

## Some Comfort of the Scriptures

(Romans 15:4)

- A. Paul wrote two pastoral epistles to Timothy who oversaw the church at Ephesus for a season. **1TI 1:3; 3:15.**
- B. Timothy was a notable man of God who had the scriptures to perfect him. **1TI 6:11; 2TI 3:16-17.**
1. He could be all that God intended for him without talmuds or commentaries.
  2. With an understanding of word definitions and grammar (**NEH 8:8; 2TI 1:13**) God is well able to thoroughly furnish His ministers by the scriptures.
- C. He was a faithful spiritual son in gospel labors under Paul. **PHIL 2:19-22.**
1. This is an important mark of a potential minister. Before he is to be entrusted with the ministry and leadership, he must be first a faithful follower. **LUK 16:10; 19:17; 2TI 2:5.**
  2. Knowing one's place in the chain of command is an article of great faith. **LUK 7:1-9.**
- D. Timothy was also compliant with godly leadership's decisions. **ACT 16:1-3.**
1. Before Paul laid hands on him to *ordain* him (**1TI 4:14; 2TI 1:6**), he laid hands on him to *circumcise* him. Faithful duty can imply some curious demands of men and Timothy's willingness to comply in spite of Paul's apparently weak eyes is noteworthy. **GAL 4:15.**
  2. Mind that this occurred after the Jerusalem council had recognized the limitations of circumcision in **ACT 15.**
  3. This would have been done to reduce offense in the eyes of the Jews, not as a matter of justification or ministerial requirement. **1CO 9:20-21.**
  4. Paul was not a trophy hunter like others. **GAL 6:13.**
  5. Thankfully, Paul's decision here was one for particular circumstances as the kingdom of God was being taken from Israel (**MAT 21:43**) before their space of repentance would run out in 70 A.D. Proof of righteousness before God is by faith, the superior token. **ROM 4:9-11.**
- E. Timothy's mother was a believing Jewess (**ACT 16:1**) but the language of **ACT 16:1-3** implies that his father was an uncircumcised, unbelieving Greek.
1. Scripture is silent about his father's faith; we cannot assume him to be a believer.
  2. But his mother, Eunice, was a woman of *unfeigned* (not pretended or simulated; sincere...) faith. **2TI 1:5.**
  3. Eunice's marriage was a "mixed" marriage, as likely was her mother Lois' marriage. Two can walk together in agreement (**AMO 4:4**) in imperfect arrangements.
    - a. NOTE: There will be special challenges in such unions where compromise in indifferent things may be necessary for domestic tranquility but compromise of Biblical commandment is another story.
    - b. NOTE: There will be challenges in marriages where both share the same faith! These are preferred arrangements but carnal thinking, speaking and acting can trouble these also.
    - c. In marriage, there will be "...trouble in the flesh..." (**1CO 7:28**). Mutual respect, patience, forbearance and charity are necessary in all marriages.
- F. Moses generally forbade Jews marrying Gentiles in **EXO 34:16; DEU 7:1-4.**
1. Such laws particularly applied to the devoted seven nations in Canaan who were to be eliminated or overcome.
  2. These laws also applied to the remnant of the seven nations put under tribute. **JOS 17:13; 23:11-12.**
  3. Otherwise, a Jew could marry one of a conquered people. **DEU 21:10-11.**
  4. Derbe and Lystra (**ACT 16:1**) would not have been of the seven devoted nations.
  5. Eunice's marriage was mixed/imperfect but permissible and as long as he was pleased to

dwell with her, her place was at his side. **1CO 7:13-14.**

6. Some consider **2CO 6:14** and **1CO 7:39** prohibitions on believers marrying someone not of like precious faith.
  - a. **2CO 6:14** concerns improper mingling of fellowship and communion in churches. Believers in Jesus Christ cannot commune with unbelievers nor adopt heathen religious customs for Christian faith.
  - b. Marrying “in the Lord” (**1CO 7:39**) is no more a command to only marry one of like precious faith than **EPH 6:1** is a command for children to only obey parents if they are true believers. A marriage is “in the Lord” if it fits God’s universal law for marriage: one man to one woman, both being unattached maritally according to God’s definition of unattached.

G. Some observations about Eunice:

1. Her faith was genuine and was likely part of her upbringing by Lois.
2. We read not of any great concern she had that Timothy was not circumcised.
3. We read not of guilt or shame she bore for marrying an uncircumcised Gentile.
4. We read not of her badgering her husband to get Timothy circumcised.
5. We read not of her having tried to do that herself, like Zipporah. **EXO 4:25.**
6. We read not of her badgering her husband to become a Christian.
  - a. **1PE 3:1-6** is appropriate for the likes of Eunice.
  - b. “He that is persuaded against his will remaineth unpersuaded still.”
  - c. Believers don’t know if they will save unbelieving spouses (**1CO 7:16**) but they do know they should be good spouses themselves while holding fast their faith.
  - d. Patience, prayer, good example, etc. can accomplish more than badgering.
7. She is the likely source of Timothy’s knowledge of Scripture. **2TI 3:15.**
8. As a believer, she knew the Scripture.
  - a. Scripture would have confirmed what was written in her heart concerning righteousness before God: circumcision avails nothing. **GAL 5:6.**
  - b. She should have known that Abraham was declared righteous by his faith before he was circumcised (**ROM 4:9-12**) and that there were others prior to Abraham who were righteous before God.
  - c. She should have known of scripture’s permission for marriages outside of Israel and so have comforted herself and answered any who challenged her from a basis of tradition. **PSA 119:52 c/w MAR 7:5-9.**
  - d. She should have known that true circumcision and Jewishness is inward and spiritual. **ROM 2:28-29.**
  - e. She should have known that fleshly circumcision was typical of the circumcision of Christ for sinners. **COL 2:11 c/w ISA 53:8.**
  - f. She should have known that the O.T. was only meant to reach unto Christ Who put it away by a N.T. **GAL 3:19; HEB 8:13.**
  - g. She should have known **ACT 10** happened long before **ACT 16.**
  - h. She would have known that her faith was evidence of inclusion in God’s eternal covenant in Christ and of spiritual life, and the same things applied to Timothy. She, her mother, and her son had what was in Abraham counted for righteousness without fleshly circumcision. **ROM 4:11.**

H. The scriptures give much peace, hope, relief and good counsel to everyday believers in everyday imperfect circumstances and trials.