpose of the Church and Its Ministry*
 - 1) The [general] call to be a Christian
 - 2) The secret call that directs one into a special form of ministry.
 - 3) The providential call which describes the gifts and graces of the person; i.e., obvious candidate for ordination.
 - 4) The ecclesiastical or congregational call. The congregation or

ecclesial institution certifies the person.

- “Because we have correctly insisted in our fellowship that all of us have been called to service, ‘ordination’ has not been a significant part of our vocabulary. However, the fact that we are *all* called to serve never meant that do not ordain people for special ministries . . . the church has always been led by those who have been ordained for special ministries” (JT, 115).
- “Where the church has nothing approximating this call to service for its leaders it will be impoverished without this reminder of the decisive moment in the lives of leaders we are left without a sense of the sacredness of the task before us” (JT, 114).
- Cf. E. Peterson’s remarks about ordination vows serving as a pitons (*The Unnecessary Pastor*)

- **1:7**

- **For God did not give us a spirit of cowardice**

- **Cowardice--*deilia***

- Lexicon definitions

- BDAG: lack of mental or moral strength, cowardice
- Friberg: shameful fear from lack of courage, timidity
- LTJ/YAB (16) “Timothy is faltering in the face of opposition so Paul writes to bolster his courage and conviction.”

- Some translations = **timidity**

- Tim did not have a forceful personality; was apparently shy and reserved in nature (implies that the trait of a forceful personality is not required in ministry)
 - 1 Cor 16:10—see that he has nothing to fear
 - 1 Tim 4:12—Let no one despise your youth
- Implications in Pastorals

- **Excursus:**

- **Introversion**

- “An introvert who has learned how to do it [ministry].”

<http://www.christianitytoday.com/pastors/2013/spring/confessions-of-ministry-introvert.html>

<http://www.christianity.com/church/church-life/introvert-no-apology-required-11626582.html>

- **Highly Sensitive (Perceptive) Persons**

<http://hsperson.com/test/highly-sensitive-test/>

Elaine Aron, *The Highly Sensitive Person*. NY: Broadway Books, 1996.

- **But rather a spirit of power and of love and self-discipline**
 - **Power**
 - Must be appropriated—accelerator, power switch
 - Is to be exercised in love only
 - **Love**
 - *Agapao*
 - God like
 - Seeks the good of the other over self
 - **Self-discipline**
 - *Sophronismos* often translated moderation
 - Sound judgment, self-control, to have an understanding about practical matters and thus be able to act sensibly
 - A virtue highly praised by first century moral philosophers
 - “Imperial documents use cognates of this word to refer to administrators who show good judgment and discretion in the execution of their duties.”
 - The three qualities
 - Are divine attributes and gifts, not natural abilities (BW, 314)
 - Qualities a timid young man would need in ministry
 - Cf. You did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, ‘Abba, Father.’
- **1:8**
 - Paul begins to make his case that Tim is expected to fulfill his calling and follow in the footsteps of Paul, even to Rome.
 - **Do not be ashamed**
 - Rome was an honor and shame culture—still is in the Middle East
 - Avoid shame at all costs
 - **Of the testimony about our Lord**
 - Nothing more shameful than crucifixion
 - **Or of me his prisoner**
 - “His” = prisoner of JC, not of Nero
 - LTJ/KPG (17) If Paul is in chains then he is seen as being powerless.
 - So is the gospel really efficacious?
 - Paul argues that his chains proves rather than disproves the power of the gospel message.
 - The ultimate proof of God’s power is Jesus’ resurrection.
 - Oden (127) “He could not escape the Roman prison, but he refused to be trapped by it inwardly, spiritually.”
 - **But join with me in suffering for the gospel relying on the power of God**
 - Acts 9:16 How much he must suffer for my name’s sake
 - Rom 8:17 we suffer with him—will be glorified with him
 - Oden (128) “The key to the renewal of modern Christianity lies in being unashamed of the apostolic witness, willing to bear testimony to the dying, living Lord. The illusion in the modern world that contemporary

Christianity can be renewed on the basis of cheap grace this is not willing to suffer for the truth is an illusion that can no longer be taken seriously.”

- How the culture attempts to shame Christians today.
 - “The right side of history”
 - Cf. how Christian professors at universities are being hounded
 - Anthony Esolen
 - Rod Dreher about Duke Divinity School
- <http://www.theamericanconservative.com/dreher/duke-divinity-crisis-griffiths-documents/>
 - Legalism of the left
- **Relying on the power of God. . .**
 - GK (373) When mentioning the gospel Paul often falls into doxology/praise and thanksgiving = vv. 9-10
 - Cf. 1 Cor 15:3-4 For I handed on to you as of first importance what I in turn had received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures, (NRS)
 - Cf. Rom 1:1-4 Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh and was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, (NRS)
- **1:9**
- G/S (217) “The grammar of 1:9-10—the piling up of participles and uniform phrase lengths—suggests that these verses are an early Christian hymn describing God’s saving work in Christ. The editors of the United Bible Societies Greek New Testament arrange these verses in poetic format. They can be rendered as

The one who saved us
And called us to a holy calling,
Not because of our works
But because of his own purpose and grace,
Which he gave to us in Christ Jesus
Before time began
And which he has now revealed
Through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus
Who has both destroyed the power of death
And brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

- **[God] who saved us and called us with a holy calling**
 - The doxology begins
 - **Saved** = GK (373) Paul wants Tim to remember that the gospel he is called to suffer for saved him
 - Past tense (cf. 4:18= future tense—The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and save me for his heavenly kingdom. To him be glory [*doxa*]...)
 - Salvation is past, present, and future
 - **Called** = includes both the call to salvation and service

