

Lighthouse Baptist Church Ordination Service May19, 2019

What A New Generation of Christian Leaders Need to Hear!

Text: II Timothy 1:3-7.

Introduction: II Timothy is **one** of **three** New Testament books or letters known as the *Pastoral Epistles*, which include I Timothy, II Timothy and Titus. II Timothy was **written** somewhere between **two** and **four years** after I Timothy. Most **set the date** for this **letter** to be A.D. 66 or 67.

II Timothy **contains** the **last words** of the *apostle Paul*, to *Timothy* written from a **prison cell** in *Rome*. II Timothy is **in fact** the **last letter we have** from *Paul*. At his **trial** in *Caesarea*, *Paul* had **appealed** to *Caesar*, which **resulted** in **his being sent** to *Rome* to **personally present** his case.

As *Paul* writes this letter, there is a **death sentence** upon his life **delivered** by *Nero*. **Knowing his days are few, Paul turns his heart and mind to write Timothy, who represents a new generation of Christian leaders.** If there is **one verse** that **best captures** the **theme of this letter**, it is **II Timothy 2:2** which reads, “*And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.*”

When **recounting his time** spent as a **POW** in *Vietnam*, the **late Senator John McCain** said his **key** to **survival**, was to **keep** his **mind active** and **positive**. Obviously, *Paul* is doing the same. As the *apostle Paul* **sits** in his **prison cell**, he **turns his thoughts** to *Timothy*, his **greatly loved** “*son in the faith.*” Why **reflect** upon *Timothy*? *Timothy* **represented** a **new generation** of

Christian leaders who were **willing** and **ready** to **advance** the “*cause of Christ.*” This was **his focus** and **concern**. As *Saul of Tarsus*, he **persecuted the churches** of *Jesus Christ*, but as *Paul the missionary*, he **planted, established, and nurtured them**. In **II Corinthians 11:28** he says, “*Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.*” Who would **care for the churches** in **his absence**? Who would **lead**?

The *Lighthouse Baptist Church* has **no future**, if there’s no one to **lead**. Thank God for the **older generation** and **seniors** who have **faithfully** served, worked, given, taught, prayed and attended. It takes a **generation of believers** to **provide ministry** and **prepare another generation of believers** to **rise-up, follow** and **serve!** When *Moses* was **ready to leave the scene**, there “*in the wings*” stood *Joshua*. When *Elijah* was **tired** and **worn**, soon to **take his chariot ride**, *Elisha* was **ready** and **willing** to **leave the comforts of home** to **pick up the mantle**.

Paul couldn’t **be with Timothy**. He was **in prison** by the will of God, yet there was **something Paul could do** for *Timothy*. He could **continue** to **encourage** and **challenge Timothy to lead**.

This morning it’s **my desire** to **encourage** and **challenge** a **new generation** of **leaders** here in *Lighthouse Baptist Church*. *Justin* and *Tabitha Curtis*; *Ray* and *Susan Kennedy*; *Harley* and *Jeanie Clinton*; *Sean* and *Katy Baumgartner* and *Keeth Poe*. In our text, we can **identify**:

Six Powerful Statements for a New Generation of Christian Leaders

It's in my heart for these six powerful statements to penetrate your hearts and stay with you in the days and years to come as you fulfill your calling and office.

1. We are thankful for you. II Timothy 1:3 begins, "*I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience.*" Paul begins this letter by expressing his gratitude and thanks toward God for everyone in his life, past and present, which included Timothy. Timothy's commitment to the "cause of Christ" was invaluable to Paul, so he expressed his gratitude!

Here Paul connects himself with his "forefathers" who served before him with a "pure conscience." If you know anything about the Israelites, they were hardly a people with no stains on their consciences. The Israelites of the Old Testament forgot God in almost every crisis, grumbled against their leaders and God, married outside their faith and worshiped foreign gods. Yet Paul was thankful for them knowing that they had experienced the covenant-keeping love, discipline and forgiveness of God!

Paul's own conscience and life was stained. Paul had severely persecuted Christians and New Testament churches. Yet Paul had experienced the same covenant-keeping love, discipline and forgiveness of God through Jesus Christ!

