

**THE SERMONS, LECTURES, AND SONGS OF
SIDNEY EDWARD COX**

I and II Timothy – An Overview
CD #78 – 0:00 through 33:53

Editorial Note: In 1972, Sidney Cox moved from Detroit, Michigan to Birmingham, Alabama to be near my parents, John and Jean Cox. He was 85 years of age at the time, but remained in remarkable health and lived on his own in a small apartment on Birmingham's southside.

He remained in great demand as a preacher and Bible teacher. He had a well-chronicled career early in his life as a Salvation Army officer from 1910 – 1944. Later in life, he developed a close relationship with the Christian and Missionary Alliance (“CMA”). From 1956 to 1962, he served on the theological faculty of two institutions that were closely aligned with CMA – the Miami Bible Institute and the Toccoa Fall Bible Institute. Both the Salvation Army and CMA continued to invite him to preach and teach during this phase of his life.

It is believed that this message was delivered circa 1975 as part of a series of nightly messages on the New Testament books of I and II Timothy that he delivered to the Birmingham Gospel Tabernacle, a CMA congregation in downtown Birmingham.



In early 1975, at age 88, Sidney suffered a mild stroke that compromised his speech greatly and hampered his ability to preach and teach. After several months of recovery, he once again began to accept invitations, although his speech was somewhat slurred. Nevertheless, he still had a powerful voice, a clear mind and a continued passion to preach the Gospel.

On this opening night, he presents an overview of I and II Timothy.

J. Douglas Cox, grandson of Sidney Cox. August 20, 2010.

(Audio opens with the reading of I Timothy 1:8-18 in unison with the congregation):

“Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel: Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles. For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day. Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.

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That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us. This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me; of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes. The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain: But, when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found me. 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 well.”

Now that reminds us of at least one of the distinctions of this book, and that is that you will find 29 people mentioned by name, and 12 of them, you will not find anywhere else. Now that’s an interesting fact, because it makes this book quite distinct from many others that Paul wrote. In some of them, you do not find anybody mentioned by name. But here, you find 29 of them. And then forgive me for reminding you, there are 77 words in this book that are not used by the Apostle Paul in any of his other writings. Which all marks it as a letter of tremendous importance. Don’t forget this is a last letter.

And then we were considering with some interest, the fact that things occur in series of threes. I don’t know whether you notice them there in the reading, but we find that this continues all the way through. Things appear in series of threes. And you find in verse one (of the first chapter of I Timothy), “An old man writing to a young man about the God man.” Now that’s Guy King, and not me.¹ But that’s the way you find it. And then immediately afterwards, you find a three-fold salutation, which you will only find in the letters to Timothy and to Titus - grace, mercy, and peace.

And then we found, as we would expect to find, the three things that Paul always mentioned at the beginning of a letter - thanksgiving, remembrance, and prayer. And you will find generally these three things all gathered together. “I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all, making requests with joy.”² Now that’s the way he starts his letter to the Phillipians. Here in this letter, you will find exactly the same thing. And I wondered some times, I wonder if you have, why it is that you find the constant emphasis on the word “remember?” Remember, remember, remember. You will find it constantly in the letters of Paul. You will find it all the time. Remember, remember, remember. “I put thee in remembrance. I’m remembering certain things about you.” Remember. I wonder why?

Would you mind me making a suggestion about that. I think perhaps one reason why in the Word of God you find the word “remember” emphasized constantly both in the Old and the New Testament - “Remember now thy Creator in the days of our youth,”³ and so on, and all the way through. I think the reason is that the easiest thing we do is to forget. Did you hear it? The easiest thing you do is to forget. You know pastor, I’ve often wondered why the writer of *Tell Me the Old, Old Story* knew all about me. Because there’s a line in there that belongs almost exclusively to me. And it’s the line, “For I forget so soon.” Do you remember? One of the easiest things, the constant thing, we forget, we forget, we forget, we forget. And I think quietly, and there isn’t anybody here listening but us, I think God will hold us not only responsible to remember, but I think he will hold us responsible if we forget, because a lot of

¹ Canon Guy H. King was an English Episcopalian who became a noted Biblical author. One of his many books was on the New Testament book of II Timothy and was entitled, *To My Son*. Sidney Cox was very fond of Guy King and his writings, and referenced King in many of his sermons and lessons on New Testament subjects.

² Philippians 1:3-4.

³ Ecclesiastes 12:1.

our forgetfulness is entirely unnecessary. It isn't necessary at all. We say, you know, the old excuse you make, and so do I. And we've got a letter here that emphasizes remembrance.

