

2Timothy 24-08-14a

Greetings fellow members of Grace and Truth Bible Church. This is the 14th of August 2024. We're starting a new study tonight, the third of our three pastoral epistles.

This is the second epistle of Paul the Apostle to Timothy, as it's labeled in my Bible. Let's take a moment to consolidate our thoughts and focus our attention and ask God's blessing on our fellowship and we'll begin. Father, we are so grateful for this time of fellowship and the occasion to center our thoughts around your word and be instructed to receive the ministry of your Holy Spirit to lead us into all truth.

We pray that as we look together at this passage that your Holy Spirit will be our teacher, help us to understand it and see its pertinence and application in our own lives. We ask it in Jesus name. Amen.

We don't need an introduction to Timothy because we did that at the first letter, only to say that this is in all likelihood the very last epistle that Paul the Apostle ever wrote. He is back in prison and is anticipating his impending execution. This is many years after first Timothy and Titus and the situation is such that he is sort of giving the final push to Timothy to carry the torch and continue the mission, realizing that he is probably not going to be on the scene much longer.

We will find out what burdens lie on Paul's heart at this stage, this sunset stage of his apostolic ministry as we go through the letter. Timothy didn't know what was coming up until he read it, so we don't really need to anticipate very much. We will receive it the way the original recipients did.

So without further ado, 2 Timothy 1.1, Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, it says in your New King James, by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus. We have covered Paul, his new name. He started out life as Shaul or Saul, but was re-christened as Paulos.

And he is an apostle of Jesus Christ. We went into detail about the apostolic function and its place in the chain of authority in 1 Timothy. By the will of God, once again, this is an appeal to the authority that grants Paul this office and this function.

In the first letter to Timothy, he said it was by the commandment of God our Savior and the Jesus Christ our hope. Here he shortens that to the will of God. The will of God results in commandments from God.

Those who think that the will of God is irresistible would do well to compare these two greetings to see that Paul is an apostle by the will of God, but also by the commandment of God. And if God's will was sufficient, we wouldn't need commandments. Commandments are either obeyed or disobeyed.

This is why Jesus says in the Gospel of John that we demonstrate our love for him by having his commandments, his words, and keeping them. If a commandment was sufficient to accomplish the will of God, we would be perfectly obedient. This is one of our answers to those who push the Reformed view that God ordains everything from our salvation to our level of obedience.

That is a dodging of responsibility. There are commandments, and it is up to us to endeavor to keep them. It's one of the reasons we're here to make those choices.

It is the will of God and the commandment of God that has made Paul an apostle. Paul has responded. He didn't just say on the Damascus Road or a few days later, okay, I'll be an apostle.

He has continued to fulfill that commission, that opportunity day after day, month after month, year after year, for all of his life up to this point. And it is an ongoing opportunity. We all have a gift.

We all have an assignment. We all have opportunities from God. And we saw at the close of our study of Titus that the idea of continuing, when we looked at the faithful sayings and women who will be delivered in child training if they continue in godliness, and it's a message for all of us to be continual.

We're going to see this concept of continual coming up here within a verse. So we're anticipating it a bit. But Paul is and has been an apostle by the commandment and the will of God, according to the promise of life, which is in Christ Jesus.

And this idea that being an apostle, going through the sacrifices, enduring the hardships, being stoned to death in Lystra, having the 40 stripes minus one three different times, being shipwrecked, being oppressed, being harangued, being insulted and derided by the Judaizers and the Jews who reject Paul for leaving the Pharisee sect and becoming an apostle of Jesus Christ. He has endured all of these hardships, the daily needs of the churches, as he mentions in another place. Why? What is the motivation for doing anything that we do in our life, which I would say our spiritual life, but there shouldn't be any distance between our life and our spiritual life, should there? Our life is our spiritual life.

So what's our motivation? Why do we do what we do? Well, Paul identifies his right here. It's according to the promise of life, which is in Christ Jesus. The promise of life.

It is that future hope. That's what he mentioned in First Timothy. Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the commandment of God, our Savior and the Lord Jesus Christ, our hope.

