

“The Promise of Life”
2 Timothy 1:1
(Preached at Trinity, November 28, 2021)

I'm supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord's Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I'll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. This morning we begin a new book of the Bible. As I continue preaching through the Bible, I hope to follow the example found in Nehemiah in which Ezra read from the Holy Book and then gave the sense.
Nehemiah 8:8 NAU - "They read from the book, from the law of God, translating to give the sense so that they understood the reading."
(The word “translating” means “to make clear or to give the meaning.”)
 - A. It is my prayer that through the preaching of His Word we might hear God speak and that by His Spirit we might be strengthened as God continues to mold us in holiness.
 - B. The importance of God's Word will be made clear in this epistle.
2 Timothy 3:16-17 NAU - "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; ¹⁷ so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work."
2. Much has changed since Paul's first letter to Timothy. When Paul wrote the first letter he was on the road hoping to soon join Timothy in Ephesus. But this letter was written from Rome. It would be Paul's last letter. He was being held a prisoner and in danger of losing his life. Some have called this letter Paul's last will and testament.
2 Timothy 4:6 NAU - "For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come."
3. Paul wrote this letter around 66 AD. This was a dangerous time for Christians. Nero had burned Rome in 64 AD. apparently so he could reshape it according to his own plan. It burned for six days and six nights – Over half of the city was gutted. In order to direct attention away from himself Nero blamed the Christians. Arrests and torture were common under the authority of Nero. It was by the orders of such a madman that Paul was arrested, probably upon the charge of propagating this illicit religion of Christianity.
 - A. Whereas Paul's first imprisonment was a house arrest in which he could receive visits from friends and preach and teach, he was now in chains (**V.16**). He was treated like a criminal – He was cold and alone. Conditions were terrible with little light, no sanitation, and no prospect of relief.
 - B. Paul recounted that upon his preliminary hearing no one stood with him – he was abandoned with the exception of Onesiphorus and Luke.
2 Timothy 4:16 NAU - "At my first defense no one supported me, but all deserted me; may it not be counted against them."

- C. Not long after this epistle Paul was sentenced to death and, according to tradition, which fits the custom of the times, early one morning Paul was taken outside the walls of the city by the executioner and with a broad double edged sword Paul's head was severed with one powerful stroke.
At last, Paul, absent from the body was immediately present with the Lord. He met face to face the One he had met on the Damascus Road thirty years earlier.
4. Like **1 Timothy**, Paul is writing to encourage Timothy to keep the faith; to stand firm upon the truth and to resist false doctrine. But this letter is much different. Paul's first letter was written with the church in mind and much instruction is given. But tragically, the church of Ephesus was in worse shape than when Paul wrote his first epistle to Timothy. The church was weaker.
5. The threats and challenges Timothy was facing were more intense. This second letter is much more personal. Paul knew his life was about to end. Paul is also writing to prepare Timothy for life after his departure. Although Timothy was sound in doctrine and personal godliness and a faithful servant of Christ, he was prone to wavering. This letter contains 25 imperatives from the Apostle to Timothy. Paul's statements in this epistle are not suggestions but direct commands from God. Paul continues to stress the importance of sound doctrine.
In its broader purpose, this epistle calls upon every believer to pursue faithfulness in their service to the living God.
6. The opening verses of **2 Timothy** serve as a motivation or encouragement to Timothy. In **Verse 1** Paul reminds Timothy of his apostolic calling and the purpose of his calling. "according to the promise of life in Christ Jesus."
- I. What is the Promise of Life
- A. It is the gospel
1. It is the promise first announced in Genesis 3:15
Genesis 3:15 NAU - "And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise him on the heel."
 2. In 1 Timothy Paul refers to it as the "glorious gospel"
1 Timothy 1:11 NAU - "according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, with which I have been entrusted."
 3. It is the unshakable certainty based upon God's infallible Word.
2 Corinthians 1:20 KJV - "For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us."
- B. What is this Gospel?
1. That God is the Creator and giver of life. That He is holy, holy, holy. That He has given us His Law and commands obedience—but we have not obeyed.
 2. The Gospel declares that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God
You have sinned against God - the Law condemns you!
Paul states in Romans 3 that the wages of sin is death. It is sin's reward – the reward of death.