The Greek word for "pure" here in II Timothy 1:3 is *katharos* (kath-ar-os') means to cleanse from filth, impurity and guilt, to expiate or extinguish! The

basis for *Paul's* **gratitude** was the **regenerating, soul-cleansing, life-changing blood** of *Jesus Christ*! Ever since **meeting Jesus Christ** on the *Damascus* road, he has **served Christ faithfully** and with **no moral taint**! *Paul* often spoke of having a **pure conscience** before God and men. Faithfulness and a **strong moral compass** are **essential to effective ministry**.

Someone said, "*Silent gratitude isn't much use to anyone.*" We by nature **tend to be more critical** than **thankful**; to **register our complaint** rather than **compliment**! There's **no such thing** as a **perfect leader**, church member, pastor, preacher, teacher, deacon, father, mother or children! Yet in **every generation** God **calls** and **sanctifies leaders** and **we are thankful**!

Leading, ministering to and serving others can be a **thankless job**! Today, I want you to know that we are **thankful for you**. Thank you for **hearing** and **responding positively** to **God's will** and **call upon your lives**!

2. We are praying for you. II Timothy 1:3 continues, "*I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day.*" *Timothy* was **obviously** on *Paul's* **personal prayer list**. We know that when *Paul* was **in prison**, he began a **prison ministry**, which included **spending time in prayer**. *Paul* **prayed** both night and day!

For sure *Paul* **prayed** for *Timothy's* **spiritual well-being** as a **pastor**. The **stronger our faith** and **witness**, the **more determined Satan** is to **derail us**!

Timothy could expect to face temptations both subtle and treacherous! He needed God's help to avoid into *Satan's* traps!

What an encouragement it must have been to *Timothy* to know that the great "apostle" was praying for him twenty-four seven! By the way, because *Paul* knew *Timothy*, his strengths and weaknesses, he knew how to pray for him.

A good church is a place and people who pray for each other rather than prey upon each other. *Jesus* has admonished us to pray for laborers, for God to raise up a new generation of servants, workers and leaders. In **Matthew 9:37-38** said, "*The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; 38 Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth labourers into His harvest.*"

This morning I want you to know that we will pray and keep praying for you as you serve the Lord and others. We will pray for your faithfulness, wisdom, strength, discernment, patience, health, stamina and endurance! We pray for God's power upon your life and ministry. We pray that God's protection will be upon you as you preach and lead His people. We pray that you will continue to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior *Jesus Christ*. We pray that God will give you great influence upon the lives of people and that many will come to know and trust in *Jesus Christ* through your witness.

3. You are loved. In II Timothy 1:2, *Paul* began this letter by addressing *Timothy* as, “...my **dearly beloved son**.” II Timothy 1:4 reveals that this is going to be a **very personal, intimate letter**. *Paul* writes, “**Greatly desiring to see thee, being mindful of thy tears, that I may be filled with joy.**” The **past** parting between *Paul* and *Timothy* had been **tearful** and **painful**. Here *Paul* **vividly remembers Timothy’s tears on that occasion**. No doubt the **scene** *Paul* is recalling is the one recorded in **Acts 20:36-38**. “**And when he (Paul) had thus spoken, he kneeled down, and prayed with them all. 37 And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul’s neck, and kissed him, 38 **Sorrowing** most of all for the words which he spake, that they should see his face no more. And they accompanied him unto the ship.”**

God’s **purpose** for *Paul* and *Timothy* **required** that they be **separated**, which **saddened them**. *Paul* expresses his **desire** to **see Timothy again**. The **prospect** of a **reunion** brought **joy** to *Paul’s* **heart!** As *Paul’s* **life** and **ministry** **was ending**, he **realized** in a **deeper way** how **dear Timothy** was to him. *Paul* knew *Timothy!* He **knew Timothy’s strengths** and his **weaknesses**, yet **he loved him**.

People **know** when **they are loved**. People are **drawn to churches** who **take the time** to **greet them** and **get to know them**. People tend to **remain in churches** and **offer themselves** for ministry, when **they know they are loved**. Leadership is **no exception** when it comes to both **expressing** and **receiving**

love. Leadership can be a **lonely position.** These **leaders** need the **affirmation, encouragement** and a **continual demonstration** of **God's love.**

The *Lighthouse Baptist Church* and its pastor **loves you!** When someone **loves you,** there is a **safe zone** in their hearts that **allows you to share your joys, share your sorrows, share your fears,** and even **your failures** without reprisal!