We have the hope of the future. And to the extent that it is real to us, it's not an abstraction, it's not sort of a philosophical anticipation or a wish or a fantasy. It is a

reality.

The Lord Jesus Christ really is seated at the right hand of the Father. There really is a God in heaven who really is going to send the Lord Jesus back to collect his body, the church, take us to himself, and those of us who are qualified will be presented before the throne of the Father. We will all be taken into the eternal future at various levels of opportunity and service based on what we do here.

Any competitive program of training rewards those who do well, who are diligent, who study to show themselves approved, workmen who do not need to be ashamed. There is greater opportunity. Those who barely make a passing grade, they will still pass, they'll still get their certificate or their degree, but their options are more limited.

And this is just common sense. So, Jesus Christ, our hope. That's Paul's motivation.

I made a caveat, and you have a note in your New King James when it says, Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, the best texts, which is the Nestle, Allen, UBS, and the majority text itself, all say Christ Jesus here, rather than Jesus Christ. So, pop quiz question number one. What's the difference? What is the difference? Have you ever noticed that sometimes the Word of God says Jesus Christ, and other times it says Christ Jesus? We had a similar but different study on Kingdom of Heaven versus Kingdom of God.

What are the reasons for using one or the other? Same thing here. It is interesting to note that nobody except the Apostle Paul puts Christ ahead of Jesus. Not John, not Luke, not Peter.

The only one who uses the phrase Christ Jesus is the Apostle Paul. All of the other writing apostles call him Jesus Christ. So, is there a difference? Well, the best way to find this out instead of trying to look it up on the web or, well, whichever thing is first is most important.

So, if it's Christ Jesus, the most common explanation, by the way, if you do look this up, and I've heard this since I was in Sunday school, is if it says Christ Jesus, it's emphasizing his deity because he is the Christ, the Son of the living God. If it's Jesus first, it's emphasizing his humanity because he's Yeshua, that's his personal name. You know that Jesus, or Yeshua more properly, is his personal name.

Christ is his title. It is the Greek translation of Mashiach, Messiah, or Anointed One. So, you could say Jesus the Anointed or the Anointed Jesus would be one way to differentiate these a little more helpfully in English.

So, there's a little more to it than that. And granted, this is a subtle distinction, but subtle distinctions sometimes make a lot of difference. So, one of the best ways to discern this is look at the way Paul uses these because Paul will sometimes say Jesus Christ and sometimes Christ Jesus.

So, turn, for example, the first place Jesus ever occurs is in Acts. And it's Acts chapter 24. Luke, of course, wrote Acts, but Luke is talking about Paul's ministry before the Roman governors and officials and so on.

And so, in Acts 24, it is the first occasion where he is talking to him about faith in Christ or Christ Jesus. And from then on, it's only in Paul's epistles that you find it. But turn to Philippians.

This will be a quick way to see the difference. So, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians chapter one, we have it in the greeting, Paul and Timothy bond servants of Jesus Christ to all the saints in Christ in Philippi, verse two, grace to you and peace from God, our Father and the Lord, Jesus Christ. So, you have Jesus Christ, Christ Jesus, and Jesus Christ in the space of the first two verses.

Is it just stylistic variation? That's another theory. I don't think anything is just style or just for variation. There are reasons for everything in scripture.

When Paul begins by saying, Paul and Timothy bond servants of Jesus Christ, there is always an emphasis when you have the two combined, Jesus' personal name and his office of his divinity and humanity. He is two natures united in one person forever at the point of the virgin birth. And there is always an emphasis on the fact that Jesus is not only human, but is also divine.

But when his personal name comes first, particularly in Paul, because Paul uses them each about half the time, give or take. Paul is thinking first about the Lord Jesus in his human experience, not his humanity alone, but his empathy with us. So, the Lord Jesus says he did not come to be served, but to serve and to give his life a ransom for many.

So, when Paul thinks about being a bond servant, there are two ways he can think about it. It can either be under the authority of Christ Jesus, and he's thinking of his service in terms of where it fits in the authority structure, or he can be thinking of his service in terms of how do I perform it. I will serve the way the Lord Jesus served, sacrificially to myself and beneficially to others.

