



## AT HOME SERVICE

**Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> October 2025**

*compiled by Barbara Dalton – Local Preacher in training*

### **Guard the good treasure**

We explore the Second Letter to Timothy as a model for handing on the faith we have received.

This week we are reminded to stay faithful and concentrate on pleasing God.

The reading, **2 Timothy 2.8-15**, provides us with an opportunity to identify that the gospel is the treasure, decide what is valuable about the treasure and recognise the relevance of the treasure to our whole life.



‘Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.’  
(Luke 12.34) Today we are going to identify some of the treasures of the gospel and how we might handle them.

### **An opening prayer (based on Psalm 111)**

Come to God

in the company of the righteous  
and name yourself among them,  
as one whose life is touched by faith.

Draw close to God

with those whose lives are upright  
and name yourself among them,  
as one whose heart is touched by love.

Call upon God

along with those who believe  
and name yourself among them,  
as one whose soul is touched by the Holy Spirit. Amen

### **2 Timothy 2:8-15 NIV**

<sup>8</sup>Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, descended from David. This is my gospel, <sup>9</sup> for which I am suffering even to the point of being chained like a criminal. But God’s word is not chained. <sup>10</sup> Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they too may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory.

<sup>11</sup> Here is a trustworthy saying:

If we died with him, we will also live with him;

<sup>12</sup> if we endure, we will also reign with him.

If we disown him, he will also disown us;

<sup>13</sup> if we are faithless, he remains faithful, for he cannot disown himself.

<sup>14</sup> Keep reminding God's people of these things. Warn them before God against quarrelling about words; it is of no value, and only ruins those who listen. <sup>15</sup> Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.

### **Song**

Abba Father, let me be,

Yours and Yours alone.

May my will forever be,

Evermore Your own.

Never let my heart grow cold,

Never let me go.

Abba Father let me be,

Yours and Yours alone.

*Dave Bilbrough (b. 1965)*

### **Reflection**

Paul may be in chains, but his message is not (v.10). The gospel is free to continue doing the work for which God sent it into the world - namely to bring about the salvation of those who follow its teachings (that is probably the meaning of 'elect' here). Paul's endurance is an example to others to hold on even if the going gets tough; if he were to fail to endure, perhaps others would lose heart as a result.

To reinforce the message, he again quotes something that sounds like a fragment of liturgy or a hymn (vv.11-13). The first two of four lines speak of us participating in the death and resurrection of Jesus and then reigning with him after a period of trial. This is the arc of a Christian's life in a nutshell. The third line (v.12b) echoes Jesus' words in Luke 12.9 that warn of the results of not guarding the treasure appropriately. But the final line reminds us that even here we are likely to be swept up in God's grace: God will be faithful to his promise that guardians of the treasure will receive help to stay faithful.

So Paul uses the liturgy to remind Timothy that he must challenge those in his care to guard the treasure of the gospel and not be lured away into pointless disputes about words that do not really matter (v.14). Timothy will do this by working hard to grasp what the treasure is about and then pass it on to others in a way that means they will be able to appropriate it and live it (v.15). In particular, Paul is keen that people don't mess up their lives by mangling the word of truth, something that he will explain more fully.

Jesus is the treasure. The gospel that Paul proclaims is about him. This treasure is to be possessed with gratitude.

Once we have recognised this, the best way to learn about the treasure is to listen and look at those who have been following Jesus longer than we have. So Timothy served as Paul's apprentice, learning the gospel from the master so that he will be able to lead others.

We guard the treasure best when we learn its ways from those who live out the gospel in their everyday life. We all need people with whom we can share the struggles we experience as we seek to understand how the gospel shapes our lives.

Question: Who helped you to discover the treasure? Think and prayer for this person / people.

Does Paul contrast the fascinating temptation to look back and to try to understand the mystery of how a descendant of David became the Christ with the imperative to live the Resurrection and looking to the future? Is this where we may be caught fruitlessly 'wrangling over words' (v.14)? Paul is imprisoned (v.9) not because of what he knows of the past but because he threatened the status quo with the promise of how the future could be different.