4. Be faithful to your spiritual heritage. II Timothy 1:5 says, "*When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy **grandmother Lois,** and thy **mother Eunice;** and I am persuaded that in thee also."* The *apostle Paul* acknowledges *Timothy's* "*unfeigned*" or **sincere faith.** He **also recognized** where that **sincere faith originated.** *Timothy's mother* and **grandmother** possessed the **same sterling faith** in *Jesus Christ.* There was a **faith connection** made between *Timothy* and his **home of origin.**

Timothy's mother and grandmother were **obviously more** than **nominal believers.** They **lived their faith** in way that was **real, believable** and **contagious!** Their **faith was not an act.** There was **no hypocrisy** in this home! *Paul* is **admonishing Timothy** to **be faithful to his heritage!**

One of the **saddest, heartbreaking things** to **witness,** is a **second, third** or **fourth generation believer,** abandoning the church and their faith. Most of the time they **say** they have a **problem with their family** or **their church** or **both,** but **time proves different.** Once they **walk away** from the **place** and **people of their heritage,** they often **walk away from their faith.** We see an

example of this in **Judges 2:10**. It reads, “*And also **all that generation** were gathered unto their fathers: and there **arose another generation** after them, which **knew not the LORD**, nor yet **the works which He had done for Israel.**”*

Ordination is about “...**defending the faith** (once and for all) delivered to the saints!” Be **faithful to your spiritual heritage!** Don’t forget or forsake the **things you have been taught!** The body of *Christian truth* and **doctrine** is the same from **generation to generation!** In **Titus 1:9** Paul writes concerning “bishops” or **pastors**, “*Holding fast the **faithful word** as he hath been taught, that he **may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.**”*

5. You are gifted to serve. II Timothy 1:6 says, “*Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou **stir up the gift of God**, which is **in thee by the putting on of my hands.**”* The phrase “*stir up*” means to **kindle up**. If you have ever **built and maintained a campfire**, you have **seen this very thing**. When a **campfire burns down**, it helps to **stir it up**, introducing **more fuel** which **revives it**. The word “*gift*” speaks of the **giving** of a **gift involving grace**. Paul urges Timothy to **fan his gift** into an **open flame!** He is saying, “*Stir it up, Timothy! Fan the flame!*”

As this **letter arrives**, Timothy is **serving** as a **pastor**. His **gift** or **gifts** no doubt had to do with **fulfilling that office**. Whatever God **calls us to do**, He **gifts us to do!** It’s **obvious** that **gifts** come with **personal responsibility!** The “*putting on of hands*” pictures the **inauguration of office**, such as **ordination**.

Paul is **advising Timothy** to **return** in his mind and spirit to the **freshness** and **inspiration** of his **ordination**. The **approval** of *Paul* and others was **symbolic** of **God's call** and **approval**.

Today is an **exciting day** in the life of **this church!** It's a **great thing** when **God reaches down** into a **church membership** and **calls men to preach, lead and serve!** Are you **fired up?** *Justin, Ray, Harley, Sean and Keeth*, God expects you to **keep your gifts burning strong** for Him! You "*stir up*" your **gifts** by **aspiring** and **striving** with **God's help** to become a **better preacher**, a **better leader**, a **better servant**, a **better teacher**, a **better encourager** or whatever! Never limit God in your life! Be **ready to walk through the open door**, to **attempt new things** for His glory. Remember *William Carey's* challenge, "**Expect great things from God. Attempt great things for God.**"

6. You are equipped to endure. II Timothy 1:7 begins "*For God hath not given us the spirit of fear.*" *Timothy* was known for his **timidity**. "*Timid Timothy,*" they used to call him! Just kidding. That would be better than "*doubting Thomas!*" In **I Timothy 4:12**, *Paul* **challenged Timothy**, "*Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers.*" **Someone pointed out** that in I Timothy and II Timothy, there are no less than **twenty-five different places** where *Paul* **encourages and challenges Timothy to be bold, to stand up and be strong!** Obviously, this was **something Timothy needed to hear!** Leadership requires **risk taking** and the **possibility of failure!** *Timothy* might

have been **insecure, timid, lacking confidence**. Perhaps he **struggled** with a **feeling of inadequacy**.

