



DAILY FAITH PRACTICES

Sunday, October 2-8 (C) – 2 Timothy 1:1-14

Focus: *Guard the Good Treasure*

word of life

“Guard the good treasure entrusted to you, with the help of the Holy Spirit living in us. (2 Timothy 1:14 (NRSV)

Read 2 Timothy 1:1-14

In the book of Acts, we are first introduced to an outstanding young man of faith during Paul’s travels to Lystra to “... a disciple named Timothy, the son of a Jewish woman who was a believer, but his father was a Greek. He was well spoken of by the believers in Lystra and Iconium.” (Acts 16:1-2 NRSV) Paul invites Timothy to join him in his missionary travels. Timothy becomes a trusted companion of Paul, one who Paul personally mentored and instructed in the faith.

1. *What else do you know about Timothy?*
2. *What would it have been liked to be mentored by the Apostle Paul?*

Like many people, Timothy learned the faith from his mother and grandmother. The author of 2 Timothy writes. “I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that lived first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, lives in you.” (2 Timothy 1:5 NRSV) These women were probably part of the first believers in Lystra.

3. *Does it surprise you to hear Timothy’s mother and grandmother mentioned in this passage? Explain your answer.*
4. *How might these women have influenced Timothy’s faith?*

Paul is supported by Timothy on his own mission trips, but also sends Timothy to strengthen and encourage others. For example, Paul sent Timothy to the church in Corinth (See 1 Corinthians 16:10-11), Thessalonica (See 1 Thessalonians 3:2-3), and perhaps Philippi (Philippians 2:19-22). It seems Timothy had a gentle spirit and could ably handle difficult circumstances.

This tender letter, known as Second Timothy, is from a mature Christian to someone young in life and in faith. Timothy is viewed as a beloved child, one remembered with thanksgiving and in prayer. Most probably he was neither young, nor Paul’s biological child.

5. *What might it have been like for Timothy to be reminded he was loved and held in prayer?*
6. *What tone might you expect from the rest of this letter written in love?*

But despite his upbringing and training, Timothy was discouraged in faith and ashamed of the outcome of the works of the church. Followers of Christ were suffering and being thrown into prison. Perhaps Timothy had hoped or expected an easy life as a Christian.

7. *What words are helpful to someone discouraged in faith?*

The writer is not discouraged by the reality of suffering and extends an invitation to Timothy to embrace the suffering. “But I am not ashamed, for I know the one in whom I have put my trust, and I am sure that he is able to guard until that day what I have entrusted to him. Hold to the standard of sound teaching that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. Guard the good treasure entrusted to you...” (2 Timothy 1:12b-14 NRSV) In other words, keep the faith.

8. *How might have receiving such a letter encourage the faith of Timothy?*
9. *What is the good treasure entrusted to Timothy?*

word among us

Imagine a campfire blazing bright and hot. Hear the crackling of the burning wood. Now imagine a few red embers in the gray ash. Now imagine stirring up those embers.

1. *How difficult is it to get a fire going when hot embers remain?*
2. *What tips have you learned about keeping a fire burning for an extended time period?*

Now imagine a church overflowing with family and friends who have come to offer their support for youth who are ready to affirm their faith on “Confirmation Sunday”. The pastor pauses at each of the youth kneeling at the altar rail, places her hands on the head of the confirmand, and speaks these words, “Stir up in (*name*) the gift of your Holy Spirit.....”

3. *Why does the pastor pray that faith gets stirred up?*
4. *How often do we need our faith stirred up?*

As much as Timothy’s mother Eunice and grandmother Lois had a sincere and living faith, Timothy was on his own unique journey of faith. His journey included discouragement. That’s true for us all. Sometimes doubts might cloud the horizon and questions fill our spirit.

5. *Do you relate to any of Timothy’s story? How so?*
6. *Describe a time when you have been discouraged in the faith.*
7. *What did you do “to re-ignite the gift of God that is within you”?*

Timothy is encouraged to “...reignite the gift of God that is within you through the laying on my hands...” (2 Timothy 1:6 NRSV) It is intriguing to consider we have some role in rekindling faith and God’s gift to us. Some would say only the Holy Spirit can rekindle faith.

8. *Is rekindling the faith reserved only for the Holy Spirit? Explain your answer.*
9. *What can we do to rekindle the gift of God within us?*

This letter to Timothy is a gift to all who might get discouraged in the faith. How helpful to be reminded to guard the treasure of the faith. We need not go it alone, but guarding the treasure of the faith can be beautifully done in the context of a community of believers.

faith practice in daily life

Live among God’s faithful people.

We don’t simply affirm the faith on one Sunday and go about our business. The words in 2 Timothy are quite helpful as we seek to daily practice the faith of our baptism. Thus, we seek ways to rekindle our faith and surround ourselves by other Christians who inspire us. We hear the counsel, “Guard the good treasure entrusted to you, with the help of the Holy Spirit living in us.” (2 Timothy 1:14 NRSV)

We are not to be meek about living out our faith “for God did not give us a spirit of cowardice, but rather a spirit of power and of love and of self-discipline.” (2 Timothy 1:7 NRSV)

10. *In what areas of your life are you cowardly?*
11. *How might God give you the spirit of power and of love to face this week?*

Prayer

Gracious God, stir up in us the gift of your Holy Spirit and strengthen us in faith. Amen

last word

Seek ways that God is stirring up your faith.

Daily Faith Practices

Written by John and Robin McCullough-Bade

Copyright © 2013 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

May be reproduced for local, non-sale use provided the above copyright notice is included.

www.ekca.org/dailyfaithpractices

Sunday, October 2-8(C) Faith Practices Page 2 of 2