So, even when it comes to a subject like being a servant, you will see Paul say it both ways, a servant of Christ Jesus or a servant of Christ Jesus. And it depends on the aspect of the Lord Jesus that he has in mind based on the context. So, these Philippian believers, many of whom are retired military, are used to authority and to serving under orders and so on.

But you have bond servants of Jesus Christ to all the saints in Christ Jesus. Now, you have a status which is like citizenship. You have a citizenship in Rome or in the Roman Empire, and you have a status in Christ.

So, this shifts to rather than the personality of Jesus Christ and his human experience,

this is what he accomplished and the realm in which we dwell as being in him. So, it really does matter. Let me just give you a few passages.

I could go on throughout. In fact, quickly just flip the page to Philippians chapter 2. Therefore, if there is any consolation in Christ, you say, well, are you talking about, is there consolation in Christ personally? What would you say now that we've been sensitized a bit to the saints who are in Christ Jesus? This is your status. If there is any consolation in Christ in terms of my position, positional truth, my identity as a member of the body of Christ, not so much his personal example.

I'm not consoled by his personal example. I'm consoled by the knowledge and the certainty of my place in him. So, there's consolation in Christ.

And notice the other things that are in Christ. There is comfort of love in Christ, not just the personal love of Jesus, but the love of fellow believers. There is fellowship of the spirit in this realm of Christ, in Christ, in him.

You think of Ephesians chapter 1 and all the things we learned about what we have in him, affection and mercy in Christ. And so, it speaks of our position. So, when you get to chapter 2, verse 5 through 11, let's just look at that one section.

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus. Let this mind be in you, which was in Christ Jesus. Why does Christ come first here? This is the mind that was in Jesus Christ, fulfilling his function and his office.

The role of Messiah, the role of the anointed one was a mission. It was an assignment from God. It was a purpose and a goal to be accomplished.

So, when you think of Christ Jesus, and he is not coming to be a personality and to enter into personal relationships as an end in itself. He is coming as Christ. Think about this.

Remember in Luke 2.11, Luke 2 is the shepherds watching their flocks by night. Remember? What's the closing announcement from the angel to the shepherds? There is born to you this day in the city of David, what? A Savior. You know the Christmas songs.

What is it? Luke 2.11. There is born to you this day in the city of David, a Savior who is what? Christ the Lord. There is a Savior who is Christ. This is good tidings of great joy.

Peace on earth to men of goodwill. There is born to you a Savior who is Christ the Lord. What's missing out of the formula there? You got three of the four most common appellations.

What's missing? Savior, Lord, Christ. Not his personal name. Savior who is Christ the Lord.

Once you start watching for how the Lord Jesus is referred to, it's really fascinating. It

spreads out and absorbs things from the context and really makes a lot of sense. And then when we come back to 2 Timothy, we're going to see why Paul uses these terms the way that he does.

But in Acts 1.11, at the other end of Jesus' ministry, this is when he's born. This is his initial birthday. Then at the end, when he has ascended in Acts 1.11, you got the two angels and they say, ye men of Galilee, why are you standing there staring up into the sky? This same Jesus Jesus who was taken up from you into heaven will so come in like manner as you saw him go into heaven.

This same Jesus. Doesn't say this same Jesus Christ. Doesn't say this same Christ Jesus.

Doesn't say Jesus Christ the Lord. Doesn't say Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. This same Jesus.

Why does the angel use that name of all of the available terms? Using our rules of interpretation, to whom is the angel speaking? It's right there in the context. Who is he talking to? Ye men of Judah, ye men of Samaria, ye men of Jerusalem, ye men of Galilee. The Galilean disciples are the first to have met the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world down by the river Jordan, right? And it is their personal relationship to the humanity of Christ that is interrupted by this ascension, right? It was hugely interrupted by the crucifixion, but then he came back and for 40 days he has been appearing and teaching and assuring and confirming and breathing on them, the Holy Spirit and so on.

But now he has departed for the final time. This same Yeshua, this same Jesus is going to come back. That tells you that the return of Jesus Christ is not spiritual.

It's not official in the sense of coming back in his office. For the men of Galilee, he is coming back personally. It is the human person of Jesus who is returning.

