

DEAR TIMOTHY...

AN 8 WEEK SERIES IN THE BOOK OF 2 TIMOTHY

Connect group questions

2 Timothy 1: 9-18 – Dear Timothy... Jesus has destroyed death

1. Why do people fear death? Why do we hide it away? Why do some people insist that every effort be made to save their loved ones, when it is obvious, they are heading for death? Why the move to call funerals, 'celebration of life'?

"...WHO SAVED US AND CALLED US TO A HOLY LIFE"

2. What are we saved *from*, and what are we saved *for*?
3. How have you contributed to your rescue?
4. If you had been rescued from certain death by a life saver (or some other rescuer), how do you think you'd react toward the rescuer and their organisation?
5. Does our rescue from death by Jesus not seem as real as the situation described in the verse above? Is that why we aren't as motivated to tell our story and defend our rescuer as you might expect?

"...WHO HAS DESTROYED DEATH"

6. Why is death described as an enemy? (Read 1 Corinthians 15:20-26)
7. Because Jesus has destroyed death, what will happen when we die physically?
8. What is the significance of this grace having been given to us 'before the beginning of time'?

"...WHO IS ABLE TO GUARD"

Suffering for the gospel is no cause for shame for Paul, because he is convinced that God is able to guard what he's entrusted to him. Because he trusted God with his life, he didn't consider his life to be at risk. That meant in turn, he was not ashamed of the gospel or the consequences of proclaiming the gospel.

9. If confronted with the real possibility of dying for Jesus, would you remain strong to the end – because you are convinced he is able to guard what you've entrusted to him?
10. If the answer to '9' is 'yes', why do we fret much **smaller** consequences of standing up for Jesus?

"GUARD THE GOOD DEPOSIT"

11. Why does the gospel still require 'guarding' today?
12. How are we to go about doing that? What resources does Paul commend to us?

THE VERSES MARK DIDN'T COVER (vv15-18)

13. Paul is in Rome in prison or under house arrest. What must have been life to feel deserted by everyone?
14. What can we learn and put into practice from Onesiphorus?

Anything new to you in this passage? Or something that came home to you in a new way?

Pray that as we reflect again on what we have been saved from and saved for, we will revel in what God has done for us. Pray that we will have increasingly clarity and joy about Jesus having destroyed death. Pray that as a result, we might realise that our lives are not at risk because God is able to guard what we have entrusted to him. And pray that we will be faithful in guarding the gospel in this our day.

Date: 12th May 2019
Services: 730, 930 Tewanin and Peregian
Series: Dear Timothy
Title: ... Jesus has destroyed death...
Passage: 2 Timothy 1:9-18
Outline:

1. "...saved us and called us to a holy life"
 2. "...who has destroyed death"
 3. "...he is able to guard"
 4. "...guard the good deposit"
-

INTRODUCTION

- last Sunday's first passage from 2 Timothy, finished with an **invitation**...
 - An invitation we don't receive every **day**...
 - not invitation an to **drinks** out or a **meal** or a **stroll** along the **beach**...
 - ...but an invitation to join Paul in **suffering** for the **gospel**...
 - A call not to be **ashamed** of the gospel – or **shy** about the gospel – or **embarrassed** about the gospel...
 - ... but **rather**... up **front** about the gospel – clear about the gospel – confident about the gospel... no **matter** the **consequences**...
 - ...even if those consequences mean **persecution**...
 - Or **arrest**...
 - Or even if standing up for the gospel puts you at risk of being **blown up**...
 - Even if *not* being ashamed of the gospel / costs you your **life**. //
 - In our nation at this time – you will probably face precisely **none** of those extreme consequences... but you may face being **marginalised**, **ostracised**... **ridiculed**... **ignored**... or losing your **rugby contract**...
 - so let's take a moment to ask 'why'?
 - Why is the gospel **worth** putting your **life** on the line – your **job** on the line – your **reputation** on the line – your **friendships** on the line?
 - What is so **good** about the **good news** that makes it sufficiently significant to risk the more **extreme** outcomes – or some of those **lesser** ones?
 - So Paul lays it out for Timothy (and for us) again... to make sure we know what the **gospel** is all **about** // and *why* it's worth **suffering** for...
 - So here is where we are heading this morning... here are some of the some key phrases from the passage which I want to explore with you:
 1. "...who saved us and called us to a holy life"
 2. "...who has destroyed death"
 3. "...who is able to guard"
 4. "...guard the good deposit"
 - first
1. "...WHO SAVED US AND CALLED US TO A HOLY LIFE"
- We're going to pick up the passage at v8b... and what I want you to note is that in the Greek, this is one long sentence... *Rather, join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God WHO has saved us and called us to a holy life*...
 - **There's the gospel!** //
 - It is about what **God** has **done**... **magnificently** – **decisively** – **wonderfully**... in saving us and reorientating our lives...