Jewish society reserved the greatest respect for the thinkers and teachers, who did not work with their hands. By contrast, Paul the tentmaker demands people of great faith and thoughtfulness who will also translate belief into action, by working, speaking and enduring for 'truth' (v.15). How deep do we look before dismissing people as unworthy? Do we follow media trends and castigate bankers, politicians, journalists, 'benefit cheats' and illegal immigrants en masse, instead of looking at individual people, brothers or sisters in their humanity? Are we open to the contributions of the elderly and retired, the unemployed, and the unpaid carers? Can we see all these life-paths as different apprenticeships to the master

Paul talks, in verse 15, of being 'a worker who has no need to be ashamed'. We know that Paul was a tentmaker – it's who he is, but this isn't to the exclusion of his preaching. It is all part of him. We are all a complex mix. Churches are good at making people just 'churchy' and overlooking the rest of who and what we are. The workshop environment would have been significant in shaping Paul's life. For his role as a missionary, it was probably more important than his rabbinic training. Paul wants Timothy to understand that sharing the gospel is about the whole of life. Timothy is to be an apprentice of whole-life faith.

### **Intercessional Prayers**

We pray for our troubled world.

Especially the city of Gaza

where the situation is so dreadful.

So much destruction, so many casualties of war.

We pray for the safety and protection of all human life.

We pray for those who live in fear

of the harm others can do them.

For those in fear of their lives.

O Lord, hear our prayer.

We pray for a world where people are often

intolerant of each other's views,

and struggle to live together in harmony.

We pray for civic leaders,

faith communities and individuals,

that they will be courageous advocates

for truth, justice and peace.

O Lord, hear our prayer.

We pray for the church worldwide.

For those who lead, and those who serve.

May we all try to be real in serving you.

We pray for people of other beliefs,  
as they too seek to live godly and constructive lives.

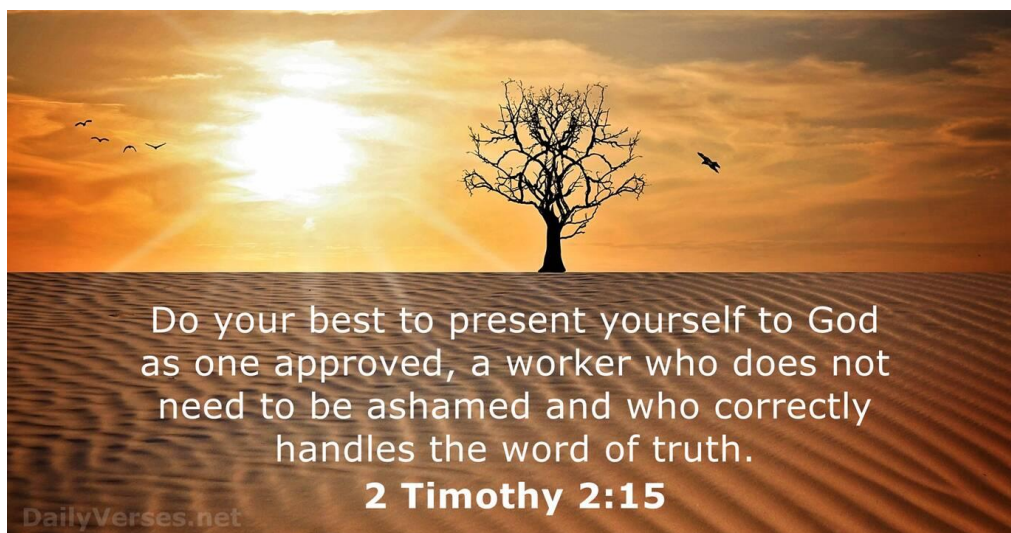
O Lord, hear our prayer.

Forth in thy name, O Lord, I go  
My daily labour to pursue,  
Thee, only thee, resolved to know  
In all I think, or speak, or do. *(Charles Wesley 1707–1788)*

**Remind us, O Lord, to pray continuously for the real world in which we live.  
And to be ready to be part of your answer. Amen**

### **Prayer**

God of grace and mercy,  
send us back out into the world as people approved by you,  
to witness to you without shame, full of faith and courage,  
to the glory of your name. Amen



### **Song**

Worthy O worthy are You Lord  
Worthy to be thanked and praised  
and worshipped and adored  
Singing hallelujah

Lamb upon the throne  
We worship and adore You  
Make Your glory known  
Singing hallelujah

Glory to the King  
You're more than a conqueror  
You're Lord of everything.

*Mark S. Kinzer (b. 1952)*