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Thursday, April 27, 2023 ▪ Read 2Timothy 1:15–18

Questions from the Scripture text: What does Timothy know about whom (v15)? And whom, particularly? What does he pray for whom (v16)? Whom would this include? What has the head of their house done? When? Indicating what about his heart? Where had he arrived (v17)? What did he do there? For whom now, more specifically, does the apostle pray mercy (v18)? From Whom? When? Of what, further, does the apostle remind Timothy?

What hopes can there be in times of general apostasy? 2Timothy 1:15–18 looks forward to the second reading in morning public worship on the coming Lord’s Day. In these four verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **in times of general apostasy, one man’s faithfulness may bring mercy to his whole household.**

Courageous kindness. Timothy already knows the data in v15. Phygellus, Hermogenes, and the vast majority of believers in and around Ephesus have turned away from Christ’s apostle. In the context, we are reminded that this is to turn away from Christ Himself, and the life and immortality that are in Him (cf. v8–12).

The focus of the passage, however, is not in the one verse on the many, many who have turned away, together with their cautionary tale. The focus of the passage is in the three verses on Onesiphorus and his household.

Onesiphorus had left his household back in Ephesus (cf. 4:19) to come to Paul’s aid in Rome. Even though everyone back in Asia had turned away from Paul, and in Rome Paul was a prisoner in chains, Onesiphorus went to Rome for him, sought him out “very zealously,” found him, and refreshed him. Not just once but often. This was in keeping with how he had served Paul previously, back home in Ephesus, “in many ways” (v18b).

Covenantal kindness of Christ. The apostle doesn’t just pray that Onesiphorus would find personal mercy, but that the Lord would grant mercy to his entire household. When we consider that Paul is writing as an apostle of Christ under the inspiration of the Spirit, we understand that he is indicating not just the heart of a grateful Christian but the heart of a merciful Christ.

God deals with us covenantally, showing us kindness for the sake of our covenant heads. This way of dealing with men in history mirrors the Lord’s way of dealing with believers eternally in Christ, Who becomes their everlasting head through faith. So, the apostle prays that the Lord would grant mercy to Onesiphorus’s household. The implication is also that Timothy would hope to have a household, and that he would hope that the Lord would reward his faithfulness not only by mercy to Timothy but by mercy to that household.

Covenantal kindness of Christians. The other implication of Paul repeating these prayers in a mentoring letter to Timothy is that he expects Timothy to join Paul in praying this for Onesiphorus and his house. Indeed, the apostle expects his protégé to join action to prayer. Onesiphorus is currently in Rome, where Paul may minister to him. But Onesiphorus’s household is back in Ephesus, where Timothy may show extra kindness to him for the sake of their husband/father/master.

In addition to neighbor love, there is a special brother love that Christians owe one another for the sake of their covenant head, the Lord Jesus Christ. Covenantal considerations extend beyond particular households of mere men to the household of God.

The ultimate mercy, of course, is the mercy that is in “that Day.” That phrase in v17 repeats its use in v12 and keeps the focus on eternal and spiritual mercy. Salvation is the most important mercy from God to seek in behalf of our household. Salvation is the most important mercy from God to pray for others and for their households. Salvation is the most important mercy from God to seek in our labors for others and for their households. Salvation is the most important mercy from God to seek for the household of God.

Who are in your household now? Who may be in your household later? Who has shown you, or your household particular kindness? How are you repaying them? How are you repaying their household?

Sample prayer: Lord, we thank You for your kindness to Paul through the ministry of Onesiphorus, even when so many others had turned against him. Forgive us for when we fail to recognize when a brother needs us to stand courageously with him or to seek him out zealously to refresh him. Thank You for teaching us to think covenantally and to be kind to children for the sake of their fathers. Forgive us for when we have failed to seek mercy covenantally with respect to others, or even with respect to our own households. Grant that our hearts and minds would be conformed to yours in this, we ask through Christ, AMEN!

ARP23B “The Lord’s My Shepherd” or TPH406 “Jesus, With Thy Church Abide”

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(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Second Timothy 1 verses 15 through 18. These are God’s words. This, you know that all those in asia have turned away from me. Among whom are phyllis and homogeneous. The lord grant mercy to the household of an as a forests. For he often refreshed me. And was not ashamed of my chain, but when he arrived in Rome, he sought me out.

Very zealously and found me. The lord granted to him. That he may find mercy from the lord in that day. And you know, very well how many ways? He ministered to me. And emphasis. So far, the Reading of god’s inspired and an errant word. It’s a very interesting that in this, Farewell.

Instruction and charge from the apostle Paul, to His protege, his son and the ministry of the faith. The eldership. He includes this. Four verse. Note of

commendation and prayer, not for Timothy.

