



Second Timothy

Paul's Last Words

Fan The Flame

Be Bold

II Timothy 1:3-12

Lesson One

Mission Arlington/Mission Metroplex Curriculum

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Fan The Flame—II Timothy 1:3-12

Paul began this last letter to Timothy with thanksgiving. This is so like Paul. We see this kind of gratitude expressed in most of Paul's letters. (For instance: Romans 1:9, 9:2; I Thesalonians 1:2, 2:13, 5:17; Ephesians 1:16 and many others.) He knew that Timothy had a very big responsibility, and wanted him to know that there was not a time, night or day, that Paul was not thinking about him and praying for him.

Paul gets very emotional and says, "Recalling your tears, I long to see you." Most likely Paul was remembering the parting recorded in Acts 20. There Paul gave a final message to the people in Ephesus. In that chapter, he mentioned his tears twice, in verses 19 and 31. He also mentioned the tears of those in Ephesus, (verse 37) and we can be sure that Timothy was among them. Now, Paul, sitting in chains in a Roman prison, painfully waits for friends like Timothy to come to him. We will see later, in chapter four, verse nine, that Paul urges Timothy to come to him soon.

We should notice how very personal this letter is. He called Timothy a "dear son." He referred to Timothy's "tears." He "recalled." He "longs." All these emotional words lead us to see how very much Paul wanted to tell Timothy personal things.* And, as we will see, he opens up to Timothy more than he has in any other letter.

But, not only had Paul been reminded of Timothy's tears, but he said in verse five that he had been reminded of Timothy's sincere faith. You may remember that in Matthew 16:18, 19, Jesus said that He would build His church on faith that Jesus is Lord. Now Paul reminds Timothy that not only does he know of, and has experienced, Timothy's faith, but also that of his mother and grandmother. This is not to suggest that Timothy had a third-hand or second-hand faith. It points out that Timothy had a strong background in the faith and that he was living up to that in his own life. It is interesting to note that when Paul referred to Timothy's grandmother, Lois, he used an affectionate term that might equal our expression "grandma."

And, we remember that Paul had said in verse three that he was serving God as his "forefathers did," and Timothy was serving God as had his mom and grandma. And, Paul added a word, "sincere." It is possible to fake faith. Paul would later (II Timothy 3:1-5) talk about people who have a "form of godliness but denying its power." These are "fake" Christians. It is pretty easy to fake Christianity. All you have to do is behave pretty well, go to church, take some responsibility in the church and people will think you are a Christian.

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Paul wanted Timothy to remember the time when he was set apart for ministry. Paul refers to it as the laying on of his (Paul's) hands. This was, and still is in many churches, a formal ceremony that recognizes the call of God on a person's life and the laying on of hands symbolizes the blessing of God.

Paul said Timothy should fan the flame, the work of God's Holy Spirit in his life, which was recognized in that ceremony. Timothy had by this time spent several years as a leader in the church at Ephesus. This was the church to which Christ spoke in The Revelation, chapter two, and told them that they had "left their first love." In other words, they had been at one time on fire, aflame, for the Good News of Christ. But, as the years went by, they cooled off. Well, Paul said to Timothy in our Scripture today that if the flame gets low, fan it. Fire needs oxygen to burn. If you fan a small flame, it will catch more of what is burning on fire and the flame gets bigger. Timothy had the gift of God's Holy Spirit in him. It was a burning flame.

That flame wasn't anything of which to be ashamed. It was something that Timothy should have been proud of and forceful in sharing. Paul told Timothy not to be timid or ashamed. He was to be like Paul, brave and strong in sharing the Good News of Jesus, even if it meant suffering, as Paul was doing at the time. And, Paul gives several reasons for his fearlessness: God's power to save, God's purpose, God's grace, God's sending of Jesus. Also, Jesus destroyed death and brought life and immortality.

Paul said that we have all of this, but not because we have done anything to deserve it. It is a free gift by God's grace.

Then, Paul wrote that he was not ashamed of the Gospel. (Verse 12) He knows exactly what he has believed and is convinced that God will take care of him and will do everything that God has promised to do. Wow, what a great promise...and it is for all of us.

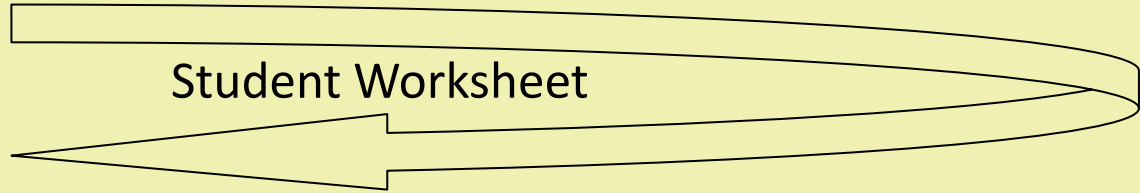
*Underlined words and phrases are to be used in completing the Student Worksheet.

Scripture Memory: "I am not ashamed, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted Him for that day." II Timothy 1:12

Lesson Goal: To help students understand Paul's love for Timothy and his challenge to Timothy to grow in his ministry.

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What four words, phrases, did Paul use which tell us that this is a very personal letter?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

What did Paul say in II Timothy 3:1-5 about people who have fake faith?

What reasons did Paul give for his fearlessness?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

Paul said that we have all of this, but _____ because we have done _____ to deserve it.

It is a free _____ by God's _____.

Scripture Memory: "I am not ashamed, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted Him for that day." II Timothy 1:12

How to begin a Personal Relationship with God:

First, believe that the God of the Bible is the true God.

Second, believe that Jesus, God's Son, was sent to earth to die so that you can have a relationship with God.

Third, ask God to forgive your sins in Jesus' name. Jesus' death on the cross paid the price of every sin you commit.

Fourth, ask Jesus to be your Savior and the Lord of your life.