

2 Timothy
Last Words; Lasting Words
I Know Whom I Have Believed
2 Timothy 1:8-18

Sermon Notes

Philip Towner It is not unusual for Paul to draw on human experiences to illustrate the truths he is trying to express.

Cut from the sermon: During his first imprisonment, Paul had said in Philippians 1, “For me to live is Christ, to die is gain.” He then went on to say being with Christ was preferable, although he sensed that God had more for him to do on this earth. Paul’s intuition in his first imprisonment had been correct – he was released from prison and continued ministry for another 3-4 years. This time, though, it didn’t look like Paul would be released a second time. Nero needed someone to blame for the fire and who better than Paul – and Peter, who was also martyred about this time. So, think again how meaningful the gospel truth that Paul shared was to him that Jesus had abolished death and brought immortality to light.

Robert Yarborough Timothy may be feeling inadequate for bearing the onus of gospel duties. But he did not, in the end, get himself into this fix: God did: it was “his own” intention. Timothy’s situation did not come about “according to” human achievement or qualification but “according to” divine “purpose and grace.” The energy and plumb line for Timothy’s duties lie entirely in God. From experience Paul knows there is great freedom (e.g., from self-reliance) and promise in this understanding. What God began, he can carry out (Philippians 1:5; 1 Thessalonians 5:24). Timothy should be wary of imagined self-limitations.

Kent Hughes tells us that in the final chapter of Romans – chapter 16 – Paul mentions 33 people by name, 24 of whom Paul had met on his missionary journeys and who had apparently settled in Rome.

Application from the Sermon

1. Be deeply rooted in your understanding of God’s purpose and grace in saving you
2. Ask God to give you a greater fear of him than of suffering and death – death has been abolished in Jesus!
3. You have been entrusted with an incomparable treasure – guard it well

4. Take great pains to be a loyal friend, even if your loyalty brings suffering for the sake of the gospel

Scripture Associated with the Sermon

Hebrews 2:14 Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, 15 and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.

1 Corinthians 15:54 When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written:

“Death is swallowed up in victory.”

55 “O death, where is your victory?

O death, where is your sting?”

Romans 10:13 For “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

14 How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? 15 And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!” 16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?” 17 So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.

Philippians 2:18 . . . Yes, and I will rejoice, 19 for I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ this will turn out for my deliverance, 20 as it is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed, but that with full courage now as always Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life or by death. **21 For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.** 22 If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. 23 I am hard pressed between the two. **My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better.** 24 But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account. 25 Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all, for your progress and joy in the faith, 26 so that in me you may have ample cause to glory in Christ Jesus, because of my coming to you again.

Ephesians 1:4 . . . In love 5 he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, 6 to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.

Hebrews 13:22 I appeal to you, brothers, bear with my word of exhortation, for I have written to you briefly. 23 **You should know that our brother Timothy has been released,** with whom I shall see you if he comes soon. 24 Greet all your leaders and all the saints. Those who come from Italy send you greetings. 25 Grace be with all of you.