

Title: *The Danger OF INCONSISTENCY*
 Text: I Timothy 1:1-2, 5

Would you open your Bibles, please, to the book of I Timothy. There are three books in your N.T. called the Pastoral Epistles: I Timothy, 2 Timothy, and Titus. These three books tell us every thing there is to know about the church and how it should be run. They tell us everything we need to know about the qualification of people who serve in the church. They tell us everything we need to know about our relationships with one another within the church. And because of this I would like to begin a series of messages from one of these books: THE BOOK OF I TIMOTHY.

I Timothy chapter 1 beginning with Vs 1. (Read 1:1-2,5)

Prayer

Our Father, we thank you again for the Word of God which abides forever. We thank you for your Word which is our confidence and assurance in a day of confusion and uncertainty. And our Father, we pray that your Holy Spirit would make us sensitive to thee. So that the Word of God will be powerful and sharper than any two edged sword. We pray that the thoughts of our hearts and minds might be on thee. Bring us to that place of commitment to Christ where we will be willing to give everything to Him who first loved us and died that we might have life and life more abundantly. We ask this for the glory of Jesus Christ. In His name we pray. Amen

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In Vs 1, we are introduced to the Apostle Paul. In Vs 2, we are introduced to Timothy. Two wonderful men of God.

I would like to remind you that I Timothy, 2 Timothy, and Titus are perhaps the most important books you could read. For example: the book of 2 Timothy is the last book that the Apostle Paul ever wrote. This book was written during Paul's second imprisonment around 67 A.D.

The first time Paul was in prison, he wrote, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philmon. This was around 62 A.D. Shortly after this Nero, the Roman emperor did a stupid thing. He burnt down just about the whole city of Rome. And He blamed it on the Christians. And from that time on it was dangerous for Paul or anyone else to openly preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Nero, also, murdered his wife, his mother, his brother, and his two sisters because, as Roman history tells us, they professed Jesus Christ as savior. And dear friends, I think is it thrilling to pick up the book of Philippians and read in chapter 4 verse 22 "that all the saints greet you, especially those in Caesar's household." Paul, during his first imprisonment, won members of Nero's family to the Lord Jesus Christ. It is thrilling.

But, the book of Timothy was written during Paul's second imprisonment. And this time Paul knew he faced death. For he said, "the time of my departure has come; I have fought the good fight. I have finished the race. I have kept the faith." The Greek word translated "departure" means "executed". Paul knew he was going to be executed for the faith.

So, I Timothy, 2 Timothy, and Titus were all written during this second imprisonment. And thus, these are the last words of instruction from the Apostle Paul to the church.

The key verse in the abook is found in chapter 3 verse 15: "But in case I am delayed, I write so that you may know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, ~~the pillar and support of the truth.~~ the pillar and support of the truth." And that is what we are going to learn about as we study this little but wonderful letter.

(1)Now, let's come to chapter 1 verse 1. Here we read: "Paul, an Apostle".

I cannot read the word "Paul" without rejoicing. Dear friends, do you know what the word "Paul" means in the original language? The word "Paul" means "Little." Some folks believe he was little of stature. The impression I had of Paul as a young man was that Paul was a man that stood around 6ft 4 inches tall. He was a man who was in stature above everyone else. I often thought this of Paul because he used illustration ~~so~~^{of} attheliecs so much in this sermons. And so I thought of Paul as perhaps the winner of some event in the Olymbic games.

I, also, thought of Paul as the most dynamic preacher of the N.T. And I use to compare Paul with the great eveangelist of our day. I can see him thundering out on Mars Hill.

But, then the more I learned about the Apostle Paul, what a change it brought. For Paul reminds the Corinthains that he came with speech not the kind they would like to hear. It wasn't eloquent. In fact, on one occasion, Paul said that he was poor in Speech. And do you know what I blieve? I believe Paul had a speech problem. And because of that he wouldn't be well received in to many puplits in our day and age.

Some Bible scholars feel that the "throne" in Paul's flesh was a speech problem. Others believe Paul had poor vision.

Now, because his name is Paul which means "little", I believe it refers to some characteristic about him. "Saul" was his Jewish name which means "to ask" And Jesus changed that to "Paul" which means "little."

In 160 A.D. an Asian Christian wrote a kind of historical novel about Paul which he called THE ACTS OF PAUL. And in this novel he gives us a description of Paul's appearance.

He writes: "A man of little stature, thin haired upon the head, crooked in the legs, of good state of body, with eyebrows meeting, and a nose some what hooked, full of grace."

