

May 16, 2021 -

II Timothy 1:13-21 -

“Facing the Challenge of Loyalty”

Introduction:

Last Sunday NASCAR racer Martin Truex Jr. won at Darlington Raceway, he led 248 of the 293 laps as he drove to victory in the Goodyear 400. He bagged his third win of the 2021 season. Martin was followed up in second place by Kyle Larson and third by Kyle Busch.

Did you know that in NASCAR racing, every car has a sponsor? Sponsors are the people who supply the racer with the resources to run the race. Often they'll supply the car, the engine, the tires, and the funding for the pit crew. They are the people that make it possible for the driver to win the race. Do you know who the sponsor of any given driver is? That's right: their names are plastered all over the race car. The sponsor is proud of that car. The NASCAR driver has given his allegiance to his sponsor. He believes in and has a loyalty to the company that invested in him.

Folks, do you realize that like NASCAR, God asks, “Are you willing to place your loyalty with me?”. Do you believe in me? Are you willing to allow me to own you and invest in your life? We should all believe in Him and give sincere loyalty to Him. “Loyalty means nothing, unless it has at its heart the absolute principle of sacrifice.”

As we read Paul's last written words, we see no wavering, no doubt in his mind about his faith and loyalty to Christ. We see only a profound, unshakeable confidence and boldness. Facing the challenge of loyalty we must concentrate on whom we believe, commit ourselves to God's Word, and anticipate life's disappointments appreciating the Loyalty of faithful ministers.

I Be Loyal to What You Believe (1:-12).

1. Paul begins this section: *For the which cause I also suffer these things* (1:12a). The phrase suffer these things refers to Paul's imprisonment, the abandonment by most of his friends, and his imminent execution. We cannot be loyal if we are ashamed of Christ and those that serve him. Why is Paul relentless in his preaching and teaching rather than becoming discouraged?

2. Paul is courageous to the end because he could say, “I know WHOM I have believed, not WHAT I have believed. Being a Christian is not about joining a particular church or denomination or affiliation it is about receiving Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Christianity is not a religion; it is a relationship with Jesus Christ. Paul's confidence or certainty was not in a book or a theology but in Jesus Christ as God's only Son. There is no doubting in his mind.

3. Paul continues: **and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day** (1:12c). This is a second reason that explains Paul's boldness. Paul gave Jesus his life, and knew Jesus was fully able to keep it! The word “able” means “powerful enough.” Paul has committed his life and eternal destiny to the Lord Jesus, and he believes both are in good hands until that day when Christ returns. Always remember if He began a good work in you he will finish it too. Note the Apostle Paul wrote in I Corinthians 2:9, “**But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for**

them that love him.

We can have that same assurance because of Jesus promise in John 10:28. **And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.** We have His word on it. The reason people don't have the courage of their convictions is because they don't have the convictions to start with.

II Commit Yourselves to God's Word (1:13-14).

1. Paul puts it like this: *Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me* (1:13a). The phrase "hold fast" means to hold on to. Paul wants Timothy to hold on to his teachings, which now make up almost half of the New Testament, using them as a "form" or pattern. This is an important measure for any pastor; he must hold fast the pattern of sound words. The primary measure should not be humor or excitement or personality or charisma or even evangelistic interest. Some who claim an evangelistic heart let go of the pattern of sound words and show themselves to be unfaithful to their Lord and their calling.

In Greek this is one word "hypotypōsis" meaning an example or pattern for one own teaching. The context in which this teaching is to be done is with faith and love that is in Christ Jesus. Remember, Paul said the best of teaching without love in 1 Corinthians 13:1 is like sounding braze and a tinkling cymbal. Faith and love is important if one is going to be loyal and committed.

2. Paul also exhorts young Timothy: That "good thing" this refers to the Gospel and the apostles' teachings and the phrase "which was committed unto thee" means a deposit, a trust or a thing consigned to one's faithful keeping. The word "keep" involves protecting against loss, destruction, or change-literally to preserve in-tact. Folks, we must be faithful to keep the truth of God's Word that has now been committed to us. We live in a time where faithfulness is only expected so long as it serves our own interests. When it stops being in our immediate benefit to be faithful, many people feel just fine about giving up their responsibility. But this is not honoring to God. We must stand for the truth without apology. We must pass the truth on uncompromised to the next generation.

We must not allow any part of God's Word to be distorted. What warning does God give through Moses in Deuteronomy 4:2?

Facing the Challenge of Loyalty we must concentrate on whom we believe, commit ourselves to God's Word, and lastly ...

III Anticipate disappointments and appreciate Loyalty (1:15-18).

1. Paul expresses his disappointment concerning Phygellus and Hermogenes in vv 1:15. Many turned away from Paul after his arrest. Almost everyone in a position to help Paul refused to do so. The fact Paul mentions these two by name suggests they were a special disappointment. Most of Paul's friends deserted him when he was imprisoned, probably afraid of being guilty by association. What about you? Do you forsake your Christian friends because they have a

profound faith in Christ?

2. In contrast, Paul writes of his appreciation for Onesiphorus (O knee sip for us) (1:16-17). He lived in Ephesus but went to Rome and found Paul, who was one of thousands of prisoners. It must have been very difficult to find him but he persevered. Getting permission to talk to Paul must have involved much “red tape” in Rome’s bureaucratic.

He did not allow neither the difficulties of finding Paul nor the danger of being associated with him keep him from tracking Paul down. Adversity separates the chaff from the wheat in friendship. We don’t find out who our real friends are until we need them. When we become part of a church, we bond with people and get to know them. Hopefully, in the process, we acquire friends who will help us be closer in our walk with God and support us in times of need.

3. Paul prays for him and asked God’s mercy on him and mention how he appreciated him. *The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day: and in how many things he ministered unto me at Ephesus, thou knowest very well* (2 Timothy 1:18). Paul knew he would never again be free and in a position to return the kindness, so he asks the Lord to grant Onesiphorus mercy ... in that day. Mercy refers to compassion that results in kind acts.

4. The phrase *in that day* most likely refers to the Judgment Seat of Christ. At the Judgment Seat of Christ, we will receive the ultimate recognition and reward for the mercy we have shown others. Christians will be judged at the Judgment Seat of Christ to determine our eternal rewards. The Bible teaches there will be two judgments at the end of time. One is the Judgment Seat of Christ, where all Christians will be judged. The other is the Great White Throne Judgment of God, where all lost people will be judged to determine the degree of their eternal punishment.

Conclusion:

Sometimes it’s worth going through problems just to find out who our friends really are. The Lord often tempers our disappointments with the pleasant surprises of a loyal Christian friend. There is not a more faithful friend than Christ Himself who gave himself for us. He shed His blood on the cross of Calvary and died a vagarious death. Do you appreciate him do you know the power of His Blood?