



Sermon – 03/26/2017

1 Timothy 1:1 – 2

2 Timothy 1:5

John 14:27

So if you're visiting with us my agenda is to take a book of the Bible and walk through it from beginning to end. So we're starting a new book today: 1 Timothy. So slide over there. I trust you have your Bibles. We're going to walk through the first two verses.

Now there are probably some moms who came in here today. You're got a son particularly and there are two ways to be a single mom. You can be a single mom, that is, you don't have a husband. You can be a single mom spiritually and you've got a son that struggles with you bringing him to church. Today may have been the normal fight. Even if your husband's not antagonistic to what you do, your son looked at you today and said, "Come on, mom, dad's home, he's fishing, he's doing something, I want to be with dad. I don't want to go to church." And you got here and you're struggling with the fact that you wonder if you're going to be able to transfer your faith. You love Jesus, you believe the scripture, and you're just wondering to yourself, "Am I going to be able to take what I believe and bring it into a child whose father is distinct from what I believe, whether he's in the home or not in the home, and so I battle this and I've got a little boy that idolizes his dad. Am I going to be able to bring what I believe about Jesus Christ and my passion for him and my love for him and what I just sang in worship to his heart where it impacts his life and changes his destiny? Am I going to be able to do that?" And there's some of you that arrived this morning, you are troubled, you are struggling, you are hurting because that is a tough thing you face. Every time we open this book I want this to be, every time you hear the word Timothy, every time we go to this book, every time we talk about 1 Timothy I want it to be the ultimate encouragement to you that absolutely you can transfer your faith no matter what. He writes, now you say in first, but listen to what he says in 2 Timothy. He says:

⁵I remember your unhypocritical faith which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and I'm persuaded it is in you.

Now listen to who's writing. 1 Timothy:

¹Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus according to the commandment of God our Savior and Jesus Christ our hope, ²To Timothy, my genuine son in faith:

Listen you've got the toughest apostle in the world here. As a matter of fact when he picks Timothy to go with him on the missionary trips, it's right after the massive fight with his best friend, Barnabas. They meet, as a matter of fact, they said, "Look we've started, we have this first missionary journey, let's go back and figure out how those churches are." And so they meet and when they meet, Barnabas pulls up with John Mark who was on the first missionary journey but quit. Paul looks at Barnabas, his best friend, they have worked together for years. As a matter of fact Barnabas is the whole reason the church accepted Paul. They were scared to death of him. Barnabas is the one that pulled him in. They've been best friends and now they meet and Paul, who writes this book, looks at Barnabas and says, "You're nuts. We're not bringing John Mark." And Barnabas says, "Oh yes we are. I think he needs another chance." And Paul says, "Oh no I don't." And finally they come to a place where Barnabas says, "Look he doesn't go, I don't go." And Paul said, "Fine." So they split. He lost his best friend. That's how tough this apostle is that's writing this book. And he writes and he says, "Timothy, you are a genuine son in the faith." He actually picked Timothy moments after this big debacle between him and Barnabas because he saw something in Timothy. If he's seen any weakness, any lacking of faith, he never would have picked Timothy, but he does because he sees a genuine young man whose mother, according to the book of Acts, is married to a Greek, and the whole euphemistic concept is this guy has nothing to do with Jesus. She, and remember something, she transferred her faith to her son in a single spiritual mother home. She transferred her faith to him so deeply that the toughest apostle in the land saw it, believed in it, and chose it. And she did it in a day when it wasn't like today. Christianity isn't considered a cult in this country. But it was a cult here. They were called cannibals because they ate the flesh and drank the blood of Jesus. They were atheists because they believed in only one God when everybody else believed in plurality of gods. So she took her faith in a godless home with a man that was in the home but was not spiritual and somehow she transferred her faith to a son that was such a deep faith that the toughest apostle in the land hand picked him and put him in Ephesus and said, "Pastor that church." Every time we open this book, if you're that kind of mom and you are struggling today and you are either a single mom or you're a single spiritual mom, I want you to understand. Every time we open this book you've got a guy whose mom transferred her faith in the harshest environment possible. So we're going to walk out of here trusting that the same God that took Eunice's faith and put it in her son is the same God that's still alive, still on the throne and he will take your faith and put it in your child. So we're going to lock that down. OK. So here's what he says:

[Paul, apostle to Timothy, my genuine son in the faith:](#)

Now watch this:

[Grace, mercy, peace from God our Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.](#)