- Saved from sin
 - Saved for service
- **Us** = community/church; avoids an individualistic view of salvation; that it is all about me and Jesus
- **Holy calling** = being set apart for God’s specific purposes
 - *Hagia* is not some level of super-piety
 - Describes ordinary people set apart by God for extraordinary purposes
 - “Sanctified for thee. Not holier than thou.” (Herman Ridderbos?)
 - Thus, not according to our works, accomplishments,
 - Paul’s calling has taken him before Roman authorities in Rome
 - Will Tim follow that calling?
- **Not according to our works but according to his own purpose and grace**
 - **Purpose** = plan, resolve, will
 - **Grace** = a free gift that requires human response; our freedom to receive or reject is implied
 - Theology of glory vs. Theology of the Cross. Resource—Gerhard Forde, *On Being a Theologian of the Cross: Reflections on Luther’s Heidelberg Disputation, 1518.*
- **This grace was given to us in Christ Jesus before the ages began**
 - This was God’s decision and plan before time and creation

- **1:10**

- **But has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus**
 - **Appearing** = *epiphaneias* (epiphany)
 - Can mean “shining”—like a light that reveals, illuminates
 - The appearing of the Savior was embodied in Jesus, the Christ
 - It was played out in his earthly ministry and all it involved and produced (all that Jesus began to do and teach)
- **Who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel**
 - **Abolished** *katargesantos* = cut off, invalidate, destroy, make nothing of
 - Life, not death, gets the last word—this is central to the **gospel**
 - Tim needs to hear this and be comforted and emboldened by it
 - The **life and immortality** have implications not just for the future, but for now; there is life beyond physical death
 - **Gospel** = the good news about his life, death, and resurrection. We live between the first and second comings, but we live with hope
- **Sermon Lead/Excursus:** Preaching about death in terms of life as promised by the gospel. Resources:
 - Christian Wiman, “Gazing into the Abyss.” *American Scholar* 76: 3 (2007): 61-65.
 - “There is definitely some wisdom in learning to see our moments of necessity and glory and tragedy not as disparate experiences but as facets of the single experience that is life. The pity, at least for some of us, is that we cannot truly have this knowledge of life, can only feel it as some sort of abstract ‘wisdom,’ until we come very close to death.” (62)

- “Then one morning we found ourselves going to church. *Found ourselves.* That’s exactly what it felt like, in both senses of the phrase, as if some impulse in each of us had finally been catalyzed into action, so that we were casting aside the Sunday paper and moving toward the door with barely a word between us; and as if, once inside the church, we were discovering exactly where and who we were meant to be. That first service was excruciating, in that it seemed to tear all the wounds wide open, and it was profoundly comforting in that it seemed to offer the only possible balm” (64, emphasis added).
 - Nicholas Wolterstorff, “Trumpets, Ashes and Tears.” *Reformed Journal*, 36:2 (1986): 17-22
 - James Van Tholen, “Surprised by Death” in *This Incomplete One: Words Occasioned by the Death of a Young Person* Michael D. Bush, editor, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006.
 - **“If we can see the strong hands of God twist a crown of thorns into a crown of glory, and in hands as strong as that we can know ourselves safe.”** (*Creed or Chaos*, p. 18).
- **1:11**
- **For this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher**
 - Paul now applies the meaning of the gospel stated in the hymn to his situation
 - GK (377) “Having mentioned that work of Christ, Paul is now constrained to mention his own part in the ministry of the gospel.”
 - Notice **was appointed** is a passive verb. It is God working through Paul.
 - **Herald** *kerux* proclaimer, the one delivering news
 - **Apostle** *apostolos* one sent by and another. Paul was chosen by Christ and sent with his authority
 - **Teacher** *didaskalos* applied to Paul himself only here and in 1 Tim 2:7; but Acts 11:26 Barnabas and Paul taught in Antioch for a whole year
 - GK (377f.) “What distinguishes these three aspects of Paul’s ministry? *Kerux* and *didaskalos* emphasize his roles as evangelist on the one hand and teacher on the other. He may have added these two terms . . . to his usual self-designation of *apostolos* to emphasize these aspects of his ministry in his letters to Timothy so that he could be a model for Timothy (and others), who is to serve as an evangelist (2 Tim 4:2) and teacher (1 Tim 4:11; 6:2; 2 Tim 2:2) but is not an *apostolos*.”
- **1:12**
- **And for this reason I suffer as I do. But I am not ashamed**
 - **Suffer** *pascha*—do a concordance search and see how many times the word is used in reference to Jesus
 - Rome is attempting to shame Christians into silence or defection
 - As Paul encourages Tim to accept suffering, he takes the medicine himself
- **For I know the one in whom I have put my trust**

- **My trust** = *pisteuo* to put faith in
 - **And I am sure that he is able to guard until that day what I have entrusted** [lit. = my deposit] **to him**
 - **He is able** = *dynatos*—not person resources, but God’s power. The power that raised Jesus from the dead. Cf. 1:8 not a spirit of cowardice, but of power (*dynamis*)
 - **Guard** = *phulasso*—protect, preserve, keep safe, watch over, keep in custody
 - **That day** = judgment
 - **What I have entrusted**
 - *Paratheken mou* = my deposit; what does it mean? Two translations:
 - 1) What God has entrusted to Paul = gospel or possibly Paul’s ministry (ESV, RSV, TEV, NEB)
 - The entire phrase *paratheken mou phulaksi* occurs only two other times in the NT (1 Tim 6:20; 2 Tim 1:14) and has this meaning and should here as well.
 - The context is about the gospel message that must be preached and taught, not about Paul’s own life.
 - JT(117)
 - Paul is commissioning Tim to “guard the deposit”
 - This also addresses his successors in every age
 - The deposit is the basic Christian message
 - It is placed in our hands for safe keeping
 - That is the most fundamental task of church leadership
 - It will be despised by most in our culture
 - It will be threatened on all sides
 - 2) What Paul has entrusted to God = Paul’s life (NRS, NAS, NIV, KJV, NJB)
 - This passage is distinguished from the others
 - In 1 Tim 6:20 and 2 Tim 1:14 *phulasso* (guard) does not have the personal *mou* (my) connected
 - Timothy is to guard the deposit
 - God is guarding his deposit, Paul
- **1:13**
- **Hold the standard of sound teaching that you heard from me**
 - **Standard** = *hyotuposis*
 - Sketch or outline
 - Model or pattern*
 - Rhetorical figure vividly sketched in words
 - **Sound teaching** = lit. “healthy word”
 - It is a pattern in sound teaching (CONTENT) that results in good behavior (CONDUCT)
 - **Heard from me** = still calling on Tim’s memory
- **In the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus** = Jesus is the standard of the teaching/message (CONTENT) and the model of the behavior (CONDUCT) in which it is to be spoken.