- **Saved** us from the **impact** of our own **rebellion**...
- Saved us from **consequences** of living **independently** from **him**...
- Saved us from **death** – saved us from being **separated** from **him**...
- That rescue, as you know, cost Jesus his life.
- The weight of our **independence** – our **rebellion** – Jesus took on his **shoulders**...
- So he **saved** us, by taking our **place**... //
- And how **wonderful** that he's called us from a life lived for **US** – a life lived for **greed** or **materialism** – or **hedonism** or a life of **floundering** around in the **dark**... or a life lived in **ignorance** and **arrogance**... / to a **holy life**...
- A 'holy life' is a life **separated** out from those around us because the whole orientation of our lives is **away** from **ourselves** and is centred instead around **God** and everything that is **precious** and **important** to **him**...
- We have been lifted to a **higher calling**...
- We've been pulled from the **mud** and the **mire** – and brought into a **pristine white** and **clean** whole **new world**... we've been brought from **death** to **life**, from **darkness** to **light**... from being **blind** to where we now **see**...! ///
- I could almost guarantee that if you were pulled out of the **surf** by a **life saver**, you'd spend the rest of your life supporting the **individual** who saved you and the **lifesaving association**... and you'd happily **tell the story** and spread the **news** about how **brilliant** this was...
- Or if the Flying Doctor service saved your life when you were **minutes** away from **death** – you'd stand up for and **defend** the **flying doctor service**... no matter **what**
- Or if the **RACQ** life flight helicopter rescued you... the same would be the case... /
- And if **Jesus** has rescued you from **death** and brought you to **life**... you will spend the **rest** of your **life** – **defending** him – **sharing** the **story** – telling **others**...! //
- And just as when the surf life saver comes over the next huge wave and drags you on to her board... or the helicopter winches you to safety – the rescue is **NONE** of your work and **ALL** of **theirs**... /
- So too is **our** rescue, all of **God's** doing – and – **none** of **ours**... /
- And just in case you were in any doubt about that, Paul adds – *not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace.*
- There is something **perverse** in us which always wants to turn the gospel back into something **WE DO**... so we end up talking about **my faith**, **my works**, **my service**, **my giving**, **my prayers**...
- Paul will have **none** of it...
- It's **God's** work... **only** because of his **mercy** - he **saved** us and called us to a holy life... //
- ...but there's **more**...

2. ...WHO HAS DESTROYED DEATH

- Let's pick up the text again in v9b... he's been talking about being saved through God's grace and he adds - *This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time,¹⁰ but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Saviour, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.*
- Now isn't that **fascinating**...
- There are many people today working out how they can live longer...
- People will work out at the **gym**... will modify their **diet**... will do **pilates**, **yoga**, **meditation**... take all the right **supplements**...
- ...some will even invest in **cryogenic** technology so when they die they can be **frozen** until such times as someone can work out how to bring them back and fix whatever it is that took them **out**...