He says, "I want you to have three things and I believe you do have them." First thing he says is you have grace. Now and he says I want you to continue in that grace. Now remember what did we talk about last Sunday? Grace is not some ephemeral feeling God has. It's the act of Jesus Christ from his birth to his death. He took on flesh, quit utilizing, he was still fully God, fully man, that's who he was, but he lived as a man so that he could be tempted to sin and so that he

could die on the cross for our sins. And in dying on the cross and being resurrected and in the resurrection we know he died for our sins not his own or he wouldn't have come out of the grave. And now he's gone back and he's waiting to come back. So we know our grace is rooted in the shed blood of Jesus Christ. It's an act that brings that grace. So what you want, if you're not a believer, is you want the gift of grace in your life where the Holy Spirit speaks to you and says to you, "It's not who you are or what you do. It's who Jesus is and what He did that allows you to be forgiven." Your forgiveness and your relationship with God is based on His act; who he is, fully God/fully man, and that he died on the cross for your sins and shed his blood. There's the gift of grace. And when your, when the Holy Spirit comes to you and breaths that into your soul and your faith joins with what the Holy Spirit tells you, then the gift of grace comes in to your life. Now so why does he say to him? He's already got the gift of grace or he never would have put him as pastor at Ephesus. So why does he say, "You have the gift of grace, but now I want grace to come to you"? Now I want you to listen to me carefully. OK. If you don't know Jesus Christ you want the gift of grace that you believe what he tells you, that it's not who you are or what you do, because there's nothing you can do to fix who you are. You're in trouble and you can't do anything to fix it. It's what He did and who He is and so when you believe that and you put your faith in that then you get the gift of grace. God cleans up your sin through the blood of Jesus, he drops his Holy Spirit into your life and that Holy Spirit stays with you, He stays with you until the day you die and you go to heaven. Now that's a gift of grace.

As a believer, now I'm going to be real careful with what I say today, as a believer it's not the gift of grace you want, it's the purpose of grace. And what's the distinction? Here it is. As a Christian you're still going to sin. OK. You come to Christ you're still going to fail. You're going to get here and do some things. And then finally the character of God and you need his grace and the great thing is his grace is from the moment you have the gift all the way until the day you die. So it doesn't matter what you do from now on; you are saved by the blood of Jesus Christ.

Now, but now I want the purpose of grace which is I get out here and I step into a sin and I go, "God I'm sorry." His grace, right, forgives me, but now here's what I want and I want to be careful in how I say this. I want you to listen to me carefully. Now I want the purpose of grace and that's this. Whatever I had to be forgiven for I need to step away from. That's the purpose of grace. The gift of grace is everything he did on the cross, I don't do anything. I just believe and accept. But the purpose of grace now is that when I step out here and he's willing to forgive me, if I need forgiveness then by definition I need to step away from whatever he had to forgive me for. Now there's the purpose. And that's what he wants for Timothy. Timothy makes a mistake as a pastor, he wants Timothy to be able to be forgiven and to step back from what he was forgiven for. So we want the gift and once we have the gift now we want to live in the purpose. So he says, "Grace to you. I want that for you and I believe it's yours." Then he says: mercy. And a lot of times you think that's interchangeable and sometimes it is. But generally when they're together like this, it's pretty clear both the Greek word *charis* for grace means, it references your sin, but the Greek word *éleos*, mercy, references, now listen, the consequences that come from your sin. No matter what you and I do, we step out here, we're forgiven, but there are consequences, and those consequences are intense or shallow depending on the depth of what we've done. But those consequences his mercy covers when I step back. Now if you're a

parent, right, Eunice, his mother, now I know we tend to just look at the Bible and think all these people were really spiritual. Eunice was like the rest of us. There are days you love your children and days you're not sure. And as parents we fail. There is no parent and even if mom and dad are both spiritual, you both love Jesus, there are not days that you don't fail. And it's hard raising kids. I think I've shared this story. I come home one time in Midland and I'm walking in the front door and I open the front door and Peggy is standing there with both kids with, and only a man that's married will understand this statement, the look. Now if you're a man and you see that look here's the first, it's like Nehemiah in the Old Testament, here's the first thing you pray, "Please, God, don't let this be my fault." So I pray that prayer and I'm still getting the look and she says, "We are raising a juvenile delinquent." Of course you want to tread carefully at this point, right, as a husband. Baby he's four. We may still have time. She lets go of the kids and she looks at me and in this day of no cell phone she looks at me and she goes, "I'm going to the mall and I'll come home when I want to." "Yes ma'am." And then I look at Stephen and I go, "What are you doing? You are killing me!" Now when you have those moments as a parent I guarantee you you're not going to do the James Dobson thing. OK. There are days you're going to mess up. I mean Dobson all these child guys will tell you, "Oh you need to rationalize with children." No. There are times when you look at them and say, "I'll tell you why you do it, boy, because I told you to!" There are days you don't do it right. I guarantee there were days Eunice didn't do it right. So if she failed how did her faith transfer to her child? Because God's mercy overruled it. I remember we had, my wife and I, failed in the life of Stephen in a particular way so when he was older we asked him one day, we said, "You know, do you remember when this happened?" Because it was kind of one of those big moments and he looked at us and he said, "You know I don't remember at all when that happened." I believe with every fiber of my being that's the mercy of God. I'm going to make some mistakes. You're going to make some mistakes. So I want the purpose of grace, but when I step back in the purpose of grace and I go, "I'm going to get away from what I needed to be forgiven for." Even when I do that, there's still consequences but here's the great thing, God's mercy handles those consequences. And here's what's really great. He handles those consequences even when you don't need grace but you do need mercy. There are times when consequences come into your life because of someone else's sin, not because of your own.