But for an as a forest,

The idea being both to remind Timothy. Of that, which is commendable before God and encouraged Timothy to note it in others. And give thanks to god for others and pray, god's blessing. For others. This is one of the the duties and tasks of a minister Is that he would in the public worship proclaim god's blessing upon others as the ambassador of christ and in imitation of and participation in Christ's.

Shepherding ministry that he would pray god's blessing. Uh, for others. And so, he is noting that which provokes, the blessing of god, And in which we are to, which we are to respond with thanksgiving in prayer. Now, which encourages us both to do the same things and to recognize the same things, and here it is.

The kindness. Of, and as a forests. Uh, to the apostle. First of all, it was a courageous. Kindness. He says in verse 15, this, you know, The situation in people turning against paul people, turning against the gospel. Therefore, because paul is the Apostle par excellence of the gospel to the gentiles.

This is his great calling and task and joy. And message. And people have turned away from him. This, you know, that all those in asia. Have turned away from me. He's going to talk later about how at his first defense, no one stood with him. But everyone abandoned him.

In a situation like that, not just when someone has turned. Against the faithful minister. But when everyone has turned against the faithful minister, And a lot of faithful christian. A lot of faithful father and husband. Let a faithful minister No, that in god's wise providence and good providence. It may yet be his experience.

That despite his faithfulness, everyone turns against him. We must be prepared to have christ only. And the lord jesus tells us, we must be willing. To have christ, only. That if it comes down to father mother brother sister children, Being against us. Our allegiance to christ must be so great that it would require The same loss.

And, Being abandoned by Everyone else in life. As if we had hated them. And so when someone is in that situation and it's actually a great act of courage to stand by them, The one on whom, everyone has turned the one. Against whom everyone speaks and thinks ill of And you are still willing to identify with them.

We of course must do this with christ. But we are also to do this. With those who are faithful. In the ministry, faithful in the church. And, Uh, rejected. And abandoned. On account of their faithfulness. Apparently there are a couple whom paul fought white, stand with him despite jealous and homogenies.

But we often find out people's true colors. Uh, in Uh, times of difficulty. And especially when the difficulty. That includes people. Abandoning us, so and as a forest is kindness was courageous. Uh, we need to Uh, form our relationships around truths from God. Whether the truth is people being made in his image, Or even more than that, that the people being.

Um, renewed in his image, having made a group credible profession and faith in christ. Being part of the church, therefore, we Ought to think of them as christians and even more. Those particular believers. Him, god has attached to us. In our own congregation and even more. In our own ministry and even more in our own household.

And so, There are truths and realities about. God's providence to us and Uh, what god has done? In creating people and in redeeming them, that ought to form the basis. Of. Our. Care for and kindness toward others. And then in a context in which someone is being abandoned by everyone else, they actually need the friendship, the support, the encouragement to help.

Then. More than at other times. And so, if we're thinking, Uh, from our impulses. And the situation happens. Uh, we are going to be. Those are going to be the situations in which we are least, likely to be kind, because the cost is so high and we're operating Out of fear or desire to be loved by others but if we're operating according to the way the scriptures, teach us, then those are going to be the situations that we are.

Most driven to be kind. Because in god's providence, It is the point at which it is most needed. And so, Truth-based. Thinking and living leads to courage. And in this case, courageous kindness, We see here, not just the courageous kindness of Uh, and as a forest, but the covenantal kindness of god and therefore Of christ's apostle.

The lord grant mercy to the household. Of vanessa for us. All the household, did not go to Rome and seek out Paul and Very zealously not being ashamed of his chain but found paul and refreshed him. And yet, we know that god. God as a covenantal god. He shows kindness.

To those who are represented in their federal head and their covenantal head on account of their head. He? That we were in atom and so we are judged in Adam. We send in him, we fell with him. And when we believe in the lord jesus christ we come out of ourselves and out of being an atom.

Uh, to being in christ. Uh, we become an entirely new. Uh, person, both by the spirits regenerating work and by our covenantal identity. Uh being considered in christ and everything. God, does for the believers for the sake of christ. Even that initial regeneration because he election was in christ and there is a covenant.

In. Among the persons of the godhead that Includes and considers all those who are chosen in the sun. Uh, loved by. Go on in the sun, from before the world began, therefore for, for whom the sun is sent therefore for, for whom the spirit is sent in for it.

And so forth. And so god has determined to work covenantally in the way that he will redeem from before the world began. And so he operates covenantally in history. With households and with churches. And, Often he treats. Someone well each as a kindness to someone for the sake of his That person's father.

Uh, one. Such instance, you remember? Was when david wanted to know if there was anyone left. Of the house of jonathan that he could work that he could. Interact with in a crescent covenant. Love way. That he might be able to show. So love and mercy and kindness and for the sake of his father, And, He located mephibosheth and so forth.