That is not a very flattering description. If you translated it would read: "A man who is short, sturdy, bull legged, bald, shaggy eyebrowed." That was Paul.

But, I am, also, reminded that the word "little" can refer to the work of God in a person's life. Paul, who was so great in the eyes of the Christian church, he who called himself "a Pharisee of the Pharisees, a Hebrew of the Hebrews, a graduate of the University of Tarsus, a Jew who was above reproach, concerning zeal: he persecuted the church." It was this man, this powerful individual that God broke and humbled. And God gave him the name "PAUL" meaning "little". What a wonderful lesson to learn.

Now, back to Vs 1: "Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus according to the commandment of God our savior, and of Christ Jesus, who is our hope"

From this verse I would like to point out three things about the Apostle Paul. Three principles that you can apply to your life this morning.

(1) Number one, HIS APOSTLESHIP.

Paul said that he was an Apostle of Christ Jesus. It seems everywhere that Paul went people were accusing him of being an impostor. He was always defending the fact that he

was an apostle. People would say, "Hay! He wasn't one of the 12. But, Paul said in Galations that he had this calling by tghе direct revelation of Jesus Christ.

In I Cor. 15, Paul said that "last of all Jesus was seen by ;me." You see, Paul saw the resurrected Christ on the road to Damascus. It was a physical vision of Christ which granted him the right to be an Apostle.

By the way, the word "apostle" means "One who is equipped to fulfill a responsibility and then is sent with a commission to do so." So, Paul says the he is an Apostle of Jesus christ. You know, dear friends, no one can equipe us like Jesus. I am so glad of that. Isn't it wonderful to know that no matter how weak we are in the eyes of certain people, no matter how little we might be, yet, little is much when God is in it. Paul, the little one, was powerful with God. Like wise, we too can be powerful with God. Acts 1 :8 says: "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. " WHY? To be witnesses for God. (2) Secondly, noticed his authority.

Paul is an apostle of Christ Jesus according to the commandment of God. Oh, dear friends, listen. If you are seeking God's will fsor your life, then listen to His call. You see, no person has the right to be in the service of he Lord who does not know they are called by God himself.

My hear used to go out to men who were studying with me in Seminary. I would hear them say, "I don't think God is calling me, but I thoght I would look into this profession of ministry, anyway." That is said.

But, this principle is not only referring to a call to professional ministry, it is also referring to God's call in every believer's life to minister in th local church.

Has God called you? Young people who serve as members of the youth council: has God called you to that place of service? Sunday school teacher: has God called you to serve as a teacher of His Word? Church Leaders, choir members, all who serve: has God called you?

Now, the truth is that God is calling. The real question is: ARE WE LISTENING? AND ARE WE RESPONDING?

And when you are listening and when you do respond, like Paul your authority comes from the Lord. HOW? By the commandment of God our Saviour.

(3)Then third, notice the wonderful assurance Paul had in his heart. And this assurance was in two areas.

(1)First, Paul had assurance of his own redemption. "By the commandment of God our saviour." And dear friends, may we never forget that. We were redeemed not with corruptible things like silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Jesus Christ as of a lamb without blemish, "OUR SAVIOUR". Jesus is our savior.

And what does Paul call him? He calls Him God. Jesus is God. Not just man. But God. God incarnate in man. "In the beginning" as we read in John 1:1, "was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

Then John 1:14 says: "and the word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth."

Paul an apostle of Christ Jesus by the commandment of God our savior. Paul knew he had been redeemed.

Oh, dear friends, can you say that? Can you say that Jesus is "MY SAVIOR! MY LORD! MY REDEEMER!.

We sing a great song: Redeemed, how I love to proclaim it! Redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. Redeemed through His infinite mercy. His child and forever I am. Redeemed, Redeemed, Redeemed by the blood of the lamb. Redeemed, redeemed, His child and forever I am. Praise God.

Dear friends, do you have that assurance in your heart that Jesus is your savior? If you haven't, you can. Just confess your sin and ask Jesus for his forgiveness and ask him to come into your life. And the assurance is then yours. "For as many as receive Him, to them gave He the right to be called children of God.

(2) Then Paul spoke of the assurance of the Lord's return.

Vs 1 says: "of Christ Jesus, who is our hope." Did you know that it is impossible for a person to be saved if he or she doesn't believe in the return of Jesus Christ? Did you know that? It is true.

