



CONFIDENCE

Believers can have confidence in Christ in all circumstances.

2 TIMOTHY 1:3-14

Whether subtly or overtly by media outlets, billboards, magazines, or corporate seminars, we are motivated toward a self-confident life. Yet God's Word compels us toward a life of Christ-confidence. When we are most dependent on Him, He is most pleased with us. Confidence in Christ enables us to face challenges by His power rather than by our self-sufficiency. By relying on His strength we can make a difference in our world.

Does our culture over emphasize self-reliance? Explain. How does our culture foster or impede trusting in God as opposed to ourselves?

UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT

2 TIMOTHY 1:3-14

Second Timothy represents a change of tone from Paul's first letter to Timothy. In his previous epistle, Paul urged him to take a strong stand against false teachers who threatened the church at Ephesus. Between the two letters, Timothy apparently followed Paul's advice, but could have suffered such an adverse response that he may have toned down his preaching. Paul encouraged Timothy not to be afraid but to rekindle his gift of prophetic preaching.

Beginning his letter, Paul followed a typical formula in his salutation. However, he did not need to identify himself as an apostle to prove his authority to Timothy. Instead, he reminded Timothy that he served to fulfill God's will and to proclaim Christ's promise of eternal life. He also affirmed his love for Timothy as his spiritual son.

In a major difference from his first epistle, Paul wrote this letter from a Roman prison. He believed his life was approaching its end. Timothy must have understood the serious finality of the situation and wept over what might happen. Paul responded with a pledge of constant prayer.

Inspiring him to courageous ministry, Paul also reminded Timothy of his spiritual heritage. Paul was confident that Timothy shared the faith of his mother and grandmother.

Just as Paul compared himself with Timothy regarding their battle for the gospel and their heritage of faith, he also affirmed their mutual suffering. Paul encouraged Timothy not to be ashamed of Christ's testimony. He reminded Timothy that God had not only called them, but He would be faithful to them.

While many people had abandoned Paul in his distress, others made special efforts to help him. Similarly, Timothy might have to endure many opponents, but God would always be with him as he faithfully proclaimed the sound doctrine entrusted to him. Neither Timothy nor Paul had to rely on themselves, but they could trust the Holy Spirit who worked in them.

As you read 2 Timothy 1:3-14, look for qualities of the person the Lord entrusts with His message.



EXPLORE THE TEXT

HERITAGE (2 TIM. 1:3-5)

³I thank God whom I serve, as did my ancestors, with a clear conscience, as I remember you constantly in my prayers night and day.⁴ As I remember your tears, I long to see you, that I may be filled with joy.⁵ I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you as well.

VERSES 3-4

Although often imprisoned, Paul never viewed himself as a victim. He offered thanksgiving to God. Paul's gratitude inspired him to **remember** Timothy in his **prayers night and day**. The affection between Paul and Timothy was like a bond between a father and a son.

Paul's yearning to see Timothy was based on two factors. First, he remembered Timothy's **tears**. Paul didn't explain the occasion for Timothy's emotion. It could have been the tearful farewell in Acts 20:37 when Paul parted from Timothy and the Ephesian elders. Timothy's tears underscored the friendship and esteem he and Paul held for each other. Second, Paul longed to see Timothy because he needed the **joy** that a reunion would bring. Paul knew that the source of true joy is Christ. He also knew that the joy of the Lord sometimes flows through a friend in Christ.

VERSE 5

Timothy's faith was **sincere**. The word *sincere* conveys authenticity. Paul saw in Timothy's faith the same vitality that thrived in his **grandmother •Lois** and his **mother •Eunice**. Their faith set an example of true devotion to Christ which they modeled for Timothy. Timothy's heritage served as fertile soil for the gospel to take root in his life. When Paul declared that he was convinced of the sincere faith abiding in Timothy, he was bearing witness to a continuing passion for Jesus that was three generations deep.

How is a person's spiritual growth impacted by the lives of others?