I called a lady this week and I said, "Can I share you and your husband's story without using your name?" She didn't even bat an eye. She said, "Absolutely you can. As a matter of fact we still talk about what happened." Twenty years ago I had a young man and his wife come into my office and sat down and came out that she was involved with another man. But he said, "Look we're both Christians. I'm willing to forgive her. I'm willing to forgive her and make this thing work again." So they tried. They were back in my office about a month later. She'd been with another guy and she said, "I'm gone. I don't like this guy, I don't want to be home with him, I'm not doing this, I'm gone." So he's crushed. He is wounded in need of the mercy of God by someone else's sin. He doesn't need grace because he didn't do anything wrong. But he needs God's mercy. And so he's left just dying. Literally within about two months a lady comes into my office with her husband and come to find out that he, she came home one night and found another woman in the house. He's involved with another lady. She says, "I'll forgive him. Let's make this work." So they try. He comes back and says, "I'm gone. I don't love you. I don't want to be here. I'm gone." And he goes off with the other lady leaving her with two little girls. She doesn't need the grace of God because she's not the one that messed up. But she does

need his mercy because she's caught out there. And I'm telling you when you get to these places and you're just devastated because of somebody else's sin, you are struggling. You wonder where in the world God is. But his mercy is always on its way. Within a few months they met each other. Began to date and actually began to get engaged, but then the guys said, "Look I need to wait a little while. I want to make sure" now listen to this guy's heart "I want to make sure I will love your daughters, not like a step-dad, but like a dad." He comes to her and says, I can do that. They marry. Twenty years later they're in this room today. But if you meet them you're just going to see a couple, I would say young, they're younger compared to me, a couple, handsome, enjoying each other, laughing on the way out, you have no idea what they've been through. But the mercy of God took two wounded people, brought them together, healed them, and they have a marriage today that absolutely glorifies Jesus Christ because his mercy extends to us even when we don't need his grace.

So what does that mean? Grace, mercy, peace. One of my top verses in all the scripture. I want you to listen to this. John 14:27. Listen, Jesus on the way to Gethsemane with His disciples:

[27I leave you peace; I give you my peace. Not like the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be afraid.](#)

You know what his peace is? It is, worlds peace is the idea that everything's good, I have money in the bank, I'm healthy, my kids are good, my wife's good, we have a good job, we're successful; that's the world's idea of peace. It is not God's idea of peace. You're going to have some tough times in this world. But if his grace and his mercy have you, it doesn't matter what you face, his peace, you can live in peace that God, in spite of what you face, has your back. Hardest thing to do as a pastor is bury a child. I buried a little four-year-old girl yesterday who drowned at Disney World last week. Boy that is a tough time. That family did nothing wrong. They didn't drown their daughter so they don't need grace. But they are standing in need of mercy. But they can be assured of peace because God's mercy extends to us even when it's not our fault. So even if it's my fault and I step away from what he forgave me for and I have these consequences out here, his mercy overrules those consequences. When it's not my fault his mercy overrules those consequences. And so I can be at peace. That's his prayer for Timothy because he knows you're fixing to pastor people, hardest job in the world, I've called you to that, placed you there, and I want you to be sure of something. No matter what you face, no matter what comes your way, whether you need my grace or you need my mercy, whether it's your fault or not your fault, here's what God basically says to him. I have your back. And it's not Paul that has his back. What did we sing today? The God of angel armies is always at our side. The Creator of everything you see, no matter what you face in this world, every day if the gift of grace is true in your life, every day He has your back and He is bigger than any consequence you will ever face. Your fault or anybody else's fault. We serve and love and adore and worship a tremendously great God!

Let's pray.

Father again thank you for who you are. Father let Timothy remind every mom in here, every dad, that no matter how much we fail, no matter how much we struggle, no matter what happens to our kids' lives, you can transfer that faith. That it's really on you not on us. And Father thank

you no matter what we need, whether it's forgiveness or mercy, you're there. We cannot praise you enough for that. In Jesus Christ name