

# PAUL'S SWAN SONG

Tender Words from a Mentor

2 Timothy 1:1–7



## LET'S BEGIN HERE

Prison wasn't something new for Paul. He had previously spent at least four years confined by Roman authorities (Acts 24:27; 28:30). However, his time in the Mamertine dungeon was something new. It was a cold, dark, foul-smelling place; little more than a hole in the ground under the crowded streets of Rome. And though Dr. Luke had cared for Paul's physical needs (2 Timothy 4:11), the apostle longed to see his spiritual son. Timothy still ministered in Ephesus, some 830 miles to the southeast. Ministry was still troublesome. Heretical hounds still barked and bit. And the naturally reserved Timothy had grown weary and timid. A few tender words from his mentor were just the boost of confidence and courage the young pastor needed.



## LET'S DIG DEEPER

### 1. Spiritual Father . . . Beloved Son (2 Timothy 1:1–2)

Before Paul's letter reached Ephesus, Timothy, no doubt, had heard of the great Roman fire and Nero's persecution. The young pastor likely knew that his friend was imprisoned and wasn't likely to escape the bloodlust of Nero's madness. So when a courier arrived—Tychicus, perhaps (2 Timothy 4:12)—bearing a letter with Paul's seal, Timothy must have opened it with abandon.



## Quotable

*Grace is God's gift  
to the worthless.  
Mercy is God's  
ministry to the  
helpless. Peace is  
God's promise to  
the anxious.*

— Charles R. Swindoll



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#### 2. The Refreshing Power of Encouragement (2 Timothy 1:3–5)

It was because of God's grace and mercy that Paul could be at peace. Standing in the center of God's will (2 Timothy 1:1), Paul had no need to worry. Come what may, Christ was all in all. How else can we account for the apostle's courage on death row and his encouragement of Timothy?

*Paul adopted an attitude of gratitude (2 Timothy 1:3).*

*Paul cultivated a heart of worship (1:3).*

*Paul maintained a clear conscience (1:3).*

*"I constantly remember to pray" (1:3).*

*"I long to be with you" (1:4).*

*"I am aware of the faith that is within you" (1:5).*

*"I have great respect for you" (1:5).*



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#### 3. A Needed Reproof (2 Timothy 1:6–7)

Timothy was a man of authentic faith, but he tended to wither under the heat of heretics. So after a word of affirmation, Paul offered a word of inspiration—encouragement to hold high the standard of authentic faith.



#### LET'S LIVE IT

It took courage to live for Christ in the first century. It takes courage to live for Christ in the twenty-first century. While we may never face physical persecution, we live in a world that is increasingly hostile to the things of Christ. This is one reason why mature believers need to actively fulfill three roles in the lives of less mature believers—roles Paul fulfilled in Timothy's life.

First, *we must fulfill the role of intercessor*. Mature Christians pray not only for themselves but for others as well.

**For whom do you constantly pray? When's the last time you told that person you were praying for him or her?**

Second, *we must fulfill the role of mentor*. Mature Christians pour their lives into younger believers to help them grow in the faith.

**Whom do you mentor in the faith? If no one, why not? Whom might you mentor?**



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If you do mentor someone, what are you doing to mentor that younger believer? How rewarding is the relationship?

Third, *we must fulfill the role of encourager*. Mature Christians have longer histories with Christ and therefore can use their perspective and wisdom to encourage others.

Whom can you encourage this week? Thinking of this person, write down three or four things you know would be an encouragement to him or her.



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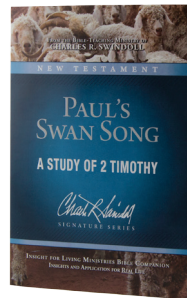
*2 Timothy 1:1–7*



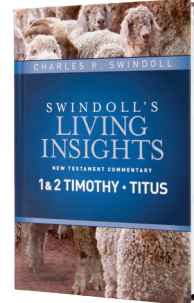
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