- **1:14**
- **Guard the good treasure entrusted to you**
 - Cf. 1:12
 - **Good treasure** *paratheken* = deposit
- **With the help of the Holy Spirit living in us**
 - Cf. 1:8
 - The HS is given/gifted at baptism. Cf. William Willimon in *Remember Who You Are: Baptism, A Model for Christian Life*; also cf. to comments at 2:11-13

“Every day we must live our baptism. Every day we must respond to God’s gracious gifts in our lives. . . the day after our baptism we must renew our baptismal vows, open ourselves again to God’s work in our lives, say yes in all the big and little things we do and people we meet and promises we keep throughout the day . . . **A major part of God’s daily saving work in our lives is God’s gift of God’s Spirit** . . . Daily God renews in us what he began in our baptism. In our baptism, God has turned to us so that we might turn to him. Daily we turn, responding to what God is doing in us. We respond to the Spirit’s urging within our lives. . . The Holy Spirit permeates and leads us daily, tugging at our lives until they be fully turned toward God” (79).

- **1:15**
- **You are aware that all who are in Asia turned away from me, including Phygelus and Hermogenes**
 - **Asia** The region in which Ephesus is located—western part of modern Turkey (cf. the seven churches of Asia in Revelation—in the 90s or early first century the church was still in place there)
 - **Phygelus and Hermogenes** = negative model in paranaesis = Tim don’t be like them
 - Bad example; bad CONDUCT, based on bad CONTENT?
 - Only reference to these men in NT
 - Paul is clearly disappointed
 - **All have turned away**= hyperbole (cf. NTW, PFE/PE, 93—gets confessional in this section)
 - “The most difficult thing I have found in Christian ministry is opposition from people I thought were friends, or at least colleagues, fellow-workers” (92). Nagging thought-what if they are right?
 - Paul must have felt a colossal failure
 - Now they have turned away from him [cf. my conversation with a friend who is feeling much the same way]
 - Does not necessarily mean they have defected from the faith
 - Does suggest that they have at least deserted Paul
 - May have joined the rival teachers who misunderstand the meaning of the death and resurrection of Jesus
 - Or, maybe had toned down the message of Jesus as Lord so as to not offend Caesar and changed it to the more comfortable belief that faith in Jesus was a private religious experience.
 - Paul saw any of this as betrayal
 - Or, maybe it was a distancing from Paul because he was in prison.

- NTW (PFE/PE) gets confessional in this section
 - When we disagree with others they probably feel that we are confronting them
 - The nagging thought—*are they right?* Such humility—normally necessary and healthy—doesn’t always apply; sometimes confrontation cannot be avoided
 - Cf. the Confessing Church in Germany having to stand up to the Nazis and the state church
 - [Cf. C. F. Beyers Naude in South Africa—see G. McLeod Bryan, *Voices in the Wilderness*; also Desmond Tutu, *No Future Without Forgiveness*—confrontational without being vindictive]
 - “Agreeing to disagree” on such fundamental issues sells out the gospel
- **1:16-18**
- **May the Lord grant mercy to the household of Onesiphorus, because he often refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chain; when he arrived in Rome, he eagerly searched for me and found me—may the Lord grant that he will find mercy from the Lord on that day! And you know very well how much service he rendered in Ephesus.**
 - Following the methods of paraenesis,
 - O is a positive model in contrast to P&H—don’t be like them
 - O models courage, cf. 1:7—not of cowardice, but of . . .
 - Tim, be like O
 - **Mercy**
 - Cf. Matt 5:7 “blessed are the merciful, they will receive mercy
 - Cf. 1:2—mercy is sympathetic concern, it relieves pain, distress, agony
 - Paul added mercy to grace and peace in his greeting
 - **Me**
 - P&H “turned away from **me**” (v. 15)
 - O “refreshed **me**” (v. 16) and “found **me**” (v. 17)
 - Also notice the play on words between ‘he **found** me’ (v. 17) and ‘may he **find** mercy’ (v. 18)
 - **Often refreshed**
 - = many times
 - Various ways—food and personal presence
 - Prisoners were dependent on family and friends for provisions
 - Roman authorities would not provide anything
 - Harsh conditions—more so than description of Acts 28
 - **Not ashamed of my chain**
 - Cf. 1:8 (don’t be ashamed), 12 (I’m not ashamed)
 - Social shaming
 - Implication = Tim should follow the example of O and not be ashamed
 - Cf. 2:9—the gospel is not chained

In 110 AD, Ignatius, bishop of Syrian Antioch, got caught in persecution of the church. In anticipation of his execution in Rome, he wrote six letters to churches and one to Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna. In the letters, Ignatius shows how deeply he drank of Paul’s

(and other apostolic voices) attitude toward the social shaming techniques used by Roman authorities and citizens in general. He regarded his execution as an honor bestowed on him and as an opportunity to bring honor to God. He speaks of the chains with which he is bound to his Roman guard as ‘most honorable’ or ‘most worthy even of God.’

In a manner similar to Paul’s commendation of Onesiphorus, Ignatius wrote: ‘My spirit and my chains, concerning which you never showed contempt or shame, are a ransom for you. Neither will the perfect faith, Jesus Christ, be ashamed of you.’

This assurance of the future vindication with honor is perhaps the strongest incentive to endure temporary loss of honor now (deSilva, 755f.)