BIBLE SKILL: *Compare Bible characters.*

Compare the influence of Lois and Eunice with the influence of Cornelius, Lydia, and the Philippian jailer on their households. (See Acts 10:2; 16:15; 16:31-34.) Contrast these examples with the effects of ungodly parents found in the following passages: 1 Kings 13:33; 15:26; 15:34; 16:25; 16:30; 22:52. What actions could you take to be a godly influence in your family? What encouragement can you find in Paul's advice to Timothy that would help you live out a godly example for others?

GIFTED (2 TIM. 1:6-7)

⁶For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands,⁷for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.

VERSES 6-7

Timothy needed to keep ablaze ***the gift of God*** that was in him. Paul urged him to fan the existing fire into a full flame. The specific gift Timothy received from God likely involved his ministry that was officially recognized during the ***laying on*** of Paul's ***hands***. The laying on of hands was a symbolic act representing God's calling and imparting of His gift. Paul wanted Timothy's ministry at Ephesus to be stirred into a blazing furnace of godly leadership so that he could withstand the antagonists, equip the believers, and evangelize the lost. Giftedness requires responsible utilization for maximum effectiveness.

All believers receive the Holy Spirit at conversion and are gifted for service. Paul emphasized the need for Timothy to exercise his gifts courageously because God did not give believers a spirit of ***fear***. The term *spirit* refers to a disposition or temperament supplied to believers from the Holy Spirit. Instead of fear, timidity, and dread, the Holy Spirit provides power, love, and sound judgment for kingdom effectiveness.

The word ***power*** denotes godly strength of character that Timothy needed to proclaim the gospel and confront the heretical doctrines



of false teachers. God's power was required for Timothy to succeed as a leader. Failure awaited if he trusted solely in his own strength and abilities to do the work.

Timothy also needed **love** and **self-control**. *Self-control* involved both wisdom and discipline. Timothy faced situations in Ephesus that required keen analysis and critical thinking beyond natural ability. He needed to rely on the supernatural discernment that God provided. Consequently, the *power, love, and self-control* imparted to Timothy enabled him to serve the Lord with all his strength, his heart, and his mind.

What are the dangers of relying on our own strength and abilities to complete a God-given task? How can one tell the difference?

MAJOR THEMES IN 2 TIMOTHY

- **Giftedness.** Paul reminded Timothy of his God-given gifts.
- **Sound teaching.** Paul charged Timothy to continue in the pattern of sound teaching he had received.
- **Ministry priorities.** Paul urged Timothy to not engage in futile disputes but to keep his eye on the highest priorities of ministry.
- **Difficult times ahead.** Paul warned of perilous times in the future.
- **The inspired Scriptures.** Paul reminded Timothy of the importance of God-inspired Scripture as the sure compass for navigating the future.

UNASHAMED (2 TIM. 1:8-12)

⁸Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God,⁹ 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 us in Christ Jesus before the ages began, 10 and which now has been manifested through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life

and immortality to light through the gospel,¹¹ for which I was appointed a preacher and apostle and teacher,¹² which is why I suffer as I do. But I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that he is able to guard until that Day what has been entrusted to me.

VERSE 8

Paul realized that some people would wrongly interpret his imprisonment. Some would view the legal charges against him as the judgment of God upon the message he preached. Doubts about the gospel would arise and the legitimacy of Christ would be questioned. Moreover, Paul knew that Timothy was susceptible to the mounting persecution. He exhorted Timothy not to be **ashamed of the testimony about our Lord** or of Paul as a **prisoner** of Christ. Paul didn't consider himself to be a prisoner of Rome. It was Christ, not Nero, that captured Paul's life. Suffering was the price of uncompromising loyalty to Jesus and was bearable by relying on **the power of God**. God's power was sufficient to either remove Timothy's affliction or to sustain him through the affliction.

VERSES 9-10

Timothy could rely on God's power because he had experienced it through salvation. The phrase **who saved us** was a stark reminder of all that God had done through Christ. God took the initiative not only to save sinners but to call them **to a holy calling**. God's saving plan involved a call to live a godly life.

Paul continued to remind Timothy that neither salvation nor calling were based on worthiness or works. Instead, everything was based on God's purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ.