- For many people who end up in hospital – their **families** – along with **doctors** – want to do **anything** they can to prolong life...
- So they will do **scans** and MRIs and more **blood** tests... to keep their loved ones alive **at all costs**...
- people **fear** death...
- The **process** of death
- And/or the unknown of what is on the other **side** of **death**
- ...so they must do everything to ward **off** death - to put **off** the **inevitable**...
- And here comes the gospel which says '**death has been destroyed**' and '**life and immortality**' have been brought to **light**... //
- We had a very big funeral at Sunshine Beach during the week – over 300 people – 200 inside – 100 outside...
- It was very sad... a lady who was part of our 730am service when she was well enough... died of Ovarian cancer – first diagnosed 7 years ago...
- No one likes **death**! Death **separates**... it's **final** – there's no way **back**... those here who have lost loved ones – know the pain all too **well**...
- Even the **Bible** describes it as an **enemy**... the **last** and final **enemy**...
- But friends – Jesus has **destroyed it!** He's **destroyed it!**
- **Cancelled** it
- **Overcome** it
- So Jesus said – (opening words of the funeral) I am the **resurrection** and the **life**... the one who believes in me will **live** even though the **die** and the one who lives believing in **me**, will **never die!**
- The Apostle Paul can **ridicule** death – saying – ha! – **where** O death is your **victory?** – **where** O death is your **sting?**
- Death is **dead!!** // Allow that to **sink in!**
- **That** is why the Gospel is good **news!** //
- And will you please notice that God's salvation plan wasn't plan "**B**"?
- This grace was given us in Christ Jesus "**before the beginning of time**..."
- His rescue was all part of his plan before **time** – to show his great **glory** and magnificent **mercy**...
- And those before-time plans... all came to light when Jesus turned **up**...
- and note Jesus didn't turn up so we could have a **better life**...
- he turned up to destroy **death**...
- Easter morning... the tomb was **empty** because Jesus had destroyed **death**.... Evil and death met Jesus in almighty battle – and Jesus **won!!**
- ...and because he **destroyed death** – life and immortality has been **brought to light**...!
- And to those who say – Mark – that's the last thing I'd want – to live forever – than let me tell you that's because you don't have a clear picture of what it will mean to live without the evil and suffering and injustices of this world... you don't have a clear picture of what your new perfect body, built to last **eternity** will be **like**... /
- I visited someone in hospital this week who has been given three months to live, and because she trusts **Jesus**, she's **excited** to go exploring all he has in store for her...
- ...that's what happens when you understand that Jesus has destroyed **death** and brought **life** and immortality to **light!!** /
- What is there to be **embarrassed** about this??
- This is **brilliant** isn't it??

- We have nothing to **apologise** for in the gospel... its **glorious, life-saving, life-giving** news... and it's for everyone who wants it!! //
- ...and if we should **suffer** for **promoting** a God who **saved us** and called us to a **holy life**... a God who has destroyed that great enemy **death** and brought immortality to **light** – then **so be it!!** //
- Now note this – because Jesus has destroyed death, then even if our life is put at **risk**..., we **trust God**...

3. ...WHO IS ABLE TO GUARD

- ...what we've **entrusted** to **him**....
- Back with me to the text – v11 - *And of this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher. ¹² That is why I am suffering as I am. Yet this is no cause for shame, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him until that day.*
- **What** had Paul entrusted to God?
- His **life!!!**
- Jesus laid down his **life** for **Paul**
- In **response**... **Paul** has laid down his life for **Jesus**
- That's what **every** Christian does... as we **deny ourselves**, take up our **cross** and follow **Jesus**... /
- But this is no **problem** to **Paul** – because he “**knows** whom he has **believed**...”
- And because he **knows** whom he has **believed**, he **knows** in **turn**, that he can **trust** God with his **life**...
- We had missionaries connected with Roseville church who worked in a difficult area of Johannesburg. I asked one day 'aren't you concerned for your **safety**?' They answered, 'there's no safer place to **be** than in the **centre** of God's **will**'. Paul would **agree!!**
- If Jesus has destroyed death, than our lives can **never** actually be at **risk**... and laying our **physical** lives on the line by standing **up** for **Jesus** – is no big **deal!!**
- ... surely brothers and sisters, we **too** can say with Paul – I am prepared to suffer for the gospel – because I **know** whom I have **believed** and I am **convinced** that he is able to guard what I have **entrusted** to him until that **day** – that day I go to **meet** him or that day Jesus **returns**...! //
- Well – finally – he **guards** our **life** for **us**... and we