- **When he arrived in Rom, he eagerly searched for me and found me**
 - **Eagerly** = diligently; took some effort; had to ask questions and get directions
 - BW: “... [Paul] may be under military watch at the Campus Martius on the of Rome awaiting the resolution of the trial, for this is often what happened to prisoners brought to Rome by the military (see Acts 26-28). It takes a hearty soul to seek someone out at a military camp who is being guarded by centurions or even the Praetorian Guard” (324).
 - Would this suggest that O has an extroverted personality?
 - Paul expresses the episode in very personal terms because of his deep personal gratitude, and therefore refers to himself with first person pronoun three times (vv. 15, 16, 17) [see **me** above]
- BW: “At this juncture the Greek breaks off, and I suggest that this is due to emotion, for Onesiphorus is likely dead, hence the prayers for mercy on both his household and him and the lack of reference to him in the final greetings, where Onesiphorus’ *s household* in Ephesus is greeted. There is an unusual stress on mercy in the Pastorals, not found with such frequency in the earlier Paulines. Noticing how this wish prayer [**may the Lord grant that he will find mercy on that day**] interrupts the flow of the text, we can say that this suggests that Paul is dictating at least at this juncture. Here is also where we note that there are less Lukanisms in 2 Timothy than in Titus and 1 Timothy. Luke is still involved in composing this document, but it appears that Paul is taking a more active role in the composition of this missive than in the previous two” (324f.) **BW makes the conjecture that Onesiphorus paid with his life for this visit.**
 - Fee (237) agrees. “Thus it is hard to escape the implication that Onesiphorus is now dead.” He warns about concluding that this supports countenance prayers for the departed (a proof-text for the RCC view of intercession for the dead; see Dibelius-Conzelmann, 106). O’s salvation is not in question.
 - Bassler (137) also agrees. “It seems likely that the author intended to imply that Onesiphorus had died since rendering service to Paul, for the prayer is for mercy for his household, not for Onesiphorus himself.” Contra BW, Bassler does not think one can infer that his death was due to persecution.

- GK, however, thinks that the inference is just that Onesiphorus is apart from his family. He cites 1 Cor 1:16 which speaks of Stephanus while he is alive. Furthermore, in 2 Tim, “that day” is used in reference to those still alive (1:12, 14; 4:8).
 - Dibelius-Conzelmann and Mounce do not think the context or grammar warrants the conclusion that Onesiphorus is dead.
 - Towner/NICNT: “But it is equally possible the he was yet alive, whether away from home, on the way home, or at home” (484). Towner also discredits intercession for the dead for Paul seems quite clear on this man’s standing in the faith. “If Onesiphorus had died, we should not read into Paul’s wish a prayer for his friend’s postmortem salvation, as if his spiritual condition at death were uncertain and sufficient prayer might sway the Lord toward mercy . . . (485).
- **Sermon Sample: Appendix C—“Don’t Back Down”**
- **2:1ff**
- Preliminary observations
 - From the contrast of P&H with O, Paul now moves to Tim
 - Paul wants Tim to get his house in order before leaving Ephesus (Mounce, 504)
 - Three imperatives
 - Be strong (v. 1)
 - Entrust (v. 2)
 - Share in suffering (v. 3)—back to the central reality and concern
- **2:1**
- **You then,**
 - *Su oun* (emphatic = verb has personal ending—“you be strong”— the separate personal pronoun appearing at the beginning of the sentence is for emphasis) **YOU then... you be strong** (3:10, 14; 4:5)
 - The repetition of the pronoun heightens urgency of the situation
 - **Su** – 2:1; 3:10, 14; 4:5, 15
- **My child**
 - Cf.1:2
 - Paul again affirms affection for Tim although there might be a degree of concern and worry about Tim’s loyalty
- **Be strong**
 - Present imperative verb = ongoing or habitual behavior is called for
 - Passive voice = source of strength is not found in Tim’s personality or personal resources, but outside himself
- **In the grace that is in Christ Jesus**
 - **Grace**—unearned, undeserved favor and love freely given by God to those united with CJ = let God strengthen you *by means of* his active grace
- **2:2**
- **What you have heard from me**
 - JRWS & G/S—“to be a hearer of” was phrase used in reference to being a student of...

- G/S “Jesus called out a community that would learn from him, his life and example and teaching, and then, in its own life and example and teaching, call others to join the community (Mk 1:16-20; 2:13-14; Matt 28:18-20). A healthy faith community has always been the best context for hearing and being nourished in the faith.” [Cf. the Triadic Notion of Faith above.]
- **Through many witnesses**
 - Two interpretations
 - Reference to historical event; i.e., Tim’s conversion, baptism, or commission to ministry. The witnesses would be elders or other people including Lois and Eunice who watched or took part
 - The gospel Paul gave to Tim was public and widely known and was not given in secret from Paul alone—it was confirmed by many others
 - In contrast to the opponents who “came through the back door of houses” (see 3:6) secretly whispering about myths and legends
- **Entrust**
 - A strong succession term
 - Not of apostolic office
 - But of apostolic tradition
 - The succession of tradition (G/S + others)
 - Paul received his ministry as a succession of tradition (i.e., his gospel and all that it involves and produces) from JC
 - Paul passes on that tradition to Tim
 - Tim passes that tradition on to faithful leaders
 - These faithful leaders are themselves able to pass the tradition on to others
 - *Paratithemi* lit. = set food before or distribute food to a crowd; to set one before God; or commit or entrust to God
 - **Application**—intentional practices needed in times like these (21st century)
 - MAFIA (Men and Friends in Action) a discipling group
 - Willimon’s confirmation taskforce
 - McNicol’s *Preparing for Baptism*
- **To faithful people**
 - **Faithful** = a matter of character; reliable, trustworthy, dependable
 - **People** = *anthropoi* = men
 - But it is not just for men
 - Women had limited access to education in 1st century and faced restrictions; cf. the result of that situation in 3:6
- **Who will be able to teach others as well**
 - **Able**
 - NIV = qualified
 - Frieberg—implied movement [advancement] that reaches a certain stage of sufficiency
 - LTJ/YAB translation: *The things that you heard me say in the presence of many witnesses you must entrust to men who are faithful and will be competent enough to teach others as well.* The competence is not in teaching techniques, but in the conduct of their lives. CONTENT + CONDUCT
 - **Sermon lead**