And so, when Paul remembers. And as a for us, he doesn't just Pray for god's blessing on the man. He prays for god's blessing upon the household. We are to think in terms of households. Uh, because god. Has established that in reality, particularly in his church. And he teaches us.

To follow him in that. The idea here then is. Uh, as paul prays for and would encourage and as a for us, however, he may in room yet, an esophoris's household

is still back in Ephesus. And so not only is Timothy as their minister to join Paul and praying for blessing upon them and the public courses by week pronouncing, blessing upon them.

But that he would show particular kindness. To an essa forest's household because Timothy is in a spiritual sense, having been adopted in the ministry as it were Um, Uh, sort of of the household. Of Paul. And finally, On, on this particular point Timothy is Hoping. We know. Or we must.

Uh, conclude to have a household of his own if he doesn't already, and he should remember, That God deals favorably with households for the sake of the husband, or the father And, Godliness before the Lord. We know. That obedience provokes blessing. And disobedience provokes chastening. Well, when a man is a father or a husband, Uh, he is a federal headache of an ample head and he should remember.

He should live mindfully. That he is provoking God one way or another for the sake of his family. So there is the covenantal kindness of Christ. As. Um, Recognized and prayed for Uh, by the apostle. And then there's the Um, the covenantal kindness. Of Christians. We've talked about that a lot already.

Uh, Paul repeating these prayers. He expects Timothy to join Paul in praying both for and as a forest and his house, he expects Timothy to not just pray, not just to pray for a necessity forces house, but to minister to them, In. Um, With special. Consideration. And affection. And especially seeking their spiritual good.

The Lord grant to him, that he may find mercy from the Lord verse 18 in that. Day. Not only now. Praying for. And as a forest of course to Uh, to be vindicated in that day, welcomed into everlasting glory. In the resurrection and the new heavens and the new earth.

But remember, he still thinking about The mercy to the household of Vanessa, for us. And, Uh, when we think about the last day, One of the great things that a believer thinks about is will my household be there? Will you come to heaven with me? Will you? Will you on that day?

Be found in Christ Jesus. Having trusted him for yourself. Having Uh, recognized the guilt of your sin. And, Um, and hoped in him. Rejecting your sin choosing Christ instead. And wanting to be hissed. Will we enter? The new heavens and the new earth. Glorified resurrected body perfected. Holy souls.

Together. That will be a great mercy. In that day.

There is no more. Sora sin. Sickness etc. Um, in In glory and the resurrection for us when the Lord wipes every tear from our eyes, And yet, how can it be otherwise? But that the last great tears. Would be. That someone who belonged to our house. Would perish. Would stick to their allegiance, to their sin to themselves.

And not. Even with all that Christ has offered, Give themselves up to Christ. And trust themselves to him. Commit themselves unto his glory. And so, this is A great prayer on behalf. Of an as a forest by the apostle Paul. The Lord grant mercy to the household of Vanessa for us.

May he find mercy from the Lord in that day? And yet it is a ministry. That is going to depend humanly speaking. In large part on what Timothy does back in emphasis. Because Paul isn't going back to Ephesus again. And what will the Lord use? To preserve spiritually and as a forest's wife.

And as a forest's children and grandchildren, It will be the ministry of the gospel in word and sacrament and prayer in Ephesus as overseeing by Timothy as overseen by the other elders. Him Timothy ordains and leads. And so just as we have all been done, When you have family members who are somewhere else and you care much about them and for their souls, you pray for their minister That the Lord would help him.

That the Lord would keep him faithful. There's a lot at stake. Than Timothy's ongoing. Faithful faithfulness. As the apostle has been charging him. Throughout the slutter, I'm just going to continue. So, let's pray. Our father in heaven. We pray that you would give us courage. To be kind, especially to those.

They become unpopular even and especially among your people. We pray. O Lord that If ever you bring us into a season where everyone else is abandoning us. That you would both help us by your spirit to know that Christ stands with us. And to have him be enough for us.

But that you would also have mercy upon our weakness. And give other faithful and godly people. The courage to stand with us, even if They must stand alone. Isn't that's a forested for Paul. We pray, Lord that you. Would help us to think covenantally. Both about others and ourselves.

And especially, Um, What we? Uh, might be bringing upon or participating in, in our own household. Particularly for me as the head of this house. And for the boys as they Um, Look forward. To being ahead of their own house. Not too many. Not too long from now. We pray.

Lord that Most of all. Uh, you would have mercy on those who are nearest to us and especially those Uh, with whom we have bit part of the same household. That we would all enter glory together. In the last, great day. That we would have that confidence. That we know whom we have believed.

And their persuaded that you are able. To keep what we have committed unto you. Onto that day, and particularly our loved ones. And so, we do pray for the ministries of the word. Under which Our house. Sits. And, Those who are dear to us, and By way of blood.

Especially. In this world have mercy, O God. We ask Glorify Christ in his church. Who we ask it in his name. Amen.