There was another “*fear factor*” in *Timothy’s* life. It was called *Nero*. With the rise of *Emperor Nero*, *Christians* and churches **throughout the empire** were **facing severe persecution** and **hardship**. A fire in *Rome* began a **fire of persecution** that **swept across the land**. Every **pastor** was a **target** for **social ostracism, torture** and **murder!**

The seasoned *apostle Paul* tells **pastor Timothy**, “*For God hath not given us the spirit of fear.*” This “*spirit of fear*” is **not of God**. It **rises** from our **sinful, fleshly nature**. *Paul* is **warning Timothy** and he is **warning us** of this **destructive, illogical fear** that often **visits our hearts**. This **unhealthy** and **unholy “spirit of fear”** was **standing in the way** of *Timothy* **realizing his purpose** and **fulfilling his call!** What is *Timothy* **to do** about his **fear factor?** He is to **factor in** God’s provision, His **antidote for fear!**

God has equipped you with the “*spirit of power.*” II Timothy 1:7 continues, “*For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power.*” The word “*power*” in the *Greek* is *dunamis* (doo'-nam-is) and **speaks of strength** and **ability**. We could use the word **dynamite!** This is **not our strength** and **ability**, but **God’s!** This is **God’s dynamite**, **His presence** and **power** in **your life!** In the **moment of fear**, the **voice** of the “*spirit of power*” is the **voice of faith**. It speaks to our hearts in the **heat of fear** and says, “*God can!*” God **can what?** God can **take care of the problem**. God can **transform the problem** into a **blessing!** God

can **change** and **transform us**, **enabling** and **equipping us** for the **situation at hand!** Because **God can**, ...**you can!** The way to **overcome our fears**, is to **release** the “*spirit of power*” **within us** by **faith**. We can **be sure** of **God’s power** when we are **doing** His work, **proclaiming** His Word, **representing** His kingdom. **Philippians 1:6** says, “*Being **confident** of this very thing, that **He** (God) which hath begun a good work in you **will perform it** until the day of Jesus Christ.*”

God has equipped you with the “*spirit of love.*” II Timothy 1:7 continues, “*For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love.*” The word for “*love*” here is *agape* (ag-ah'-pay) and speaks of **God’s affection** and **good will toward us!** For sure *Paul* could have **given in** to his **fleshly fears** as he was **imprisoned alone** in a **dungeon**, but **instead** he **reminded** himself of **God's love** and **care for him**. Salvation means we are **indwelt** by the “*spirit of love,*” therefore we are **never alone!** As **believers**, we are **never unloved**. It was the *apostle Paul* himself who said, “*Nothing **can separate us** from the **love of God** in Christ Jesus our Lord.*” That’s why *Paul* and *Silas* **could sing** at the **midnight hour!** The “*spirit of fear*” must **flee** from the **presence** of **God's redeeming love!** **I John 4:18** says, “*There is **no fear in love**; but perfect love **casteth out fear**: because **fear hath torment**. He that **feareth** is not made perfect in love.*”

God has equipped you with the “*spirit of a sound mind.*” II Timothy 1:7 continues, “*For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love,*

and of a sound mind.” The phrase “*sound mind*” is **one** *Greek* word that comes from the **root word** *sophronizo* (so-fron-id'-zo). It means **to restore one to his senses**. We have seen someone **in the movies** become **hysterical**, and a **friend shakes** him or her or gives him or her a **slap on the face** to **bring** him or her to **their senses**. As the *apostle Paul* **faced his execution** at the **hands of Nero** in *Rome*, he was **not threatened** with a **rising** “*spirit of fear,*” but one of **confidence** and **peace**! *Paul* didn't let his **thoughts run along** the **path** of a **fleshly fear**! He brought “*every thought into captivity!*” A “*sound mind*” is a **disciplined mind**! **Isaiah 26:3** reads, “*Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee: because he trusteth in Thee.*”

This is a **wonderful day** in the **life** of **this church** and in the **lives** of these men and women! What God has begun today will **reach out** into the **lives of people** and **families** and **impact eternity**! *Justin, Ray, Harley, Sean and Keeth*, in the **days ahead** never forget: **1. We are thankful for you! 2. We are praying for you! 3. You are loved. 4. Be faithful to your spiritual heritage. 5. You are gifted to serve. 6. You are equipped to endure!**

Take the **baton** being **handed to you today** and **run your race faithfully**! Impact your world and **find joy** in your service to our *Lord Jesus Christ*!