- From generation to generation; the contemporary threat/challenge
 - Curriculum in public education is catechizing our children in secular/pagan worldview
 - Aided by the entertainment media
 - The idolatry promoted on the internet (cf. *Irresistible: The Rise of Addictive Technology and the Business of Keeping Us Hooked* by Adam Alter)
 - Chronicles the addictive nature of computer technology
 - Cited that tech moguls like Steve Jobs do not allow their children to have pads or access the internet
 - Becoming intentional about handing on the faith in families and churches
 - Develop a specific mission
- **2:3**
- **Share in suffering**
 - = **you** (sg.) **share in suffering** *syngkakopatho*
 - Liefeld (NIVAC, 247) The verb here has to do with being in distress; so NIV = endure hardship
 - Cf. *syngkakopatho* in
 - 1 Cor 12:26 when one part of the body suffers, all parts suffer
 - Heb 11:25 Moses chose to suffer with God's people
 - Also 2 Tim 2:9—I suffer (*kakapatheo*) like a chained criminal (*kakourgōs*)
 - NEB = common criminal
 - *Kakourgōs* = evil doer, habitual criminal; same word used by Luke in his gospel for the two crucified with JC
 - Cf. orange jump suit; prison pinstripes
 - Paul then turns to three well-known and commonly used illustrations
 - The soldier—victory
 - The athlete—prize
 - The farmer—harvest
 - All three require knowledge, physical training, focus, effort, hardship if victory, award, or harvest is to be gained. POINT = commitment is required even, or especially, in hardship
- **2:4**
- Paraenesis teachers character through establishing worthy models to imitate (LTJ/YAB, 370);
- Cf. Phil 3:17: Brothers and sisters, join in imitating me, and observe those who live according to the example you have in us (NRS).
- **No one serving in the army gets entangled in everyday affairs; the soldier's aim is to please the enlisting officer.**
 - Comments about the PC police insisting that military imagery be removed from the Christian tradition.
 - The image of a good soldier was a standard example in Hellenistic moral discourse
 - In the NT: 2 Cor 10:3-5; Eph 6:10-17; Phm 2 (not always using the same word)

- **Entangled** (*emplekomai*) G/S (229) = so involved in something that one is restricted or controlled by it and therefore no longer free to do what should be done
- A Roman soldier could not be married or be in business.
- **Enlisting officer** *stratologesanti* is not Paul, but JC
- Point = don't get distracted
- GOAL is to gain victory by following orders
- Resources for illustrations about how military training aims to transform a person's thinking and acting. CONTENT+CONDUCT
 - J. D. Vance, *Hillbilly Elegy* (163ff.)
 - Hauerwas and Willimon, *Where Resident Aliens Live* (173ff.)
 - David Brooks in *The Road to Character* discusses Dwight (Ike) Eisenhower's life as a soldier. The basic lesson Ike learned in the military was the proper place for a soldier was where he is ordered to be by his superior officers. As a staff officer—never a coveted or glamorous role—Ike learned to master procedure, process, teamwork, and organization. “When I go to a new station,” said Ike, “I look to see who is the strongest and ablest man on the post. I forget my own ideas and do everything in my power to promote what he says is right” (63).
- **Application:** the one who assumes to enter or is entrusted with pulpit or lectern should stay focused and not get distracted by other important matters (cf. Acts 6:1-7).
- **2:5**
- **And in the case of an athlete, no one is crowned without competing according to the rules.**
 - Cf. 1 Cor 9:24-27; Phil 3:14
 - LTJ/YAB (366) the athlete is one of the most widely used exemplars for moral effort in Hellenistic philosophy [philosophy was not just a way of thinking, it was a way of life/CONTENT=CONDUCT
 - **According to the rules**
 - Training in addition to competition.
 - Athletes were required to spend months undergoing rigorous training. They had to take an oath swearing that they had done so before being allow to compete in the games.
 - Contemporary professional and amateur athletics are filled with positive and negative examples. Simone Biles vs. Lance Armstrong, etc.
 - GOAL is win the prize, but only by following the rules
- **2:6**
- **It is the hardworking farmer who does the work who ought to have the first share of the crops.**
 - LTJ/YAB—*kopiao* denotes hard labor even to the point of exhaustion
 - A friend named his hamburger joint in Anson, Tx Hatahoe.
 - Example of John Day
 - Christian service in general and assigned/ordained ministry in particular is labor intensive and exhausting
 - GOAL is reap a harvest

- **2:7**
- **Think over what I say**
 - *Noie* = carefully consider, think it through
 - JRWS = “mind the things I say;” it’s the idea that draws all three metaphors together
 - Think about Paul’s list of examples (profiles in courage and suffering)
 - Paul in 1:8-14
 - Onesiphorus in 1:15-18
 - Soldier who avoids distraction and is victorious in 2:3-4
 - Athlete who competes by the rules and wins the crown in 2:5
 - Farmer who works hard for a share of the crop in 2:6
 - Now moves to Jesus Christ who suffered but gained eternal life in 2:8-13
- **2:8-13**
 - JRWS heads this as the “Theological Foundation”
 - LTJ/YAB heads it as “Jesus the Exemplar”
 - Some see hymn fragments and creedal statements here; rhythmic quality
- **2:8**
- **Remember**
 - Present imperative = keep on remembering and imitating; keep on thinking about it
 - Not something forgotten, but something significant. Cf. “Remember the Alamo”
 - Should be given greater attention
 - The point of paraenesis is not momentary recall, but **persistent and formative recollection**
- **Jesus Christ**
 - Not Christ Jesus as is common in PE; Paul here puts a special focus on the humanity of Jesus (see LTJ/YAB, 373).
 - LTJ/YAB (380) “The rapid turn to Jesus’ human origins, and the immediate connection to Paul’s imprisonment, in contrast, point Timothy to the reality that the delegate’s present call—as is Paul’s own—is to share the human suffering of Jesus that preceded his resurrection. Making a preemptive argument against those who claim the resurrection is already (2:18)—that is, Christian existence is all about power and not about suffering—Paul insists that the present time is one in which the transformative power of the Holy Spirit (1:14) manifests itself in enabling humans to follow the messianic power of suffering in behalf of others (Gal 5:25-6:2)... The messianic pattern is one of life for others, inevitably involving the necessity of endurance rather than glory.”
 - Cf. Luther’s theology of the cross in opposition to the theology of glory. See Gerhard Forde, *On Being a Theologian of the Cross*.
- **Raised from the dead**
 - Word “dead” is plural—from among the dead; Jesus is the first fruit from the dead—this hope sustains Paul in his season of distress
 - Death did not have the final word
 - GK: Remembering that triumph is to encourage Tim
- **A descendant of David**