The death of Jesus on the cross was the means by which atonement was made for sin. God graciously and purposely gave His Son as the sin substitute. Salvation was not an afterthought but was conceived by God in eternity before time began. It was crucial for Timothy to recall the saving power and purpose of God in Christ before the world was formed. In view of a perilous situation and Paul's impending execution, Timothy could find great comfort knowing that God saw the future, and He was able to embolden Timothy to persevere through it.



What God purposed before time began He proved in the fullness of time through Jesus, who has ***abolished death***. The word *abolished* is a translation of a Greek verb indicating “nullification” or “making something useless.” Jesus nullified death’s power for those who place their trust in Him. In addition, Paul emphasized that our Savior brought ***life and immortality to light through the gospel***. Jesus turned what was once dark speculation about eternity into a bright reality that abundant life continues after the grave.

VERSES 11-12

For the gospel Paul was ***appointed a preacher***. A *preacher* was someone who proclaimed a message under the authority of a superior. Paul was a messenger proclaiming salvation under the lordship of Christ. He realized also that he was an ***apostle*** because he had been commissioned with Christ’s authority to spread the gospel. Furthermore, Paul embraced his role as a ***teacher***. He was appointed to communicate God’s truth and to expound clearly its meaning.

Paul’s faithfulness to his appointed role led to suffering and imprisonment. He was not complaining; he was explaining that the reason for his suffering was linked to resistance to the gospel message. Nevertheless, Paul was ***not ashamed***. The pleasure of obedience to the Lord canceled out any shame associated with his arrests and afflictions. He knew the Savior in whom he had placed his faith. The word ***know*** indicated an intimate relationship based on experience. It is significant that Paul emphasized ***whom*** he believed rather than “what” he believed. The “what” of the gospel message is crucial because the “whom” is indispensable.

Paul was fully persuaded that Jesus would not fail him. The word ***guard*** was a military term describing the vigilance of a soldier protecting something or someone. Paul was confident that Jesus could and would protect what had been ***entrusted*** to him. The gospel message had been entrusted to Paul. In turn, Paul deposited his life into the will of God.

The phrase ***until that day*** indicated that God would guard the deposit until the return of Christ. Paul’s encouragement to Timothy was that God always keeps His promise and He never forsakes anyone who makes a deposit of his or her life and ministry into His keeping. On *that day* Paul’s faithfulness and Timothy’s devotion will be evaluated and their suffering for the cause of Christ will be vindicated.

What is the relationship between confidence in the gospel and one's willingness to share the gospel? How does the truth of the gospel instill confidence in the believer?

KEY DOCTRINE: God the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His church (1 Cor. 12:4-6).

LOYAL (2 Tim. 1:13-14)

¹³Follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. **¹⁴By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, guard the good deposit entrusted to you.**

VERSES 13-14

Paul expected Timothy to be loyal to the gospel and to ***follow the pattern of the sound words that*** he had ***heard***. ***Pattern*** denoted an outline. Timothy had listened to Paul teach in a variety of settings and had soaked up ***sound words***. He was expected to use it as an outline for communicating God's truth.

Paul also charged Timothy to ***guard*** what had been entrusted to him by the Lord. This verse is similar to Paul's closing charge to Timothy in his previous letter (1 Tim. 6:20). Timothy did not need to carry out this work in his own strength but could depend on ***the Holy Spirit***. Like Timothy, we are charged with delivering the gospel not only to our generation, but to the next.

Why is it so important for believers to remain faithful in sharing the gospel? What things get in the way of believers freely sharing the gospel with others?



IN MY CONTEXT

- Believers can find strength from those who invest in them spiritually.
- Believers can act boldly with the power of the Holy Spirit working through them.
- Believers can live with confidence knowing that Christ demonstrated His power through the resurrection.
- Believers are charged with delivering the gospel to the next generation.

List the names of people who have invested in your spiritual development. What truths have you learned from them? How are you passing those lessons on to others?

Discuss as a group ways of encouraging each other to exercise their giftedness by the Holy Spirit. What actions need to be taken?

Focus on 2 Timothy 1:12. What actions do you need to take so that you can personally declare this verse as well?

Prayer Needs
