

Kirkwall Presbyterian Church

Timothy leaves home

1 Timothy 1:1-2; 1 Timothy 4:1-16; 2 Timothy 3:10-17

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Review – Timothy's first encounter with Paul. Paul came to Lystra. Before Timothy had a formal introduction some wicked men stoned Paul and left him lying in the dirt, motionless!

Timothy's second encounter. Paul and Barnabas came back from Derbe. They appointed elders in the little church in Lystra. Was Timothy one? The Bible does not say, but it implies, because Timothy was known to teach here and also at Iconium.

Paul and Barnabas went back to Antioch.

Sometime later Paul and Silas set out by land to visit the churches they had established. They came to Derbe and Lystra, Timothy's hometown.

Paul likes what he hears about Timothy.

- Full of faith
- Teaching others
- Hanging in there.
- Living in obedience!

And he concludes that Timothy would be valuable to them as a missionary.

But – Timothy was timid.

He was shy.

He probably had not been away from the area of Lystra and Iconium.

He would not be 'city smart.'

But Paul was not looking for a young man overflowing with confidence, world knowledge, and charisma.

He was looking for a man of faith, one who wanted others to come to faith and grow in faith. A man who kept on going though the way ahead be full of humps and valleys, and disappointments and times of elation, but also heartache.

Timothy was Paul's man to do God's work in a needy and desolate world.

What do you think Eunice and Lois thought of this venture?

Frightened – for him? They had witnessed Paul's stoning in their own village.

It was a hostile world toward the truth of God.

Were they sad? Probably. Sadness is a natural human reaction to losing someone dear to you.

Did they take Paul aside, jab a forefinger into his chest and exclaim, *“our world was pleasant until you showed up. Now you think you are going to steal our Timothy away, do you. Well let us tell you something...”*

No.

They had trained Timothy to know God in order that He would be useful to Him. If this is the form that usefulness would take, well, may God be glorified!

And so, the team departed – Paul, Silas and young Timothy.

About 6 miles to Iconium – once a town hostile towards the Gospel – now, had a small group of believers – a church! On to Pisidian Antioch. Another church of new believers. The trio branched into new territory taking the Gospel to Jews and Gentiles who had never heard that Jesus came, taught, did the impossible, then died and rose again to purchase pardon for all who believe. And some believed. Those who did not had their excuse stolen from them. Come Judgement Day, they will never be able to say, *“But no one told us!”*

Paul planned to go north and double back in Bithynia. The Spirit of God would not let him, because, I believe, there was a woman in Macedonia with a heart prepared to respond to the Gospel. While stopped at Troas Paul had a vision of a man in Macedonia calling, *“Come over here to help us.”* In the morning they found a boat bound for Samothrace. They bought tickets to Neapolis, Macedonia.

After a safe voyage and docking, they walked to Philippi, a leading city of the area. There was no Synagogue here. Come the Sabbath they went down to the river. If there were any believers in Jehovah, they would gather by the river to pray on the Sabbath. They found some women; Lydia was among them. She was a business woman, a dealer in expensive purple cloth. She owned a house and had servants. The house was large enough to hold meetings and host guests. Lydia was a woman of wealth. But she was hungry – hungry for the news of a Messiah. Paul told the group about Jesus and Lydia – believed!

Timothy must have been elated – a convert! And no persecution. Not yet!

There was a young woman in town who was demon possessed. The demons, these workers for Satan, had given her the ability to be a fortune teller. She was a victim of human trafficking in a way. She was a slave to owners who charged people to have her tell their fortunes. Paul cast the demons from her – he set her free. Her owners were furious. In retaliation they told a bunch of lies about Paul, Silas and Timothy and turned the

people against them. The Roman authorities, who were cruel, arrested Paul and Silas and flogged them publicly, and put them in prison. Why not Timothy? Perhaps because he was young and quiet and not seen as a threat. But the lad must have ached deep within to watch his colleagues bear the lash. Visions of Paul's stoning in Lystra likely flooded his mind. I envision him returning to Lydia's house frightened, downcast, bewildered and lonely. In the wee hours of the morning something roused him from fitful sleep. His elders, Paul and Silas – he must take them a drink – if the Jailkeeper would let him see them. On arriving he found his colleagues were not in jail but being bathed by the jailer's servants while others were preparing a meal. From the shadows he tried to make sense of what was unfolding before his eyes. Then he heard Paul's voice, *"Based upon your confession, I baptize you in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit!"* A cheer arose from the courtyard and Timothy rejoiced in his soul! How it came about, Timothy did not know. But this he knew, someone's eternal destiny was changed from death to life...

In the morning he awoke to a great stir from the marketplace. Above the din of many voices, he heard the unmistakable shout of Paul, *"Free us, my foot! They publicly beat us without a trial; we are Roman citizens! Let them come with an apology!!"* Timothy winced. *"Oh Paul,"* he said to himself, *"Let's just go—git while the gittin's good!"* Yet he knew that wasn't what his Spiritual father was like. No, Paul was a man of principles – and fearless. *"Oh"* thought Timothy, *"would I were like him!"*

Timothy would never be the brash man that Paul was. God didn't make him that way. But Timothy would become absolutely sure of his faith and unashamedly teach it. A church was born in Philippi. The believers met in Lydia's house. It grew! Years later Paul sent them a letter of encouragement and instruction. In it he mentioned sending Timothy to them. *"I have no one like him. No one measures up to his concern for your hope in Christ Jesus!"* Timothy, lived with a timid spirit. He struggled with shyness. Butterflies in his nervous stomach was – well, just the way he was. But he remained true to his calling to stand for the truth of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. God asks for no more!

Will we stand???