4. GUARD THE GOOD DEPOSIT

- ...for **him!**
- Have a look with me - v13 - *What you heard from me, keep as the pattern of sound teaching, with faith and love in Christ Jesus. ¹⁴ Guard the good deposit that was entrusted to you – guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in us.*
- We entrust him with our **life** which he **guards** for **us**
- He entrusts us with the **gospel**, which **we** guard for **him**.
- the gospel was under **threat** in the 1st century
- Paul's letter to the **Galatians** is about those who want to **add** to the gospel... add religious **rituals** and **rules** and **regulations**...
- The letter to the **Hebrews** is about those who want to **subtract** from the gospel... subtract **Jesus** out of the **picture**...
- Just about every letter in the NT mentions **false teachers**... who want to **twist** and **distort** the gospel to their own **ends**...
- So Timothy is to take what he's heard from **Paul** and **keep** it as a pattern of sound teaching...
- Today there are all sorts of people in various professions who keep **guard** of things...
- Those who superintend **measures** and **weights** so a **kilogram** is always a **kilogram** and a **metre** is always a **metre**...

- Those who even guard **time** so a **minute** is a **minute** and a **year** is a **year**...
- It takes **discipline**... and you have to have a **standard** or a **pattern** to start with – and then compare every *other unit* with that **standard** or **pattern**...
- Paul says to Timothy – make sure you do that with the **gospel**... take what you've heard from me, and make it the **standard** by which you compare **everything else**...
- don't do it **arrogantly** or puffed up with **pride** – do it he says – with **faith** and **love** in **Christ Jesus**...
- -- **guard** the good deposit... with the **help of the Holy Spirit**... /
- Friends – Paul's charge to **Timothy** is **God's** charge to **us**...
- We in our day – **still** have to **guard** the good **deposit** – **yes** – with faith and love in Christ Jesus and **yes** with the help of the Holy Spirit... but **guard** it we **must**...
- And that will mean that we **test** things we **read** or what we **hear** against what we **read here**...!
- ... and if it doesn't add **up** or isn't in accord with what we **read here** – we **must** – call it **out**... we must say – well – that's **NOT** the gospel...!
- Anything that **adds** to the gospel – that is, makes **extra** demands – or **subtracts** from the gospel – that is, if it takes **Jesus away**, or **grace** away from the **gospel** – is **not** the **gospel**...!
- Anything that significantly **changes** the gospel... anything that **grieves God** or breaks his **heart** in here – and yet you hear people say – look – that's **fine** – don't **worry** about **that** – no **problem** – needs to be called **out**!
- I read a quote from a Christian minister the other day on Facebook which said that we can't have **any** confidence that words that are **attributed** to Jesus in the Gospels were actually **said** by **Jesus**...
- ...and when we read stuff like that, we understand why Paul says what he says... because if it's all up for **grabs** – how do we know **any** of it is **true**; and frankly why would you **bother** putting your life on the line if we can't be sure that **anything** Jesus is **quoted** as saying, he actually **said**...!
- No – please join with **me** in **guarding** the **gospel**... in making sure the gospel we read **here** remains the gospel we **trust**, the gospel we **proclaim**... and the gospel we pass on! //

- What's so **good** about the gospel that we'd be prepared to **suffer** for it?
- He **saved us** and called us to a **holy life**...
- He destroyed **death** and brought **life** and **immortality** to **light**...!
- **That's** what is so good about the gospel...
- And would you risk your **life** for this **gospel**...?
- Well – yes – with the certainty that he is able to **guard** our life which we **entrust** to **him**... for we **know** whom we have believed – and he is **good** for his **promises**...
- And this gospel – is worth **preserving** – no **MUST** be preserved in its **entirety** and according to the **pattern** we have right here in our **hands**...
- For as **he** guards our life for **us**, we **must**, guard the **gospel**, for **him**!