

Continue Thou – 2 Timothy Series

Be Steadfast

Text: 2 Timothy 1:6-18

Introduction:

1. Title of series: **Continue Thou** (3:14). Strong emphasis in Epistle on encouraging Timothy to press on for the Lord, to be faithful and to take heart in the face of discouragement and difficulty.
2. This lesson: Paul unleashes a series of powerful appeals to Timothy to encourage him to be faithful in four key areas.

I. Faithfulness in Service (Vs. 6-7)

A. The Gift to Serve (Vs. 6)

1. “remembrance” = Timothy already aware of these things but needs reminding
2. “stir up” = to kindle afresh, to stir up smoldering embers into a living flame. “To keep the flame blazing at white heat” (Hiebert). Fear has a tendency to smother the fires of service.
3. “gift of God” = Timothy had been gifted by God for the work of the ministry. Paul had already exhorted him previously to *“Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.”* (1 Tim. 4:14)
4. Each believer in the N.T. has been given a spiritual gift (See Rom. 12:6-8). These gifts need to be exercised for the Lord’s glory.

B. The Grace to Serve (Vs. 7)

- A. What God does not give – ‘fear’ (7a) ‘fear’ = timidity, cowardice
- B. What God does give – “power, love, sound mind” (7b)
 1. ‘power’ = Divine strength. *“...striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.”* (Col. 1:29)
 2. ‘love’ = Divine motivation. “That self-forgetting love to Christ, the church & souls of men.” (Hiebert)
 3. “sound mind” = a healthy, sober, self-controlled, disciplined mind
 4. These three graces would be needed by Timothy as he faced the tremendous hostility towards Christianity at that time.

II. Faithfulness in Suffering (Vs. 8-12)

A. The Attitude to Suffering (Vs. 8a)

1. Not ashamed of the Gospel message – “the testimony of our Lord”
 - a. John 15:18-19 *“If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.”*
 - b. 1 John 3:13 *“Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.”*

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- c. Hebrews 13:13 *“Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach.”*
2. Not ashamed of the Gospel messenger – “nor of me his prisoner”
 - a. The natural tendency of the human heart is to recoil from suffering reproach. The fear of man is in each one of us (Prov. 29:25)
 - b. It would be easy for Timothy to succumb to the pressure and not identify with Paul in his hour of reproach and suffering like many others (Vs. 16).

B. The Acceptance of Suffering (Vs. 8b)

1. ‘partaker’ = to share with, participate in; to suffer hardships together with one. Col. 1:24 *“Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church:”*
2. “afflictions of the Gospel” = the trials connected with the Gospel ministry

C. The Assistance in Suffering (Vs. 8c)

1. “according to the power of God” = enduring the trials of the ministry and the Christian life in general is through the power of God.
2. Illustrations: Sergei Kourdakov (Forgive me Natasha); Adoniram & Ann Judson

D. The Anchors in Suffering (Vs. 9-12)

1. The Experience of Salvation (Vs. 9-10)
 - a. The source of salvation (Vs. 9)
 - i. “who hath saved us” = past tense. We are as surely saved as if we were already in heaven!
 - ii. “not according to our works” = human works have nothing to do with salvation. Rom. 11:6 *“And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.”*
 - iii. “his own purpose and grace” = salvation was God’s plan, originating in Himself
 - iv. “before the world began” = God exists outside of time. In fact, He created time (Gen. 1:1). This salvation which we have experience was given to us in Christ before the world came into existence.
 - b. The revelation of salvation (Vs. 10)
 - i. “manifest...appearing” = both come from the same root word. Means to make visible or plain; bring into view that which was previously hidden.
 - ii. “abolished death” = Christ is the destroyer of death. ‘abolished’ means to render powerless, idle, inoperative. Same word used in Rom. 6:6 – ‘destroyed’.

