

## ENTRUSTED

WILLIS 11/20/11

2Tim1:12-2:2

I have entitled what I want to share today “Entrusted.” **To be given a trust is to be made a steward.** Stewardship is a theme central to the revelation of Scripture. In His sovereignty God chose to entrust man with truth and in that entrustment He made us stewards.

- **Stewardship is different than ownership.** A steward is to take ownership of their trust but not possession of the thing they steward. A steward is to care for their trust like it was their own but not alter it like it was their own.
- So we receive, care for and bring increase to what we steward but not redefine, reduce or rearrange what we steward.
- As Christians ours is a unique stewardship. What makes our stewardship unique is the object of our stewardship. To some degree we are stewards of all that belongs to God but our primary point of stewardship is stewarding the truth of God.

**The stewardship of truth is a stewardship like no other. Stewarding truth is not just the stewardship of a possession...stewarding truth is the stewardship of a person.** Jesus didn't just speak truth He identified Himself as truth...He said I am the way, the truth and the life...

- When Jesus gives truth to steward He gives a piece of Himself. Every distinctive, every mandate, every truth is given as an entrustment to receive, apply, increase and sustain over time through the transfer of one generation to the next.
- It is precisely there where stewardship meets its greatest challenge. **Stewardships greatest challenge is in the passing of truth from one generation to the next.** That is precisely what Paul is addressing here in 2Tim1&2.
- Paul says, “Timothy, I know what I believe and I am absolutely convinced that God is able to guard what I have entrusted to him...but you...you must retain the standard, you must guard through the Holy Spirit the treasure which was entrusted to you.”

Let me set some context into that which Paul is writing. 2 Timothy is the last letter Paul ever wrote. Paul is writing to a next generation son with a very specific concern in mind. While expressing deep confidence in God he expresses deep concern for Timothy.

- His concern is well founded. He knows the history of his forefathers and understands that the generational continuity of truth has not been a strong suit in the purposes of God.
- Perhaps he is remembering Joshua...remembering the generation that rose who did not know the Lord...he is remembering that everyone had forsaken him but Luke.

So in light of the former loss and the present concern he says “Timothy, it’s not me I am concerned with nor it is God...I am convinced and God is able...in light of our generational track record I am concerned with you...you must retain the standard, you must guard the treasure...

- **Standard: pattern, drawing or sketch. “Timothy, you must retain the drawing...you are a steward of truth so as the next generation you must not change the sketch.”**
- Paul reiterates this again in ch3:14 “You however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of...” We are stewards of truth. **Being that truth is eternal God places a higher value on continuity than He does on originality.**
- 2Thes2:15 “Stand firm and hold on to the traditions which you were taught whether by word of mouth or by letter.” (Word of mouth being sermons; letters being the Bible)
- Jn8:31-32 “If you hold fast to my Word then you are truly my disciples and you shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free.” Being a disciple and staying free is predicated upon holding fast to the Word...that is continuing in the sketch.
- The truth and the way are not issues open for every ensuing generation to redefine and find their own way. They are to add what is to come without forsaking what was previously won.
- **What we are in pursuit of is a generational sketch that is as old as eternity. It has been passed down by our fathers and mothers as an entrustment for us to steward and pass it down the same way.**

2Tim2:1-2 It is the entrustment of 4 generations where the highest value is placed on faithfulness not originality. Originality is certainly needed in the apprehending of new values but faithfulness is the virtue in the stewarding of the old.

- Here is an observation of interest. No mention is ever made if Timothy was successful in the securing of the 4. There is no mention of Timothy’s son’s like we hear of Paul’s son’s. It could be Holy Spirit didn’t see the need or it could be like the generations before: “a generation rose that did not know the Lord.”

**The challenge before us is the coming generation being faithful to steward what the previous generations won while they are being positioned to receive their own entrustments.**

- It is a picture we see played out in 2John. 2Jn is written to the “Chosen Lady and her children.” Most Commentators agree this is a metaphor for a local church and the coming generation.
- John’s focus is on the stewarding of truth one generation to the next. 5 times in 4 versus the word truth is used and in v.5 John say’s “I was very glad to find some of your children walking in truth...” It wasn’t all just some but John was still glad.
- 2Jn1-11 What John is warning about is an individual lose of a corporate accomplishment. “Watch out that you don’t lose what we have accomplished...”

**2000 years later and the Church still thrives...it is proof that the Corporate will always prevail. The question however is with the individual.** Will you will I; will your family my family continue on in what we have accomplished?

- Though our salvation is not dependent upon it; our full reward is.

Let me close by giving you 3 factors that war against our stewardship and 3 that war for it:

- 1. Familiarity: The greater the accomplishment the more prone man is to familiarity.** But familiarity is an easy defeat for its only power is our agreement.
- 2. Pride: The pride of originality. The pride of I know better. The pride of it is better in me that it is in us.** In the face of humility pride is an easy defeat.
- 3. Dullness of Hearing: It is being hearers of the Word only and not doers.** Hearing only first devalues truth then redefines it. In the elevation of honor man becomes a doer of the Word.

3 factors that war for stewardship:

- 1. Humility: The lower we go the more He can entrust.** Humility is our concealment from pride. Humility is the atmosphere of entrustment. God gives to the humble.
- 2. Honor: What we honor we get more of.** The more we honor truth through practice the more we will be entrusted to steward. Truth is honored through declaration and obedience. Truth is honored through its recognition of value.

**3. Intercession: Believing prayer is the avenue of increase.** When we pray believing we will experience the increase of what we prayed for.

ICor4:2 “Those who have been given a trust must prove themselves faithful.” For the past 26 years we have proven ourselves faithful and we are not about to quit now. Holy Spirit, examine us all and give us the grace to be found faithful.