He will be all of those other things. The son of man is going to come in his glory, right? Sit on the throne of his kingdom. But for the men of Galilee, they are watching for the same human Lord Jesus.

Those who try to spiritualize the second coming of Christ and say, he comes in our hearts and so on. There would be a different term used here if that were the case, in my view. So then when Peter is preaching in the next chapter, Acts chapter 2 verse 36, Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath made the same Jesus, interesting use of the very term that he heard the angel use, right? Let all the house of Israel, Acts 2 verse 36, know assuredly that God hath made the same Jesus whom you have crucified.

God has made him both Lord and Christ. God has made him Lord and God has made him Christ. This has implications for those who want to talk about the trinity and the origins and the eternity.

If Lord means the deity of Christ, and if you call Jesus Lord, you're saying he's deity. Well, if God in heaven, the God of Israel, made Jesus Lord, was he not previously God and he was made God because he was made Lord? That's not a topic for today. I'm just saying you can get into a lot of interesting areas about the nature of the Lord Jesus just looking at the use of his names.

Peter says, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, God has made this same Jesus, has made him Lord, and has made him Christ. That's why he is the Lord Jesus Christ. Have you noticed that when those three terms are used, it is never the Lord Christ Jesus.

Never, ever, not once. It's never our Lord and Savior Christ Jesus. Anytime Lord or Savior precedes it, it's always Jesus Christ.

It's really only Paul that reverses the order, and he's got reasons for so doing. So in Acts 16.31, the Philippian jailer, you've memorized this verse. What shall I do to be saved? What do they reply in Acts 16.31? Believe on whom? The Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and your house, your household.

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. What does Paul say in Romans 10.9? If you confess with your mouth, who? If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in your heart that God hath raised him from the dead, you will be saved. You confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus.

2 Peter, Peter uses this same phrase two different times. Once in 2 Peter 2.20, these people who have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and are again entangled in it, and are overcome. They're worse off at the end than they were at the beginning.

And then in 3.18 of that same letter, 2 Peter 3.18, but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory now and forever. Amen.

That closes the second letter. You can look at the usage just in the pastoral epistles. We saw this in 1 Timothy 1.1, Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus.

Isn't 1 Timothy and Titus both heavily emphasizing structure and authority and our place in it? So he starts the letter. He doesn't get 10 words into it without saying, an apostle of Christ Jesus, by the command of God, our Savior, and of Christ Jesus, our hope. Apostle of Christ Jesus, Christ Jesus, our hope.

Then the next verse, to Timothy, my true son in the faith, grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus, our Lord. So right off the bat, you have this emphasis on the office and the function and the purpose. It never diminishes the personality of Jesus, but there is something you lead with.

You could introduce a friend of yours from the military. I could say, this is former Navy Captain John Smith, or I could say, this is John Smith, former Navy Captain. There's a slight difference in what I lead with.

If I'm talking to a military person, I'll probably lead with their rank so that they understand that there's an immediate basis for commonality and shared experience. Or I can say, this is John Smith, former Navy Captain. This tells you something about him in terms of background.

It doesn't change either one of his identities, but one is a little more important at the outset than the other. So in terms of the immediate emphasis of this term, if you go on in 1 Timothy 1 to verse 12, Paul says, I thank Christ Jesus, our Lord. Many times you see it's like a divine chiasm.

You have his office, his name, and then his lordship combined. And the humanity of Christ is encircled by his divine commission and his divine authority. Lord is divine authority.

God has made him both Lord, and I don't see the term Lord as immediately conferring divinity. I think it is the conferring of divine authority. The blind man says, Lord, who is he that I may worship him? He doesn't know yet that he is the Lord in the term of respect.

I know you have authority. Who is he that I may thank him, worship him, and so on? And he uses the term Lord. But there is authority there.

And the blind man, even before he knows Jesus' identity, knows that he has divine authority. He tells the assembled religious leaders, this man has to be from God. Who's ever heard of anybody but God healing the blind? So it is authority.

So Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, is divine authority, divine mission accomplished, Savior. Jesus is his humanity, and Christ is his anointed office and function. And because he is the Christ, he is the son of David, he is the future millennial king.