- Paul refers to David only here and Rom 1:1-4
- Connects Jesus to the Davidic covenant and the hope for the messiah
- **That is my gospel** in a nutshell; once again a preemptive statement in response to 2:18
 - *Euangelion*—3rd time used; also 1:8, 10
 - NTW/PFE-PL(101f.) “Paul’s gospel, in fact (verse 8), is not a religious system, not even a message about how people may be saved (though it includes that on the way). At its heart it is the announcement that Jesus is the king, the anointed one, the Lord of the world, a claim which would be astonishing and unbelievable were it not for the fact that God raised him from the dead. The message centers upon him, which proclaims him as Lord to a surprised and often angry world, is ‘God’s word’ indeed, the word which God has entrusted to apostles, preachers and teachers, the word which sums up the entire Bible of the day (the Old Testament) by speaking of Jesus as the fulfillment of God’s age-old plan.”
 - To announce the crucified and risen Lord was to OFFEND against the all-powerful claims of Caesar
 - Fee (14f.) “One cannot read much of Paul without recognizing that at the heart of everything for him is the gospel, the good news of God’s gracious acceptance and forgiveness of sinners, to which the proper response is faith (trusting that he really does accept sinners) and love toward others. This saving work is totally God’s own initiative, his prior action of grace toward the disobedient, meaning the righteous (whose righteousness is self-righteous, and therefore unrighteousness) as well as the unrighteous. That grace was effected by Christ’s death on the cross; it is made effectual in the life of the one who believes by the power of the indwelling Spirit. The believer, therefore, is one who is both forgiven of his or past sins and indwelt by the Spirit, and thus empowered for loving obedience to God.”
- **2:9**
- **For which I suffer hardship**
 - *Kakopatheo*—cf. 1:8 suffering for the gospel; 2:3; 4:5
 - James D. G. Dunn, on this passage in the *New Interpreter’s Bible*: “...suffering in not just a consequence of the gospel, but is itself part of the gospel” (843).
 - Cf. Matt 5:10-12 Blessed are those persecuted on account of righteousness...when they utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.
- **Even to the point of being chained like a criminal, but the word of God is not chained.**
 - See 1:16 in notes above regarding **chained**
 - **Word of God**—*logos tou theou* points forward *logos pistos logos* (faithful or trustworthy saying) in 2:11
 - Paul reached deep into the Jewish traditions for the theology that sustained him (NTW/PFE-PL, 101)
 - One of the themes in the middle section of Isaiah is the living and abiding power of God’s word (see Isa 40:6-8; 55:10-11)
 - Babylon was attempting to intimidate Jew’s into Babylonian ways of thinking [CONTENT] and living [CONDUCT] (Walter Brueggemann)

- Just as the people of God were sustained by Isaiah’s prophecy in their season of suffering, so now Tim and the will be sustained by such words from God.
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- **2:10**
- **Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect**
 - **Endure** *hypomeno*—to endure, persevere, remain/tarry, hold one’s ground; leading up to repetition in 2:12
 - G/S—This is holding on in the time of struggle not for endurance sake, but for the benefit of others
 - GK—Paul’s endurance is purposeful
 - Towner/NICNT (504)—the unstoppable word of God and the need of the “elect” are Paul’s two reasons for enduring
 - Paul is ready to serve as an example to those facing similar threats and distress, or ordinary struggles to be faithful—see passages below
 - But the one who endures to the end will be saved. (Matt. 24:13 NRS)
 - and you will be hated by all because of my name. But the one who endures to the end will be saved. (Matt. 10:22 NRS)
 - [Love] bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. (1 Cor. 13:7 NRS)
 - looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such hostility against himself from sinners,¹ so that you may not grow weary or lose heart (Heb. 12:2-3 NRS)
 - Endure trials for the sake of discipline. God is treating you as children; for what child is there whom a parent does not discipline? (Heb. 12:7 NRS)
 - Indeed we call blessed those who showed endurance. You have heard of the endurance of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful. (Jas. 5:11 NRS)
 - If you endure when you are beaten for doing wrong, what credit is that? But if you endure when you do right and suffer for it, you have God’s approval. (1 Pet. 2:20 NRS)
 - **For the sake of the elect so that they may also obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus**
 - Fee (252)—Too much ink has been spilt on who are the elect in this passage. The debated interpretation asks whether the elect are those 1) already saved, or 2) those not saved, but elect. Fee says that “God’s chosen people” is an excellent translation
 - Towner (504) notes that the OT and NT refers to the people of God as those chosen by God. Salvation is a process initiated by proclamation and conversion, but not concluded until the Eschaton
- **With eternal glory**
 - NTW (103) seems to follow C. S. Lewis’s sermon, “The Weight of Glory” when he describes glory as “not shining like a light bulb, but that “in God’s eyes, a human being reflecting his image and likeness, is more important than the

brightest star in the sky . . . but the glory of which the New Testament writers speak has more to do with the status, the role, which God's people will be given."