You will remember that Paul remembered the home where Timothy dwelt. Three characters in it named, or at least you have there brought to our attention a grandmother, Lois, and a mother, Eunice, and a boy and the characteristic of the home was "the unfeigned faith that dwelt there."⁴ Not the overstuffed furniture, the unfeigned faith. The thing that marked it as a Christian home was the unfeigned faith, and it was visible everywhere. Look at grandmother, Lois, and you could see it there. Look at mother, Eunice, you could see it there. Catch sight of young Timothy, and you could see it there. This unearthly glow that indicates an unearthly quality of life there. And by the way, my dear, the most valuable thing that God ever gives to a Christian is that unearthly quality of life that distinguishes you from those who are on the outside - this unearthly quality of life. And you could see it there.

And the old man tells the young man, "You are responsible for keeping alive, keeping burning, keeping the flame burning on the altar of your faith." And that's the subject of our chapter, isn't it? - the responsibilities of the Christian life. "Timothy, you stir up the gift of God. Don't expect your preacher to do it. Don't expect your Sunday School teacher to do it. He isn't there to do what you're suppose to do. It's your business."⁵ And old man is reminding a young man, "You keep it stirred up. You put the fuel on the top to keep the ashes cleaned out underneath."

And for this task of living the Christian life, God has given us a three-fold equipment. "God has not given us the spirit of fear," Verse 7, "but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." And we reminded each other that love is in the right place, that's the correct order of things. Love in the center controlling power over here. Love controlling our thinking processes, so that we have the sound mind and not the unsound mind.

You know there are two words that I used to describe the mind that God can use and does. One is sound, and the other is sober. You will find sober mind, sound mind. They mean the same thing. Sober is a word that we can define quite easily. What do you mean by sober? What? Well, my dear, sober means the opposite of drunken. Did you hear it? How does a drunken man think? How does he act? How does he walk? Does he think in a straight line? That's what a sober mind does. And your old mind there, that thing that we are so proud of sometimes, and insist on using it regardless - "I have a right to do my own thinking..."

By the way, my dear, you haven't got any such right to do your own thinking. Not at all. When the mind of Christ is in you, your thinking goes out of the window. It's His thinking. And one of the wonderful things that God does for the child of God is by the Holy Spirit to so capture that thinking process of yours that it thinks His way and not your way.

Love in the center. We reminded ourselves that that's basic. When power is uncontrolled by love, what a desperate situation that is. And when our thinking processes go our way, instead of going God's way, what a desperate situation that is. But when love controls, then all is well, and you will find in this book

⁴ II Timothy 1:5.

⁵ II Timothy 1:6, paraphrased.

that the basic problem in the churches that Paul had in mind and over which Timothy was to exercise authority, like the church at Ephesus for instance of which he according to the best we know, was the young bishop. The thing that goes wrong is when love gets off the track. You turn to chapter three and you find that's the basis of it - perilous times coming, and, "Men shall be lovers of their own selves, rather than lovers of God."⁶

You see? Love...by the way, what was wrong with the church at Ephesus? And don't forget that this condition appeared very soon after this letter was written. This is written about 35 years after our Lord had gone back to the right hand of the Father. 25 more years and the Bible is completed. And before that happened, something had happened in the church at Ephesus. What was wrong with the church at Ephesus? What? Was it their activity? Was it their orthodoxy? Oh no, no. Not at all. They were busy, busy, busy, busy, sure...but, what was wrong? "You have left your first love,"⁷ you see? That's where the difficulty came. And it came right there in the beginning of the church.

And we've got a letter that reminds us of this. That's the basic thing in your personal, Christian life, my dear. You keep your love for Christ in the place where it ought to be, in the center of things, and your life will be approved of God. But if it isn't, then there may be the word that appears in the next chapter instead of approved, ashamed.⁸

Did you hear it? We'd better watch that. Don't forget that what your heavenly Father needs more than the odd jobs you can do for Him, is your adoration. And when adoration is pushed on one side, and activity takes its place, then tragedy occurs immediately. And that's one of the difficulties. We are so busy doing things for Jesus, that we haven't got time to spend with Him. Did you hear it? I know what I'm talking about. I'm not preaching at you, don't think that. I know what I'm talking about. I get so busy, so busy, so busy I haven't got time to spend with Him, and I can almost hear His voice sometimes saying, "I appreciate what you're doing, but I wish you had a little time to spend with me." Don't you see? Love in the right place.

