

# IT RUNS IN THE FAMILY

November 6, 2022

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## 2 Timothy 1:1-14

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, for the sake of the promise of life that is in Christ Jesus, <sup>2</sup>To Timothy, my beloved child: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

<sup>3</sup>I am grateful to God—whom I worship with a clear conscience, as my ancestors did—when I remember you constantly in my prayers night and day. <sup>4</sup>Recalling your tears, I long to see you so that I may be filled with joy. <sup>5</sup>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. <sup>6</sup>For this reason I remind you to rekindle the gift of God that is within you through the laying on of my hands; <sup>7</sup>for God did not give us a spirit of cowardice, but rather

a spirit of power and of love and of self-discipline.

<sup>8</sup>Do not be ashamed, then, of the testimony about our Lord or of me his prisoner, but join with me in suffering for the gospel, relying on the power of God, <sup>9</sup>who saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works but according to his own purpose and grace. This grace was given to us in Christ Jesus before the ages began, <sup>10</sup>but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. <sup>11</sup>For this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher, <sup>12</sup>and for this reason I suffer as I do. 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. <sup>13</sup>Hold to the standard of sound teaching that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. <sup>14</sup>Guard the good treasure entrusted to you, with the help of the Holy Spirit living in us.

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## SPECIAL NOTE ON AUTHORSHIP

In the questions below you'll see the author is named as "Paul." There is significant scholarly dispute on whether Paul, who authored Galatians and Romans, was the author of 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, and Titus. It was not uncommon in the ancient world for someone to write "in the spirit and conviction" of a great leader (like Paul) and use their name and persona, especially if that leader was their teacher.

Still, it's also possible that Paul dictated or had a scribe write different letters, and Paul may have had a "later stage" in his thinking and vocabulary. Thus, the style, assumed context, and word-choice of 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, and Titus reflects that difference.

We can get hung up on these matters all too easily. What matters more may be the spiritual insight captured in these letters. That's our task as Christians, to search the scriptures looking for spiritual wisdom and experiencing God, no matter who the author may or may not have been, or how any one author may have changed over time. God keeps speaking and working, no matter how imperfect the vessel.

## REFLECT & DISCUSS

1. Read the passage slowly. Then take a deep breath and read it again. What word, phrase or image stands out to you?
2. Paul points out that Timothy's mother and grandmother had a faith that shaped Timothy. Who has influenced and impacted your faith, understanding of God, and values? Who's legacy are you carrying on through your life?
3. Paul is known to have been imprisoned. His persecution and imprisonment were forms of suffering that he connected to the suffering of Christ. What does it mean to "suffer for the faith" in our day and age? How might we find courage and strength to endure hardship through the example of Christ?
4. 2 Timothy is "testament" literature: words of a hero facing his death. Paul writes in a way that communicates his values, his theology, and his sense of mission. When it comes time for you, how do you want to be remembered? What values, impact, and sense of purpose do you hope others see from your life?
5. Paul leans into Timothy, building him up as someone who can carry the mantle of ministry. How do you encourage, invest and build up the next generation?

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