

The Holy Spirit – 7 – Timothy:-

The examples we have looked at in this series have all referred to ‘adult conversions’. (Except for the ‘families’ mentioned which may or may not have included children.) However, those among us who have grown up in a committed Christian family may have had no ‘conversion experience’ as such. We turn to Timothy, as a Biblical example, and look to see how the Holy Spirit worked in his life and led him into ministry for the Lord Jesus Christ.

Read 2 Timothy chapter 1, verses 1 – 7

Verses 1 – 2:- The apostle Paul is writing a personal letter to his younger assistant in ministry. The relationship between them has been that of ‘father’ – taking responsibility for his ‘child’ - and Timothy the ‘child’ - following and learning from his ‘father’s’ instruction and example. This letter contains further encouragement and instructions for the young man.

Verses 3 – 5:- These verses are a thanksgiving for Timothy’s faith. He was the son of a mixed marriage. In Acts chapter 16, verse 1 we read that his mother was “*a Jewish woman who was a believer*”. Here in 2 Timothy we also read that his grandmother Lois was the first in the family to come to faith. Timothy then was brought up by his mother as a Christian believer although his father was a Greek. We have no record of him ‘coming to faith’ and as with many others we understand that the Holy Spirit was working in his life from his birth (see below).

Verses 6 – 7:- The receiving of the gifts of the Holy Spirit through the laying on of hands is referred to on a number of occasions in the Book of Acts and in the Epistles e.g. Acts chapter 8, verses 14 – 17 and Acts chapter 9, verses 17 – 18. It is the power of the Holy Spirit which enables us to testify to the love of God in Christ Jesus.

The need for the handing on of faith from parents to children is found throughout scripture. In **Deuteronomy chapter 6, verses 4 – 9** we have the ancient command for the children of God (the Shemah). Note that this says that “*you shall teach them diligently to your children . . .*” It was expected that children would be brought up in the faith of their parents. For Christians this means the sharing of the love of the Lord Jesus Christ with our children throughout their lives. We have already seen that when the jailer at Philippi was baptised it was “*with all his family*”.

In the foreknowledge of God there are those who are dedicated to him from the beginning – see Jeremiah chapter 1, verses 4 – 5 and Psalm 139, verses 13 – 16. Remember there are also the words of the Lord Jesus Christ himself – John chapter 15, verse 16 “*You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit . . .*”

Whether we have a ‘conversion experience’ or have been baptised as infants and come to faith through our upbringing, we do at some point need to declare our belief in the Lord Jesus Christ for ourselves!

As we are looking at the letter of Paul to Timothy here is an early example of a Christian creed -

*He was revealed in the flesh,
He was vindicated in the spirit,
He was seen by angels,
He was proclaimed among the nations,
He was believed on in the world,
He was taken up in glory*

*If we have died with Him,
we shall also live with Him;
If we are steadfast,
we shall also reign with Him;
If we disown Him, He will also disown us;
If we are faithless, He remains faithful;
for He cannot deny Himself.*

1 Timothy chapter 3, verse 16

and

2 Timothy chapter 2, verses 11 - 13