- Cf. Luther's contrast between the theology of cross and the theology of glory, see Forde.
- LTJ/YAB (381) "Paul is saying that the word of God is faithful! Paul and his delegate [Tim] can trust the pattern of suffering now, glory later, because it is confirmed in the story of Jesus. Jesus was born of the seed of David, a human among others: he endured; he suffered; he died. But he was raised from the dead. And his gift, the Holy Spirit, now dwells and strengthens his followers (1:14; 2:1) as they undergo experiences of shame and suffering for the sake of that same good news. . . . The life empowered by the Holy Spirit dwelling within believers (1:14) is not one of present glory [is this what 2:18 means when the opponents say that the resurrection has already occurred, i.e., they are already glorified] but is defined by endurance."
- NTW (102) = glory is both status and role [responsibility] given to God's people. To reign with Christ includes work to do, new tasks to stretch us in this world. Those faithful in this world will be given authority in the one to come.
- **Sermon lead—The Word of God is not Chained**
 - Paul's aim is to get Tim to get his house in Ephesus (the church) in order
 - He needs to equip those who will teach the faith and live the faith
 - About the prophet Daniel, Howard Hendricks said, "God's method has always been to take a godly person, put her or him in an ungodly environment, and through that person propose an alternative lifestyle." Cf. that situation to Paul's and Tim's. Hendricks developed a sermon around Daniel with these three questions (the questions also fit the context of 2 Tim):
 - Was the Word well used?
 - Was the work well done?
 - Was the Lord well pleased?
- **Sermon lead—The Weight of Glory**
 - Based on the context and circumstances of 2:8-10 develop a sermon that "remembers" (v. 8) the heart of the gospel (see notes above) and show self-sacrificial suffering and endurance reflecting the hope of eternal glory now
 - Draw on insights from C. S. Lewis in the *Weight of Glory*.
- **2:11-13** A Faithful Saying (some think the saying points backward rather than forward)
- Illustrates what Paul means by "suffer" (v. 9) and "endure" (v. 10)—(Mounce/WBC, 501)
- A number of scholars see these verses as a creedal statement or a hymn.
 - LTJ (102) "It's the sort of thing you can imagine people learning by heart, teaching to their children and friends, and then repeating them under their breath when standing before tribunals, when being threatened by angry magistrate or beaten by guards, when facing sudden and fierce temptation."
- However, LTJ (YAB) (cf. Fee) say that it is not clear that the NT lines that resemble poetry ever existed as hymns or what is gained by the designation. He does recognize

“that the four balanced conditional sentences in sequence, with the last providing an extended reversal of the third, have rhetorical power. (379)

- Notice the repeated “if **we**” . . . [then] “**we** will”—it has a confessional ring to it
- LTJ/YAB (376) finds similarity with Rom 6:8—if we have died together with him we shall also live together with him.
- Long’s heading = A Baptismal Poem
- LTJ/YAB (378f.) questions whether there is enough evidence for the hymnic/creedal claim
- “This is the basic deep pattern of Christian existence, imprinted on believers through their initiation in Christ in baptism.”(source citation?)
- NTW/PEPE (102)

• 2:11

- **The saying is sure:** (*pistos ho logos*) trustworthy saying-NIV; faithful saying-KJV
 - Does the phrase conclude the previous assertion?
 - Or, does it introduce the following one?
- First line: **If we have died with him, we will also live with him**
 - Almost a direct quotation of Rom 6:8
 - Unless a grain of seed falls into the ground and dies; you must die to self; take up cross and follow me...
 - Conjectured that Roman church had lifted these words from Paul’s letter and incorporated them into a hymn
 - *Sudzaō* = to live—future indicative active
 - It is the present state and future hope of the Christian
 - G/S—The life is present, but incomplete

• 2:12

- Second line: **If we endure, we will also reign with him**
 - **Endure** *Hypomēno*—present tense = continue to endure, remain, hold one’s ground (cf. 2:10)
 - **Reign**
 - *Sumbasileō* future tense
 - Only other time the compound word is used in NT = 1 Cor 4:8--*Already you have all you want! Already you have become rich! Quite apart from us you have become kings! Indeed, I wish that you had become kings, so that we might be kings with you!* (NRS) LTJ/YAB sees similarities between the hyper-realized eschatology in Corinth which had led to pride filled super-spiritually and the teaching of the opponents in Ephesus based on the belief that the resurrection had already occurred (2 Tim 2:18)
 - However, *basileuo* is used several times in Revelation where God and the Messiah reign in heaven and the assurance is given that Christians will reign along with them.
 - It is also used several times in Romans in reference to death reigning except in 5:15, 21 where Christ is said to bring the dominion/reign of grace over death
 - Theology of the cross vs. a theology of glory

- Third line: **If we deny him, he will also deny us**
 - Lines three (3) and four (4) create somewhat of a puzzle; seem to run counter to each other
 - Dunn (NIB, 844) asks, “If denial of Christ brings denial by Christ in its train, how is that unfaithfulness is not similarly punished?”
 - Dunn thinks that the two lines serve different purposes:
 - Line 3 of the poem intends to warn the casual believer and to stiffen the resolve of the frightened
 - Line 4 is to comfort the broken and to give renewed hope to the despairing
 - Matt 10:33 If we deny him, he will also deny us
 - Denial sounds like *defection* in this context
 - In the threatening circumstances, denial was a danger.
 - Some already had. Would Tim?
 - Cf. Peter
 - Cf. Judas
 - Two different outcomes
 - More below
- Fourth line: **If we are faithless, he remains faithful—for he cannot deny himself**
 - *Apisteo*: to not believe, disbelieve, to prove disloyal/ used 7 other times in NT
 - Mark 16:11 But when they heard that he was alive and had been seen by her, they would not believe it. (NRS)
 - Mark 16:16 The one who believes and is baptized will be saved; but the one who does not believe will be condemned. (NRS)
 - Luke 24:11 But these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them (NRS)
 - Luke 24:41 While in their joy they were disbelieving and still wondering, he said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?" (NRS)
 - Acts 28:24 Some were convinced by what he had said, while others refused to believe. (NRS)
 - Romans 3:3 What if some were unfaithful? Will their faithlessness nullify the faithfulness of God? (NRS)
 - 1 Peter 2:7 To you then who believe, he is *precious*; but for those who do not believe, "The stone that the builders rejected has become the very head of the corner," (NRS)
 - Long sees this line as a strong warning to the false teachers and that Paul hopes that the good leaders will use these notes for a “come to Jesus” sermon
 - The bad teaching/doctrine amounts to a rejection of their baptismal identity
 - There will be an equal reaction from God to the action of the false teachers
 - JRWS represents the view that lines 3 and 4 warn of **God’s judgment**:
 - “The logic of the Christian hymn, with its two pairs of balancing epigrams demands [a different] interpretation.
 - ‘If we deny him’ and ‘if we are faithless’ are parallels, which requires that ‘he will deny us’ and ‘he remains faithful’ be parallels also.