Now, he goes on and talks about again some of the extraordinary things that appear from the heart of the old man to the heart and mind of the young man - Verse 8. Turn with it please, and let's follow along: "Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord,"⁹ Now stop. You will find there two things that need our attention. The words "thou therefore" appear three times as you would expect. Now let me tell you where you'll find the other two. In the beginning of the second chapter, Verse 1, Verse 3, and you will find the repetition of this word, "thou therefore." Now my dear, what is following that? It's the word that is almost beyond our understanding. Why would Paul say to a young man like Timothy...why would he say, "Be not thou therefore ashamed?" Ashamed? Was that a difficulty that even Timothy might, may have...ashamed of what? Ashamed of the testimony of our Lord.

Now, let's stop a moment and consider that. Why would Timothy be tempted to be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord? What would be your answer to that? Why would he face that temptation, difficulty? - because evidently he would, or Paul wouldn't have mentioned it. "Don't be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord." There are three reasons why Timothy might be ashamed there, and you'd better

⁶ II Timothy 3:2.

⁷ Revelation 2:4.

⁸ Reference is to II Timothy 2:15.

⁹ II Timothy 1:8.

listen to these. One, Timothy was not strong physically. Timothy had physical difficulties. Doctor Luke had to write prescriptions for him. I don't know whether his problem was stomach ulcers, it seems like it, because in these days we would give him milk and Maalox, but in those days they gave him a little wine for his stomach's sake. You remember? "And is oft infirmities."¹⁰ He wasn't strong like Titus. Not at all. He was a man who had a physical difficulty. And my dear remember, the enemy who goes around like a roaring lion seeking to devour you will attack you every time he finds you facing some physical problem. Watch out! - because that's his golden opportunity. He's just that mean and contemptible that he loves to take advantage of a person who is facing a physical problem. Now Timothy was. He wasn't strong at all.

And don't forget that Timothy was holding in his hand a letter that had come from a Roman prison cell. And he knew quite well that the end that had come to Paul would probably come to him, too. No one expected anything else. They weren't offered anything. They didn't come into the Christian church on the basis of if your coming all your problems are solved and somebody's going to hold your hand and you're going to get joy, joy, joy. All they were offered was blood and sweat and tears. Did you hear it? That's the basis on which they came into the Christian church - blood and sweat and tears. I wonder how many members we'd got these days if that was the basis? I wonder. Anyhow that was another thing.

And don't forget that even at this time, it is appalling how many folks who at one time were almost as good as Timothy and they slipped back into the clutches of the world. "Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world and is departed under Thessalonica."¹¹ And there was a time when Demas was as good as Timothy...just as good. And don't forget that when you get to the end of this chapter, not the end of the book, at the end of this chapter, you will find Paul's heart almost breaking as he says, "All that were in Asia have forsaken me."¹²

You know one of the distinctions between 1st and 2nd Timothy is this. I want to give you a few chapter references here. One of the things that you will find in 1st Timothy is this: Some of the folks are forsaking. You will find some have done this; some have done that. But when you get to 2nd Timothy, which is only a little while afterwards, and you find that instead of some, it's all. Here are a few references: 1st Timothy 1:6 - "Some have turned aside;" 1:19 - "Some have made shipwreck;" 1:15 - "Some are turned unto Satan;" 6:10...uh, it was 5:15 that last one. "Some have been led astray" - 6:10; "Some have missed the mark" - 6:21. And you will find this, "some...some...some." But when you turn to 2nd Timothy, you find it's "All have forsaken me."

When you come to the end of the book, again, this tragic note, "I stood there before Nero and all forsook me, not anybody stood beside me."¹³ And this business of forsaking, don't forget, Timothy is facing this. I don't wonder that Paul says to him, "Don't you be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord." What he's saying is, "You don't play at being a Christian." Being a Christian is a man-sized job, and it takes men and women to live the Christian life. The thing that's wrong with our city and every other city is that folks look at us and they can see everything under the sun but the reflection of Jesus in us. They can find activity and faithfulness and giving and all the rest of the stuff, but when they look at you and

¹⁰ I Timothy 5:23.

¹¹ II Timothy 4:10.

¹² II Timothy 1:15.

¹³ II Timothy 4:16, translation.

look at me, God help us! How much of Him do they see? It's so easy, isn't it? - to put something secondary in the place of the primary thing. It's so easy. It's so easy to forget that what we are is more important than what we do. It's so easy to forget it.

Now, he says, "I don't want you to be ashamed of something." What? "The testimony of our Lord." Now again, my dear, let's remember three again. The testimony of our Lord? What's he talking about? Well, that phrase, that golden glittering phrase, "The testimony of our Lord," has in it three things, as you would expect. "The testimony of our Lord" gathers into itself three things. What the Word of God says about Him: the Word of God testifies about God the Son; and second, what the Son said about Himself; and the third thing is, what we as His disciples, as His followers, are to tell others about Him. What the Word says? What He said? What we are to say? And it's the testimony of our Lord. And then you can almost hear Paul getting so excited about this thing. He's got something that raises his blood pressure in a hurry. And hear what he says, "The testimony of our Lord." What has it done for us? Well, notice it. "Who has saved us?"¹⁴ Listen to it.