So there are importances in all of this. So now we could belabor that, but it's a real interesting study. I did like two whole pages of just looking these up.

And when you go back and check the passages, there are great nuances in each. But I'll let you follow that up as you find it interesting. But back to 2 Timothy now.

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus. And because he says this twice in the same verse, within the space of a few words, that's why we're looking at it closely. Christ Jesus.

Remember, this is Paul at sunset. This is taps. This is the end of the day.

They're bringing down the colors. He's transferring the mission, the exhortation to

Timothy. And he says, look, you're a part of an organized effort that is divinely ordained, carries divine authority, is greater than any of our personalities.

That's what Christ Jesus understood, that he was Messiah first and Jesus second in those areas and in that context. Other areas, he was Jesus first and Christ second. But this is Paul appealing to Timothy's sense of understanding of what it is to be a good soldier of Jesus Christ and to fight the good fight of faith.

So it's Christ Jesus by the will of God, according to the promise of life, which is in Christ Jesus to Timothy, a beloved son. Paul refers to Timothy as his son in first Timothy. He refers to Titus as his son in Titus.

And this is a wonderful reminder that to have a child is a wonderful thing in the physical realm. But as the family of God and having brothers and sisters in Christ, those who are older or older in the faith can also have a child of the faith that is just as beloved, just as important, prayed over, thought about, many appeals and intercessions made to the throne for someone who is close that may or may not be a blood relative, because we have connections in our spiritual life that are transcendent of quote unquote accidents of birth or of relationship. So this is an expression of affection.

It is also another expression of Paul recognizing that as fathers bequeath an inheritance to their son, Paul, he can't give apostleship to Timothy, but he can give the communication opportunity to his sons, Timothy and Titus in the faith, a beloved son, a dear son. He's known him since he was a boy. This is going to be a couple of decades by now.

And he's been a partner in ministry and has undergone hardships with Paul and has done Paul's bidding and has stuck to it, hasn't given up, hasn't let himself be intimidated by his youth and so on. Then he says, grace, mercy and peace from God, the father and Christ Jesus, our Lord, God, the father. Notice father is the authority figure in a family and Christ Jesus, our Lord.

Now you have that bracket of Christ and Lord. It could be Lord Jesus Christ or Christ Jesus, our Lord. By phrasing it this way, he never says there's connections here between the possessives.

It's not our Christ Jesus, our Messiah. It's he's our Lord, our Lord, our Savior. You'll see the possessive used with Lord and or Savior, our Lord and Savior or either one of those, but it's never our Christ.

We just take these things for granted. We don't even note it, but he's not our Christ. He's not our Messiah.

We're not an expansion of Israel. And these points become important in other areas. Notice the order, grace, mercy, and peace.

You can look throughout Paul's letters and his initial greetings, and they're always in this order. Sometimes it's grace and peace. Here, mercy is in the middle, but there is an assigned order.

It's never mercy, grace, and peace. It's not peace and grace. Why? There is a logical flow.

Everything we have begins with God's grace. Paul always leads with grace, charis, which is favor. Sometimes it is translated thanks, but it doesn't always work in that case.

But it begins with the idea of favor. You may have heard that, you know, unmerited favor. Unmerited is kind of a read-in, but it is favor.

You can do a word study on charis in your Strong's Lexicon. It's fascinating to see that charin is grace in the noun charis. I think it's got two different listings in Strong's, but if you look up the passages, it's fascinating to see that it begins with God's favor toward us, and that favor expresses itself in mercy.

And because of the received expression of God's mercy, we have peace. Begins with grace, it extends through mercy, and results in peace. And they're always in that order.

Finally, the idea here, which we'll see when we come back from the break, is Paul's expression of this grace in Christ Jesus occurs at the beginning and the end of every one of his letters. Every single letter begins and ends with grace. We'll take a quick look at those passages when we come back from the break.

But grace is the beginning. Grace is the starting point. If we want mercy and if we want peace, we've got to work our way back up the chain.

If we don't have peace, we need to go back and find out where we missed out on the mercy, and recognize that the mercy is sourced in God's grace. We'll see more of that when we come back.