

Dear Heavenly Father,

Praise

Paul said, “Great indeed, we confess, is the mystery of godliness: He was manifested in the flesh, vindicated by the Spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory” (1 Tim 3:16). I praise you today for your Son, Jesus Christ, who came into the world to save sinners. You have shown mercy to me through him so that your perfect patience may be seen by all who believe in him for eternal life (1 Tim 1:16). Praise the Lord!

Today in Your Word

Today you shared with me Paul’s first personal letter to Timothy. Timothy was a Christian, perhaps as a result of Paul’s missionary work in Galatia, and he was well spoken of by the brothers at Lystra and Iconium. When Paul returned to Lystra on his second missionary journey, he invited Timothy to accompany him (Acts 16:1–3). Timothy helped Paul in Troas, Philippi, Berea, Thessalonica, Athens, and Corinth. During the third journey, he worked with Paul in Ephesus. Timothy joined Paul in Rome during his house arrest, and after Paul was acquitted, they traveled together to Ephesus. When Paul later departed for Macedonia, he asked Timothy to stay behind and act as his personal representative in Ephesus (1 Tim 1:3). Although there is a wealth of instruction and guidance in 1 Timothy for those who are in leadership positions in the church, I was challenged by the way Paul exhorted Timothy to personal holiness. Paul said, “This charge I entrust to you, Timothy, my child, in accordance with the prophecies previously made about you, that by them you may wage the good warfare, holding faith and a good conscience” (1 Tim 1:18–19). This teaches me that as I fight against false teaching, I must be careful to stand firm in the faith and keep my conscience clear. Men like Hymenaeus and Alexander are sobering examples of the danger of compromise. Paul said, “I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people” (1 Tim 2:1). This teaches me to be diligent in prayer, making intercession for *all* men, not just for those who are close to me. Paul said, “Have nothing to do with irreverent, silly myths. Rather train yourself for godliness” (1 Tim 4:7). This teaches me to soak myself in your Word, striving to understand the truth and engrafting it into my heart and mind. Paul said, “Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity” (1 Tim 4:12). This teaches me that no matter how young or old I am, my responsibility is to set an example of what it means to be a dedicated disciple of Jesus. My life should be a shining testimony of your power and grace. Paul said, “But as for you, O man of God, flee these things [the desire to be rich and the love of money]. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith” (1 Tim 6:11–12). This teaches me to avoid the pursuit of material wealth and possessions, and instead, to make godliness and holiness my goal. This means commitment and hard work on my part, for I’m called to spiritual warfare, and the enemy is far from idle.

Reflection

Paul said that if I desire leadership in the church, I desire a noble task. Yet there are qualifications that must be met, and the task carries great responsibility. If I’m in leadership, am I living up to the standards of my office? If I’m not in leadership, am I striving to follow the example of those who are?

Request

Father, help me to guard the deposit which you have entrusted to me (1 Tim 6:20), and enable me to be an obedient servant. I want to be faithful to the tasks and duties your Spirit is leading me to perform.

Thanksgiving

I say with Paul: “To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.” (1 Tim 1:17).

In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Suggested Hymn: “Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise” – Walter C. Smith.

Meditation Verse: 1 Timothy 6:9–10.