- In this case his ‘faithfulness’ when we are faithless will be faithfulness to his warnings.
 - “The one and only thing he cannot do, because he will not, is to deny himself or act contrary to himself. So God remains for ever himself, the same God of mercy and of justice, fulfilling his promises (whether of blessing or of judgment), giving us life if we die with Christ and a kingdom if we endure, but denying us if we deny him, just as he warned, because he cannot deny himself.”
 - Cf. Larry Richards *A Theology of Personal Ministry* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981), 15f.

“The biblical covenants ... are covenants of *promise*: they are God’s pronouncements of what he intends to do for His people. God’s commitments under the covenant promises will be carried out, whether or not a particular generation of His people carries out its obligations. “Israel’s history is a vivid commentary on God’s continuing faithfulness to His Word. The people rebelled and turned back at the border of the Promised Land. Yet God remained faithful to His covenant promises. When the land had been possessed, many generations during the time of the ‘judges’ turned away from God to worship idols. Yet God continued to speak of His people and their land. Evil kings led Israel and Judah into an apostasy that God was forced to punish by exile. Yet at the time of their greatest despair, the Israelites saw God reaffirm His covenant promises . . . and bring His people back to the land, purged and cleansed. No matter how a particular generation might respond to the covenant, God remained unshaken in His determination to abide by His oath.

While the failure of a specific generation to seek its identity in the covenant did not shake God’s purposes, it did have an impact on that generation. The promises point to the time of the end, when God will bring human history to a conclusion. But the benefits reserved for God’s own at that time of final blessing were available to any generation of Israelites that would recognize the covenant relationship and live as God’s people. When a generation failed to live for Him, it suffered the loss of blessings and a deterioration of life. But when it affirmed its identity as His people and lived in responsive obedience, God graciously permitted it to be experienced in space and time the blessings promised for eternity” (emphasis added).

- Richards’ observation fits well with Dunn’s (NIB, 844) that “...there was a longer, more rooted tradition in Judaism that God remained faithful to the chosen people, even when they proved faithless time and time again (v. 13).
 - Cf. Second Isaiah and Hosea
 - Paul is also clear on this point (Rom 3:3-7; 9-11)
- Oden: “The rhythm of the previous stanzas would expect us to hear the hymn saying in its fourth and last stanza: If we are faithless, God will reject our faithlessness. Rather it contains an astonishing reversal: ‘If we are faithless, he remains faithful—for he cannot deny himself (v. 13) . . . On the way to the last day, God continues to offer forgiveness and salvation even when recipients of his mercy are unfaithful [because]... God keeps his promises.” [Of course, it is not effective if it is rejected and we continue to live in opposition to God’s grace and mercy.]
- NTW (104) well represents the view that lines (3) and (4) represent **God’s grace**. He resolves it this way: “... ‘I don’t think ‘faithless’ means ‘if we lose our faith,’

in the sense of ceasing to believe that Jesus is Lord and that God raised him from the dead. I think this is meant to take account of the fact that our faithless—our reliability, our stickability, our resolve, our determination to remain ‘faithful’ in the sense of ‘loyal’—will waver and wobble from time to time. Those under intense pressure, whether political, spiritual, moral or whatever, will sometimes find themselves weak, faint, and helpless. It is at those times that they need to learn a kind of second-order faith, a faith in the utter faithfulness and reliability of God himself, the God we know in and through Jesus, who was himself faithful to death. There is a world of difference between being blown off the ship’s deck by a hurricane and voluntarily diving into the sea to avoid having to stay at the helm.”

- Back to Peter and Judas
 - Peter denied Jesus, but stayed “on deck” and was forgiven and restored
 - Jn 21:9 By shore of the lake was a charcoal fire/fire of coals (*anthrakia*)
 - Jn 18:18 Outside the gate of the high priest—slaves and guards had built a fire (*anthrakia*)
 - How the sense of smell can stir memories
 - Peter “called out” by Jesus, but also “restored” and commissioned
 - Judas betrayed Jesus, but “jumped overboard” and missed the opportunity for forgiveness and restoration
- **Lesson from church history**
 - During the Decian persecution (249-251) many Christians recanted their faith and offered sacrifices to the pagan gods and to the emperor.
 - Afterwards, many of the lapsed wanted to return to the church.
 - A heated debate ensued
 - Rigorist said no—once a sinner, always a sinner (led by Novation)
 - Moderates said yes—all are sinners and forgiveness was open to them
- **Pastoral observation:** Any given congregation will have Christians dealing with addictions and/or secret sins.
 - We need to keep them from “jumping overboard”
 - Find that delegate balance between law/judgment and grace/compassion
 - Avoid “flinty”—hard, judgmental attitudes
 - Avoid “mushy”—soft, cheap grace
 - Hold accountable, but hold on to them with the firm embrace of compassionate love
 - Doctrines of justification and sanctification
 - Cf Long’s story of a student who said that she could not preach judgment
 - Conversation
 - She told story about her teenage son who was on drugs and acting out
 - She and her husband were afraid of him
 - After one heated argument in which he threatened them
 - She went to his bedroom door in fear
 - She told him in a very firm voice, “I love you too much to let you continue doing this yourself and us

- Long replied, “I think that I have just heard a powerful and faithful sermon on sin and judgment.”
- We must give them words of hope in their season of distress
 - It always includes a call to repentance
 - But it also offers a word of grace
- **Sermon lead: Sermon on baptism**
 - Give the historical circumstances of this passage
 - Explain the literary form and purpose
 - Use NTW (102, quoted above) how the hymn might have been memorized and used.
 - Memorize the four stanzas over four weeks and work into the worship service with the congregation reciting it
 - Or use as a responsive reading
 - Resources
 - Willimon
 - *Christian Studies* #29
 - <http://bookoforder.info/Book-of-Common-Worship.pdf>