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- iii. “life and immortality” = Christ is the Revealer of life.
‘immortality’ means incorruptible, not subject to decay.
This eternal life has been illuminated through the Gospel.
2. The Example of Paul (Vs. 11-12)
- a. His calling (Vs. 11)
 - i. ‘preacher’ = a herald. Was used of those who publicly proclaimed the official messages of the Emperor. Their message would come with weight and authority. Their message could not be ignored.
 - ii. ‘apostle’ = an ambassador, messenger. Reminder of the authority behind his message.
 - iii. ‘teacher’ = an instructor. Faithfully preaching the Gospel involves teaching. “Go ye therefore and teach all nations...” (Matt. 28:19)
 - b. His confidence (Vs. 12)
 - i. “for the which cause I also suffer these things” = Paul’s sufferings were due to his calling to the Gospel ministry (See 2:9).
 - ii. “I am not ashamed” = Paul was an example of what he required of Timothy (Vs. 8)
 - iii. “for I know” = Secret to Paul’s steadfastness in the face of trials. He knew His God.
 - iv. “have believed and am persuaded” = both these words in perf. Tense. “Paul’s faith was settled and he had come to a settled persuasion regarding the matter and was fixed in an immovable position.” (Wuest)
 - v. “keep that which I have committed” = lit. the deposit. Possibly a reference to his soul. Paul was secure in the Lord, knowing he was kept by His power. He had unshaken confidence in the Lord’s ability to do what he trusted him to do.
 - vi. “against that day” = the Judgment Seat of Christ

III. Faithfulness to Sound words (Vs. 13-14)

A. The Pattern of Truth (Vs. 13)

- 1. ‘form’ = a pattern, outline, model. Root word ‘tupos’ meant a blow. It was used of the beat of horse’s hoofs; the impression left by a seal, an engraved mark; hence, a pattern, a model. The word speaks of a pattern by which one can maintain the sameness of a thing. The N.T. doctrinal standard by which teaching is to be tried and tested.
- 2. ‘sound’ = literally means “healthful”. Pure doctrine is spiritually beneficial to the believer. False doctrine is like a disease (2:17)

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3. 'words' = the truth of God's Word is communicated in 'words' (Matt. 4:4). Note: This is why the modern versions omission of thousands of words and dynamic equivalency method of translation are so damnable. Example: The NIV removes the Saviour's name 178 times – "Lord" 39 times, "Christ" 52 times, and "Jesus" 87 times from the KJV N.T. (Keith Piper)
4. "which thou hast heard of me" = the source of these sound words – Paul (Apostolic truth).
5. "in faith and love" = the truth is to be accepted by faith (Heb. 11:3). Love will drive me to maintain a strong grip on the truth (Ps. 119:127) and to communicate it in love (Eph. 4:14-15)

B. The Protection of Truth (Vs. 14)

1. "committed unto thee" = Paul had been entrusted with the truth (1 Tim. 1:11) and he in turn had entrusted it to Timothy (1 Tim. 6:20) who was to then transmit it to faithful men (2:2).
2. 'keep' = to guard, protect. Timothy is to defend the truth (Jude 1:3)
3. "by the Holy Ghost" = the power to defend the truth comes from God. Note: With each of these commands, the Apostle points Timothy to the Lord as the source of his strength to obey them.

IV. Faithfulness to God's Servant (Vs. 15-18)

A. The Deserters of God's servant (Vs. 15)

1. 'all' = reveals the scale of the defection from the Apostle. Incredulous since humanly speaking, they owed their salvation to his faithful labors in the region.
2. 'Asia' = Asia Minor, a Roman province at the time. Same area as modern-day Turkey.
3. "turned away" = Could indicate apostasy or more likely, a desertion of the Apostle Paul in his hour of reproach and trial. Same word translated "turn away from" in Heb. 12:25. Same word used in 4:4 to describe those who turn away their ears from the truth.
4. "Phygellus and Hermogenes" = Paul named names in His Epistles! These men were obviously known to Timothy who was ministering in Asia Minor (Ephesus) at this time. They were likely church leaders who refused to stand with Paul in his hour of need.
5. Note: It is all too easy to forsake the preacher when he is under fire for standing for the truth, to stand aloof so as not to share in his reproach.

B. The Devoted to God's servant (Vs. 16-18)

1. Paul's prayer for the family of Onesiphorus (16a). Paul desires God's favor and blessing to be upon this family for their faithful support of him. He recognizes that the burden was shared not only by Onesiphorus but also his whole family.

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2. Paul's remembrance of the ministry of Onesiphorus (16b-17)
 - a. The name 'Onesiphorus' literally means "the help or profit bringer"
 - b. 'oft' = Onesiphorus was not a one hit wonder! His support was constant and regular.
 - c. "refreshed me" = to cool again, to cool off. The support of Onesiphorus was like cool water to a thirsty soul; it was like a breath of fresh air.
 - d. "not ashamed of my chain" = Onesiphorus was a living example of the command in Vs. 8 – "Be not thou therefore ashamed...of me his prisoner."

Conclusion: Are we being steadfast and faithful in these areas? Are we using our gifts for the Lord? Are we enduring afflictions with God's power? Are we standing for the Word of God? Are we supporting God's men in the ministry?