3. The Gospel announces that Jesus Christ was born of a virgin and that He lived a perfect life of obedience unto the Father - a life commanded of all men but each of us have failed.
4. The Gospel announces that Jesus Christ, according to the predeterminate counsel of God, went to the cross and bore our sins
5. The Gospel announces that whosoever believeth on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ shall be saved. This is God's promise. The promise of life.
The Gospel is Good News!

C. The Gospel is the promise of life
John 5:24-25 NAU - "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life. ²⁵ "Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live."

1. We are born dead in sin – the Gospel is the promise of life
Ephesians 2:1 NAU - "And you were dead in your trespasses and sins,"
Romans 6:13 NAU - "and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God."
2. The Gospel is also the promise of everlasting life
 - a. Every human being is born with an eternal soul – an eternal existence. The question is, where will you spend this existence.
 - b. Hell is referred to as the second death. It is to die from this life only to enter into an eternal separation from God.
 - c. The Gospel promises the eternal blessings of Christ.
Romans 6:22-23 NAU - "But now having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you derive your benefit, resulting in sanctification, and the outcome, eternal life. ²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."
John 6:39-40 NAU - "This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day. ⁴⁰ "For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day."

II. To Whom is the Promise Given?

- A. In Particular – Those whom the Lord God calls – a very particular calling.
Acts 2:38-39 NAU - "Peter *said* to them, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹ "For the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself."

2 Thessalonians 2:13-14 NAU - "But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth. ¹⁴ It was for this He called you through our gospel, that you may gain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ."

1. We'll see more of this in **Verse 9**

2 Timothy 1:9 NAU - "who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity,"

2. The promise of the Gospel is God's eternal purpose.

B. In the general sense - God's offer of the gospel goes forth to all men.

1. This is the message of the N.T. - the word "Gospel" is found 99 times

Mark 16:15-16 NAU - "And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. ¹⁶ "He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned."

Romans 10:9 NAU - "that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved;"

Romans 10:13 NAU - "for "Whoever will call upon the name of the LORD will be saved."

2. The promise of life is for you! The Gospel message is for you!

a. You do not have to perish in your sins

b. Jesus said, "I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance."

c. If you repent of your sin and trust Christ, He will save you!

3. It is the greatest of all tragedies to reject so great a salvation –

Hebrews 2:1-3 NAU - "For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away *from it*. ² For if the word spoken through angels proved unalterable, and every transgression and disobedience received a just penalty, ³ how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? After it was at the first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard,"

The idea is, since we've had so much more of the Gospel revealed to us how much more accountable will we be?

III. What is the Surety of the Promise?

The Promise is "In Christ Jesus"

A. The expression, "in Christ Jesus" was a favorite of Paul – he used it 50 times

Ephesians 3:11 NAU - "*This was* in accordance with the eternal purpose which He carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord,"

Romans 6:23 NAU - "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

1. He uses it seven times in this letter.
2 Timothy 2:10 NAU - "For this reason I endure all things for the sake of those who are chosen, so that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus *and with it* eternal glory."
 2. The Gospel maintains a focus on Christ.
1 Corinthians 2:1-2 NAU - "And when I came to you, brethren, I did not come with superiority of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God. ² For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified."
- B. There is but one way of salvation and that is through Jesus Christ. There is a promise of life in Christ alone.
Acts 4:12 NAU - "And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved."
1. The promise of God comes through Jesus Christ—Christ alone.
Jesus Christ has abolished death
2 Timothy 1:10 NAU - "Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel,"
 2. Salvation is through Christ. We are united with Him. We shall be raised in Him. The life we live is in Christ.
Galatians 2:20 NAU - "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me."
- C. This promise must be received, trusted, believed it.
1. This is the great confession of the church.
1 Timothy 3:16 NAU - "By common confession, great is the mystery of godliness: He who was revealed in the flesh, Was vindicated in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Proclaimed among the nations, Believed on in the world, Taken up in glory."
 2. This is the Gospel that we must proclaim. This was Paul's great testimony until his last breath.
1 Corinthians 9:16 NAU - "For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for I am under compulsion; for woe is me if I do not preach the gospel."

Conclusion:

1. May God enable us to maintain a focus upon the Lord Jesus Christ and glory in His promise of life.
2. We must spread it abroad. And if you have not received this promise believe upon the Lord Jesus Christ today.