There's a word there that brought us out of darkness into light, and changed it from the distance to the nearness. Here it was from death into life. There's in it a message, there's somebody, there's a testimony about something and somebody that transforms lives, and there isn't anything else under the sun that will do it. That's the only thing. "He has saved us." Not only saved us, but, "Called us." We are not only saved folks, we are called ones. God brought you, my dear, into his family circle not merely to have one more nice person in the family circle who would run errands for Him, because that's the story of the average Christian life. We are so nice in the family of God, and we're so willing to run errands for Him. Now, that isn't the end of the thing at all. He wants you in there because in the providence of God there was something for you to do that no one else could do. You were a place, you were a lively stone in the building of God. And God is expecting each one of us to do the thing by which we were saved in the first place. And for which we are called. We are, "Called with a holy calling." What a dignity that puts upon us, doesn't it? Why do we need the decorations of the world when we've got a garment like that? We're in the will of God.

Now, there's another reason there. "He hath saved us, called us," ...listen..."He hath abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel."¹⁵ Isn't it wonderful, that we've got a message like that? "He hath abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel." They'll be no dark valley when Jesus comes. Did you hear it? They'll be no dark valley when he comes. "He has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel." When you accepted Him, you were accepted into His death. When He died, you died. Glory be to God! There isn't anything else, this thing we call death is just the moving from one room to another, of course.

Paul Rader, who many of you know by name at any rate - we ought to know him, we ought to keep his name fragrant within Alliance circles; the man who gave us so much in the way of music, as well as everything else; he was dying.¹⁶ Paul Rader was a big man, 240 pounds, like all the Raders. And he was

¹⁴ II Timothy 1:9.

¹⁵ II Timothy 1:10.

¹⁶ Paul Rader (1879 – 1938) was one of the most powerful evangelistic preachers of the early 20th Century. He pastored Moody Church in Chicago, Illinois (1915-1921), and followed founder Albert Simpson as president of the Christian and Missionary Alliance (1920-1923). Rader founded the Chicago Gospel Tabernacle in 1922 and pastored it for 11 years. He wrote
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dying, and cancer had got him, until he was reduced to about 75 pounds. And there he lay. And three or four of the men who were associated with him, Lance Latham and Dick Oliver and Hall Dortell, went to visit him in the hospital. And they talked with him for a little while, and then Paul Rader said this, “I know why you’ve come. You’ve come to visit me because you think I’m dying.” And he said, “I’m not dying. I died 35 years ago.” Do you see it? “He hath abolished death and brought immortality to light through the Gospel.” Twin angels to go with you through the dark valley. Twin angels: life on one side, immortality on the other. Glory be to God!

And an old man writing to a young man says, “This is the message and I have been appointed to proclaim a message like that.” “Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.”¹⁷ My, you can almost hear him rising in that old prison cell there, and the guard to whom he was chained as he was dictating this letter probably to Doctor Luke. It says, “He’s the only one that was with him.”¹⁸ And you can almost hear the exaltation and the voice of the man who is talking, and the glow in his heart and upon his face, in spite of the darkness. Light from dungeon darkness is our title. And I don’t wonder that he cries exultingly, exultingly, “I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I’ve committed unto him.”¹⁹

And the first part of our class, we’ve gone too long. Stand and sing that with me, will you? And then we’ll go on in two or three minutes.

(Singing) “For I know who I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able. To keep that which I’ve committed. Unto him against that day.”

Be seated and be comfortable for a minute or two. Brother Jack.

many Gospel song lyrics and a few tunes, and was instrumental in the founding of the Tabernacle Publishing Company. His radio broadcasts were heard on various Chicago stations as well as the CBS Network. He was instrumental in sending scores of missionaries to countries all over the world in addition to influencing hundreds of young men to enter the ministry. Rader was also a pioneer of Christian broadcasting. In the early 1920’s, the beginning days of radio, station WBBM in Chicago, Illinois, closed every Sunday. Rader received permission to use the studios, and for several years, he ran a 14-hour Christian program every Sunday. Rader called his station-within-a-station WJBT (“Where Jesus Blesses Thousands”). Sidney Cox served on the staff at the Moody Bible Institute and Church from 1922 – 1927 and lived in Chicago during that time.

¹⁷ II Timothy 1:11.

¹⁸ II Timothy 4:11.

¹⁹ II Timothy 1:12.