A man once ask me. Pastor Bill, do you mean I have to believe in the personal return of Jesus in order to be saved? " I said, "Yes, you do. It is part of the whole ball game."

He said, "Pastor, how do you know that?" Romans 8: 24 says: "For in hope we have been saved." Literally, we are saved on the bases of hope. Hope in what? In the return of Jesus Christ That is the great hope of the Christian faith. You see, if there is no Hope, if Christ is not coming again, there is no salvation. So, there is no salvation in the Bible apart from the personal return of Jesus Christ

Dear friends, isn't it wonderful to have that assurance that we are going to see Jesus someday? Man, let me tell you, that takes a load off a busy day.

That sort of relieves the burdens that you have been carrying around. That frees the mind of all the pressures that you have to go through. All the busy work and all the details of a busy week. We have an assurance that Jesus is coming again. Praise God.

(2)Now, let's come to the man Timothy. Vs 2 says: "Timothy, my child in the faith."

TIMOTHY! What a name. Do you know what the word "Timothy" means? It means "to honor God." That is pretty neat. Here was a young man who honored God. Now, I would like to share three things with you about this man, Timothy.

Turn, please, to the book of Acts chapter 16. The book of Acts chapter

16. Sometimes we say as we look at young people, today, "Isn't it all full the homes that many of our young people come from." Sometimes we see broken homes. Sometimes we see a home where the mother knows the Lord and the Father doesn't. Or, it maybe the other way around. But, you know, God is able to "do abundantly above all that we could ever ask." And I pray that non of us would ever use his or her home background as an excuse with God. You see, God holds each one of us accountable. We often blame our parents. And parents often blame their children. But, one day God is going to ask us what we have done with and for Jesus Christ. Every believer is accountable. The Bible teaches that we will all give an account of ourselves. There will be no excuse.

A young man once said to me, "Pastor, I would come to Christ, I would do everything God wanted me to do, if it weren't for the hypocrites in the church."

Have you ever h heard that one? I am sure you have. It is kind of a dumb excuse when you think about it.

But, I said to him, "You mean to tell me that you are willing to let some hypocrite stand between you and the Lord? It looks to me like he is closer to God then you are. At least he is between God and you." Why do we let others stand between us and the Lord?

Some people say, "Hay! I would give my life to the Lord; but, I know so and so, and you should see the way he lives."

Well, God will take care of that one day. God knows the hearts of all of us. And none of us can hid from him. "All things are open to the eyes of Him with who we have to deal." So, we will give an account, one day, of what we have done for Christ in living the

Christian Life.

~~Christian life. Now, there are a number of things, here, that I want you to notice.~~

(1) Number one notice Timothy's experience. Acts chapter 16 verse 1 says: "and he (that is the Apostle Paul) came also to Derbe and Lystra. And behold, a certain disciple was there named Timothy, the son of a Jewish woman who was a believer, but his father was a Greek."

Now, that is not saying that his father was saved. Paul is saying that Timothy's mother, who was a Jew, was a believer. And on the other hand his father, who was a Greek, did not believe. So, Timothy comes from home where his mother was a Christian. but, his father who was a Greek did not believe in Jesus Christ.

Vs 2: "and he was well spoken of by the brethren who were in Lystra and Iconium.

(2) And that is the second thing I want you to notice about Timothy. The good report he had from everyone. Isn't it wonderful to see a person like this coming out of a home that is separated in Christ. That is: one parent knows the Lord and one parent doesn't. But, this man, Timothy, came to know Jesus Christ. Isn't that Great?

✓ Turn over to 2 Timothy. 2 Timothy chapter 1 verse 3. I think this is wonderful background material to the life of Timothy. 2 Timothy chapter 1 verse 3 (Read Vs 3-5)

Isn't that thrilling? Here is a man who had a grandmother who was in the Lord. And a mother who was in the Lord. A mother who was faithful in spite of the fact that her husband was not a Christian.

Vs 5 says: "For I am mindful of the sincere faith within you. The word "sincere" means "No hypocrisy." Isn't that great? Timothy was not a hypocrite in any sense of the word. He had a sincere faith.

Now, let's come back to I Timothy chapter 1. Paul says in Verse 2: "To Timothy, my true child in the faith.

(3)The third thing that I want you to see about Timothy is the relationship that he had with Paul.

Dosen Trutman, the great leader of the Navigators, wrote a little book entitled: "Born to Reproduce." A tremendous book. When a person comes to know Christ, when that person is born again by the Holy Spirit, he is born again to reproduce. It is a tremendous concept concerning the Christian life. We are saved so that we might reproduce.

