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BIBLE ADVENTURES SCRIPT:

A2154 ~ Paul Faithful unto Death.

Welcome to Bible Adventures. Help for today. Hope for tomorrow. Jesus is Lord of all.

By 68 AD, the Apostle Paul was back in Rome as a prisoner once again. Savage persecution had been directed against the Christians as the result of Emperor Nero's decision to blame the Christians for the Great Fire of Rome, which occurred in 64 AD. No longer did a person have to commit a crime to be put to death. People were found guilty on the basis of what they believed. Paul had always encouraged the Christian churches he started to obey the laws of the land and Christians to be good citizens. It was hard to then find crimes done by them, hence the change to death for belief in the Lord Jesus Christ.

DRAMA - [The Bible In Living Sound.](#)

Paul wrote two letters to a young man called Timothy, the first one when Paul was in Macedonia and the second while he was a prisoner in Rome awaiting his death.

Timothy grew up in the city of Lystra which was located in southern present-day Turkey. He became the closest disciple of Paul and his co-worker. When Paul wrote the book 1st Timothy, he was an old man and he saw that he needed to pass on his authority and knowledge to younger men like Timothy and Titus. Timothy had already been appointed leader of the church in Ephesus and Paul wanted to encourage him and instruct him in his duties. From that time until now, the letter of 1st Timothy has been very helpful for church leaders.

Although Paul had established the church at Ephesus about only 10 years before 1st Timothy was written, some men had started to teach false doctrine that was different to the truth that Paul had taught. Paul gave Timothy, as the church's leader, complete authority to stop this false teaching. As well as this, the men were teaching Jewish myths and family histories. For Jewish people, family histories were very important. Each Jew wanted to trace his ancestors back to Abraham, the first Jew. They believed that, because they were the natural descendants of Abraham, they will obtain salvation through him.

Paul made it quite clear that it wasn't important whom a person's ancestors were. No one can inherit salvation from their parents. Each person has to decide for Christ themselves. God's work of saving people depends on faith in Christ and in Christ alone. People are usually interested in hearing new things. But we must always compare any new teaching we hear with what is written in the Bible. If it differs from the Bible, we must reject it as incorrect. The goal for believers is to grow in the love of God and true doctrines lead people to a life filled with love.

For God's love to fill our lives, we need a pure heart, a good conscience and a sincere faith. If we don't have a clear conscience, the Holy Spirit won't be able to work in our lives and our love will dry up. Then we'll be easily convinced by smooth-talking false teachers who are seeking positions of influence in the church.

If our conscience has become unclean by some sin, we need to repent and be reconciled to Christ through faith.

Paul also gave Timothy instructions on how each local church was to be administered. It is good to be called by God to be a church leader yet such a person mustn't seek a position out of pride or ego. It's very important that the church be governed well and that those in leadership should be men of good reputation, as the church is God's household.

Paul also said a few things about women. They were to teach the children and other women but they were not to be in authority over men or teach men. Paul gave his reason that women are more easily deceived by false doctrine, just as Eve was deceived in the garden by the serpent. Women weren't to dress to make a show of their wealth or worldly importance in the church but to do good deeds instead. The church was to care for the poor widows with no family to provide for them. Younger widows were to marry again and live faithful lives for Christ as they took care of their households.

Finally, in the last chapter, Paul addressed the matter of riches and having a great desire for a lot of money. He was speaking to people in the church who were already well-to-do. They weren't to be arrogant, as everything they had was given to them by God. They mustn't put their hope in possessions. Money and wealth are not in themselves evil. God has provided us with everything for our enjoyment, so we can receive His material gifts with thanksgiving. But if we start to love and depend on our possessions, it would be best to sell them instead of becoming entrapped by them. Otherwise, we could risk losing the spiritual possessions stored up for us in heaven. By New Testament standards, anyone who had more than what he needed was considered rich.

Paul was a devout and righteous apostle of Christ. Yet in this letter, he calls himself the worst of sinners. This's not false humility. The more holy a Christian becomes, the more unholy he will consider himself as the holiness of Christ becomes greater. The reason is that the nearer we come to God, the clearer we see our own unholiness. As Paul thinks about the mercy and grace that God has showered on him, he cannot keep from praising such a wonderful and amazing God.

Titus, a young Greek man, was a helper to Paul and he'd been left on the island of Crete to set up the church there by appointing elders. Paul also wrote a short letter to Titus when Paul was in Corinth in 63 AD. Titus was still in Crete when he received this letter.

