

## What Can We Trust?

By: Justin Witt

Paul's instructions to Timothy in 2 Timothy 3:14:

*"But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them;"*

Of whom did Timothy learn the things that he knew? To answer that question, perhaps it would be good to ensure that we know who Timothy is. Our first mention of Timothy (or Timotheus in some places in the KJV) is in Acts 16:1. We learn that he was the son of a certain woman which was a Jewess, and believed, we also learn his father was a Greek. In fact we get a little more detail in 2 Timothy 1:5 where we learn that his grandmother was Lois and his mother was Eunice and they had such genuine faith, a faith which Paul also attributes to Timothy. It is very likely that his mother and grandmother had a hand in what Timothy learned.

We also learn in Acts 16:2 that Timothy was well reported of by the brethren at Lystra and Iconium. I would say that it is likely that he learned something from these brethren as well.

There are numerous passages that show that Timothy traveled with Paul. Acts 19:22 says that Timothy ministered to Paul. He is called Paul's workfellow in Romans 16:21. He is called Paul's son in numerous passages as well as faithful in the Lord (1 Cor 4:17 for instance). He works the work of the Lord as Paul does (1 Cor 16:10). I would say that it is also very likely that he learned much from Paul as well. Paul had such confidence in Timothy that Paul sent Timothy to the brethren in Phillipi and Thessalonica (Phil. 2:19 & 1 Thes. 3:2). And in 1 Timothy 1:3 he mentions that Timothy is abiding in Ephesus to help the brethren there.

Clearly Timothy has great faith and knowledge, but the question still stands, Paul told him to be confident in the things that he had learned knowing of whom he had learned them. Who did Timothy learn these things from? Is Paul telling him to be confident because he had learned from his mother and grandmother because they were faithful? Is Paul telling him to be confident because he had learned from the brethren in Lystra and Iconium? Is Paul telling him to be confident because he had learned from Paul?

For that answer let us continue on where Paul left off (2 Timothy 3:15).

*"and that from a child thou hast know the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus"*

In fact it is only in part that Timothy could trust what he had been taught by his mother and his grandmother or other brethren or even Paul himself. Paul is not, in fact, telling Timothy to trust in what anyone told him. Paul is telling Timothy to trust in what he had learned from the holy scriptures since he had been a child and to trust in his faith in Jesus Christ. His mother and grandmother had great faith and surely would have taught only that to Timothy, which is why he could also be confident knowing whom he had learned from. The same, I am sure, could be said of anyone that Timothy might have learned from. But the fact is that Timothy wasn't told to trust in their teachings because they were

family or brethren or friends. He was only to trust in their teachings in that they taught him the holy scriptures.

For any of us, we may have faithful parents or grandparents or friends, or we may not. But regardless of how faithful we consider family members or friends or preachers or elders, we are only to trust in their teachings in as much as they are solely from the scriptures.

There are no creeds or doctrines that Timothy was to learn from, there was no seminary school that was required for him or Silas or Titus or any of the others that taught with the apostles. All that has ever been necessary to go out and teach are the scriptures that we have been given and faith in Jesus Christ. I pray that none of us ever teach when we are missing either of those two things.

2 Timothy 3:16-17

*“All scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”*