Paul says, "My true child." Yes, Timothy's father was a Greek who didn't believe. But, Paul was Timothy's spiritual Father.

Dear friends, I wonder, how many son's we have in the Lord? How many daughters have we in the Lord. Born to reproduce Prov. 11:30 says: "And he who is wise wins souls." Oh, how we need to introduce people to Jesus Christ.

D. L. Moody, a great evangelist of the late 19th century, was once talking to a group of friends after one of his meetings, and he said: "It was a wonderful meeting. It was so good to see those 2 and one half conversions." And the people looked at him kind of funny. And then one of the ladies said, "Oh, I know what you mean by two and one half. You mean 2 adults and one child." And Moody said: "NO, I mean 2 children and one adult."

Isn't it wonderful to know that Timothy was led to Christ by a godly grandmother and a godly mother. And from this book of I Timothy we are told that he was brought up in the faith. As a child he grow under the direction of the scriptures. Praise God!

(3) Now, let's come to the second thing that I want to share with you this morning.

Please notice Vs 5 and the goal of the church. This ought to be the goal of our church.

This ought to be the goal of everything we do in the church. Whether we teach a Sunday School class or repair the building or sing in the choir, this should be our goal.

Vs 5 says: "but the goal of our instruction is" basically three things.

(1) Number one, love from a pure heart. We have so much in the way of "fake love" in this day and age. But, love from a pure heart is real love. And this love is spelled out in I Cor. chapter 13 (Read I Cor. 13:1-5) Love that is pure, genuine, and real.

(2)Secondly, love from a good conscience. Let me ask you a question. Are you holding the faith in a good conscience? I meet so many people who claim to be church members, and yet, they do not know the Lord with a good conscience. They have an intellectual agreement to a set of facts. But, they cannot say with a good conscience that Christ is the captain of their life. They cannot say that they have new life in Christ.

Timothy, the goal of my instruction to you, the goal of everything that I want to say to you, IS LOVE FROM A GOOD CONSCIENCE.

Dear friends, can we say that we believe the Bible to be the Word of God with a good conscience? Can we say that we believe that Jesus Christ arose from the dead and is coming again with a good conscience? Can we say, today, that if Jesus should come, right now, we would know without a shadow of doubt that we would be on our way to meet him? Can we say that with a good conscience?

(3) And third, a sincere faith. A faith that is pure. A faith without hypocrisy. We need a faith that will get a hold of God. With God all things are possible. With man all things

are not possible. Jesus said, "If you come in prayer asking and believing you shall receive." But, most of us are like the man who read the verse of scripture that says, "if we have the faith of a mustard seed we could pray and remove mountains." This man had a hill out in his back yard that he wanted removed. So, that night just before he went to bed, he prayed: "Lord, you know that mountain out in my back yard. Well, I want it removed by tomorrow morning." He jumped into bed and went to sleep. The next morning, he went over to the window and looked out. The mountain was still there,. And He said, "I knew the Lord wouldn't remove it." (ha)

But, aren't we just like that? We say, "why doesn't God do something." Maybe the reason is because we don't have a faith that is sincere. We say, "Oh, yes, I really believe that God could heal this person. I really believe that God is going to save my husband, or my wife. I really believe that God is going to provide all of our needs." But, in our hearts there is insincerity. And we don't really believe God. Dear friends, God knows it. He knows our hearts.

Have you ever heard of a man by the name of Dr. Pappy Revere. He was director of the Evans Hilll Rescue Mission. The amazing thing about this man was that he was a paralytic. But, he was a wonderful man of faith. One of the things that characterized Dr. Revere was that "he was so stupid that he believed God would give him anything he ask for."

People would call in from all over the country and ask Pappy Revere to pray for them. And he would pray very specifically. If he had a financial need he would talk to God about that need. But, he was always very specific with God. He would pray: "Lord,

that light bill is \$45.38 and it has to be paid by 12:00 noon tomorrow. Would you have that money here to pay that bill."

Now, most of us would be scared to death to pray that way. We would call it presumption. But, God calls it faith.

Dear friends, what is the goal of all that we are trying to do here at First Baptist Church. Read Vs 5 again: "But, the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart, and a good conscience, and a sincere faith."

This ought to be the goal of every Christian here today. And if it is our individual goal, then it will become the goal of this church. A love from a pure heart, a good conscience, and a sincere faith.

Are you fulfilling these goals in your life?

Let Us Pray