As well as warnings about false teachers and the ways to refute them, Paul urged Titus to set a good example for others in the church. Both Titus's life and teaching must be blameless, so that his enemies would have nothing bad to say about him and thus be put to shame. Paul instructs all believers to be careful to devote themselves to doing what is good. In the Bible, the great doctrines of the Gospel always come side-by-side with practical instructions for daily living. On one side, we see God's great love and grace; on the other, we see our duty. These two sides are not to be separated.

Paul told Titus to give just two warnings to anyone who was divisive and persisted in arguing. There's no point in trying to get such a person to listen to reason. Such a person is condemned by his own words and actions. Some people leave true doctrine and teaching because they want to walk in their own way. They're selfish, proud and ignorant. And sadly, after they leave the truth, they become even more enslaved by sin and their minds become more hardened and dishonest.

Since Paul was released in Rome in 62 AD, he'd been travelling and preaching in places far away from Jerusalem and known Jewish strongholds. But by 68 AD, he was back in prison in Rome. Only Luke was with him, so he wrote to Timothy again asking that Timothy bring Mark with him and come to Rome.

In 2nd Timothy, Paul spoke about Timothy's spiritual gifts and encouraged him to use them, particularly his gift of leadership. Timothy by nature was actually a timid and fearful person.

Paul reminded Timothy that in place of his natural shyness, God, through the Holy Spirit, would give him a spirit of power, love and self-discipline. And throughout history, God has accomplished great and amazing things through naturally afraid people who've been filled with the Holy Spirit.

Paul encouraged Timothy to expect suffering for the sake of the Gospel just as he himself had suffered. In 2nd Corinthians, Chapter 11, Paul listed the beatings, whippings, shipwrecks and being stoned once. He was also chained to a Roman soldier for years on end. But in spite of all that was done to Paul by wicked men, Paul remained faithful to his calling to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles. Sooner or later, every true believer in Christ will be persecuted. In 1st Peter, Chapter 2, it says: “Christ Himself suffered for you and left you an example, so that you would follow in His steps.” Christ’s servants must sacrifice themselves for His sake and for the sake of others.

One of the most important verses in the entire Bible is written in 1st Peter, Chapter 3. All Scripture is written by the inspiration and guidance of God. There is no other book like the Bible in all the world. Other books may contain things that are true, wise and helpful. But only the Bible are the words of God that He Himself recorded. This book shows us the true way of righteousness and helps us to walk in it. We can fully trust every word in it as God’s voice to us directly on how to find peace and fellowship with Him who reigns in heavenly realms.

In the final chapter, Paul gives Timothy five things to do. He was to: preach the Word, be prepared at all times, correct, rebuke and encourage. The church leader must be prepared to preach the Gospel in season and out of season. Many Christians wait for just the right time before sharing the Gospel with anyone, but that right time often never comes. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we must always be ready to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with others, even at difficult and inconvenient times.

Paul asked Timothy not to be ashamed of him because he was condemned to die as a criminal. Many of Paul’s friends in Rome had failed to help Paul by not speaking up for him at his trial. Some had even deserted him but Paul testified that the Lord had not. With God’s help, Paul was enabled to proclaim the Gospel not only inside the courtroom but outside as well. He didn’t try to defend himself, only the Gospel.

Now Paul was imprisoned again in Rome and he knew he had no possible hope of being delivered from prison and death this time. God had already revealed that Rome was where he would die. Was Paul afraid to die? In Philippians, Chapter 1, Paul said: “For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.” He was looking forward to God bringing him into God’s kingdom to be with Him for ever. Death wasn’t the end but the beginning.

Paul’s work was finished. He had laid the foundation for the church of Jesus Christ through the whole Roman Empire. Luke had written down the record of Jesus’ life, death, burial, resurrection and ascension back to heaven in his Gospel. He also wrote the history of the early church in the ‘Acts of the Apostles’ which could be more accurately named ‘Acts of the Holy Spirit’. Whatever the Apostles did, they did through the power of the Holy Spirit. And this same Holy Spirit is continuing to work throughout the world right up to this present time, in me and in you too, if we live to please the Lord under the direction of the Holy Spirit in everything we do.

This is the last drama in the series by ‘The Bible in Living Sound’. Next week, we’ll start again in Genesis Chapter 1.

The drama is from The Bible In Living Sound.

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