

Bible Notes for small Groups. WB 5th October 2025

2 Timothy 1:1-14

It's party time, and as I write the Tory party have been in conference in this political season. As we listen in on any of the different parties as they debate and discuss we can be sure of hearing rhetoric that attacks and criticises other groups. After a while it's difficult to take any more of that. Having said that we must also realise that many politicians are there because they seek to do good for the country, so it is not all politicians that speak negatively. Some of their speeches will be rousing, calling their members to be faithful and passionate for the cause, fighting for what they say is good. Paul's pastoral letters to Timothy and Titus also call for passion but it should be within a ministry of love and compassion not shouting and finger wagging.

- Have you ever been put off by someone shouting or speaking fire and brimstone rather than love and grace?

Timothy was raised by his Mother and Grandmother in an atmosphere of faith and respect. It is a great responsibility for parents to teach the next generations. And it is a fact that children often mimic us in how we behave and the way we speak whether that be positive or negative. So, we have a responsibility to act positively and lovingly and give a good example.

- Has there been a time when you saw a child copying you when you had rather that they had not?

Being a grandparent is a privilege. We must realise that we should tread sensitively and carefully as we too will be influencing our grandchildren.

- Is there anything you learned from your parents or grandparents that you still do today?

Paul calls Timothy his son which indicates the kind of relationship they had even though Paul was not his biological father. Timothy had supported and worked alongside Paul and must have watched and learned from him as Paul, the mentor, preached and shared with Timothy from his own experiences.

Paul's position in prison must have saddened Timothy but Paul wrote his letters to strengthen and encourage Timothy in his ministry. Being a mentor is an important, positive activity investing time and commitment into the lives of the younger people around us.

- Has there been anyone in your younger life that has been like a mentor to you? What about a mentor in your Christian faith? What were they like and how did you learn from them?

Sometimes someone in a position such as the minister or moderator, or someone who has been in the church for a while will be approached or looked to for wisdom. If that happens to us, we must not waste the opportunity to share what we have learned in our lives of faith. The people who are part of the children and youth team and go out with them on a Sunday morning to teach and minister, or who take part in children's camps and holiday clubs are so important to the life of the church as they invest their time and experience into the children's lives.

- Is there any part of church life where you could come alongside younger people or people at the early stages of faith to help and encourage them?

Paul talks about laying his hands on Timothy. The laying of on hands like that is something that is meant to fan into flames inspiration and strength to serve God. It is a setting apart for service and a sign of God's blessing. A commissioning to carry out the work. Timothy was commissioned to lead the church at Ephesus and needed blessing and knowledge to help him through anything he might have to face.

Paul sends a message of Grace at the beginning of the letter. It is the central part of his message. He sends mercy and peace to Timothy. These days emails tend to encourage us to just dive in with the business of the message rather than engage in the letter writing style that we used to use where we began by focussing on the person receiving the letter. Asking how they are and sending them good wishes.

- When was the last time you wrote a letter that was not a business style letter?
- How do you feel when you receive a card or letter from someone who sends love and good wishes to you and spends time writing just to you?

Emails can be very abrupt. Paul takes his time with people as he offers a blessing. He had received the grace of salvation and holiness through God's purpose and grace. It is not an entitlement but comes through God's wonderful love for us. He lavishes grace and abundant acceptance. We receive it and need to pass it on to others. Love because He first loved us.

Paul, an older Jew and Timothy, a younger Gentile were very different people but by God's grace they became soulmates. They were poles apart but were brought into relationship by God.

- Have you Christian friends that are very different to you but because of the common love for Jesus you get on very well with?
- Is there anyone you see at church who could do with a good friend like you? Have you benefitted from someone befriending you at church?

Do we ever see grace being used at party conferences? It should be seen in the way we live out our daily lives. We are called to be a blessing to others. Grace is giving and receiving, and Paul urged Timothy and urges us, to receive that special gift from God. But receiving is not enough if we don't unpack it and use it for the intended purpose. We need to look after what is given and put it to good use.

- Can you see any areas of the life of AFC where more grace would do a power of good? Can you be part of the way grace is given there?

We have received precious things of Christ, God's love and grace, through others and must guard and share them with others