

## 2 Timothy 1:1-14

“Pastors”

October 2, 2016

Paul calls himself an apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ. By definition, Apostle is one who is sent. Paul is sent by the Lord Jesus Christ. We know his story. Paul was on the road to Damascus to persecute the Christians when Jesus came to Paul and called him to preach the Good News. Paul is sent to preach the story of the Cross at Calvary to the Greek world. The other Disciples were called to preach the Good News of Christ on the Cross at Calvary to the rest of the world. For every one of them it meant hardship and even death.

Timothy is of the new generation of preachers and church leaders. Timothy is Paul's Disciple. Paul laid his hands on Timothy and the Holy Spirit gave through Paul the gifts of the spirit so that Timothy could carry on the ministry. In our text, Timothy is encouraged to allow the Holy Spirit to develop and strength his gifts so that Timothy will be more effective in doing ministry for the Lord Jesus Christ.

As a pastor, I am many generations away from Paul. However like Paul and Timothy, I have received spiritual gifts from God. Like Paul and Timothy, hands were laid upon me. My responsibility is to fan into flame those gifts that I have received so that I can be more effective in doing ministry for the Lord Jesus Christ. Like Timothy, I expect persecution because I carry the message of the Gospel into

the world. In fact I have experienced that persecution both within the church and from outside the Church. Like Timothy, I am to remain faithful to the task of proclaiming the Gospel.

I heard the story of a pastor who was attacked by one of the Elders. This elder gave a list of his offences against the church. The Elder went on to complain about one of his offenses. It seems that the pastor was in a room full of people and he sat with his family and greeted those who came over to greet. It seems that there was another pastor in the room who went around the room greeting everyone. This pastor was found wanting because he too did not go around greeting everyone in the room. God did not call us to be greeters but proclaimers of the Gospel. Likewise some pastors are democrats, some republicans and some Libertarians. We preach Law and Gospel not politics.

One of the problems here is that the Elder did not understand their responsibility from the Lord. They were to support the pastor rather than undermine the pastor. Some Elders and congregations think that they are the employers of the pastor and therefore they need to supervise the pastor and correct all his wrongs. Over the years I have heard people tell me that I should not judge, yet for some congregations and leaders, they feel free to judge the pastor about many things. It becomes sad when they complain that the pastor is not like another

pastor who is more pleasing to their personality. For example one greets everyone and another sits and waits for people to come to him.

Of course pastors are not perfect. Paul is encouraging Timothy to become less timid when he proclaims the Gospel. The office of the pastor is a humbling office because God has His ways of humbling us. God has humbled me many times over the years. Likewise, there have been many who have sought to humble me even when God was not seeking to humble me. These people have found fault in me or my personality. They forgot that our role is to encourage and lift each other up rather than make life miserable with complaints. We are a team of many different personalities and we humble ourselves in Christ and seek to work together in unity. Our Next to New sale is an example of individuals humbling themselves to carry out a ministry for the Lord.

The pastoral office is a God given responsibility. God shows that the pastor has the responsibility to be pastor by calling him through the congregation and Synod. Only imperfect people are to the pastoral office because perfect people don't exist. However the pastor must be respectable, honorable, and servant of all. Likewise the pastor must expect that the congregation will be made up of imperfect people. Therefore the people must strive to be respectable and honorable. It is a blessing that our God sees our sins no more in His underserved grace and mercy through Christ on the Cross at Calvary. Amen.

