

2Timothy 2:1 ¶ Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

This chapter begins with Paul again encouraging Timothy to be strong. Important to note is that he is not speaking of strength in body but in spirit through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. The “grace” that is ours in Christ Jesus is a reference to his influence at work in us through the Holy Spirit. He does not, however, force our cooperation. We are most effective in serving God when we are yielded to the ministry of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

Romans 6:13 “...but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.”

Romans 12:1 “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.”

2Timothy 2:2 And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.

Paul made a point that he taught Timothy in the presence of many witnesses. His message wasn't secret and/or limited to only a few. God's truth is to be declared to everyone. Paul was commissioning Timothy to share all that he had been taught with “faithful men,” men who could be depended upon to share that truth with others. The expectation is that these men would also choose to teach others who would teach others, etc.

I liked David Guzik's comment on what it means to be faithful: “Being faithful means that you aren't in the ministry to be served, but to serve.”

It is interesting to me that so many of the cults claim to have new revelation from God that can only be learned through becoming a part of their organization. The gospel message is addressed to “whosoever will.”

Acts 2:21 “And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

1 John 4:15 “Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.”

2Timothy 2:3 Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

“Hardness” is a reference to enduring affliction and persecution. Paul often compares living the Christian life to participating in competition or warfare. To be a “good” soldier is to be valuable in serving God as empowered by the Holy Spirit given to us by Jesus.

Acts 1:8 "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

Jesus declared that we must be willing to suffer and die for Him if we want to gain eternal life.

Matthew 10:38–39 "And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it."

John 12:25 "He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal."

2Timothy 2:4 No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of *this* life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.

2Timothy 2:5 And if a man also strive for masteries, *yet* is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully.

2Timothy 2:6 The husbandman that laboureth must be first partaker of the fruits.

In these verses Paul gives three examples of the type of commitment that is necessary to live a victorious Christian life.

A soldier has to leave family and other concerns of the world behind when he goes to war; he has to focus his full attention on the task at hand to gain the respect of his commander. I am reminded of the words of Jesus.

Matthew 10:37–38 "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me."

An athlete has to train hard and focus on disciplining his body to compete according to the rules if he wants to be victorious. If he doesn't follow the rules, he will be disqualified.

A farmer has to invest a lot of hard work in preparing and working the land if he wants to enjoy a bountiful harvest.

The Christian is constantly at war against the flesh and the attack of the enemy and his legions.

Ephesians 6:11–12 "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

The Christian needs to exercise self-discipline and live according to the rules that God has established in His word if we expect to receive the victor's crown.

James 1:12 "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him."

1 Corinthians 9:25 "And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible."

It's always amazing to me that people expect God to accept them into heaven according to what they believe is right rather than according to the standard established in His word—by accepting Jesus through faith as your Lord and Savior.

If we believers expect to reap the fruit of our labors, we must be willing to work hard and persevere in the process in submission to the Lord.

John 4:34–36 "Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work. Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together."

John 15:5 "I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing."

David Guzik made an important point concerning pastors that really applies to every believer who wants to share the truth of God's word with others. We can't feed others until we have eaten ourselves.

2Timothy 2:7 Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things.

Paul wants Timothy to take the time to carefully think about what he is saying. It is when we take the time to exercise our thinking faculties and meditate on the truth that we gain more understanding about that truth.

Scriptural meditation is being redefined by many in the professing church today. The psalmist declares that it is to our benefit to meditate on God's word.

Psalms 1:1–2 "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night."

Psalms 119:15 "I will meditate in thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways."

Psalms 119:47–48 "And I will delight myself in thy commandments, which I have loved. My hands also will I lift up unto thy commandments, which I have loved; and I will meditate in thy statutes."

Psalms 19:14 "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer."

Psalms 49:3 "My mouth shall speak of wisdom; and the meditation of my heart shall be of understanding."

I used several verses to show that the mind is actively engaged in the process of scriptural meditation. In no instance is the brain being emptied and/or a mantra being employed to achieve some kind of mystical experience. Meditating on the word of God results in godly living. The person who meditates on God's word will show respect for the truth it declares. When we choose to meditate in God's word, we learn to delight in His commandments because we know they are meant to protect us. For the Lord to delight in the meditation of our heart, there must be thoughts there that please Him—not an emptiness or the sound of vain repetitions. Scriptural meditation will result in our speaking wisdom and gaining understanding.

2Timothy 2:8 ¶ Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel:

2Timothy 2:9 Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, *even* unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound.

2Timothy 2:10 Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

I really like the CJB translation of these verses: *"Remember Yeshua the Messiah, who was raised from the dead, who was a descendant of David. This is the Good News I proclaim, and for which I am suffering to the point of being bound in chains — but the Word of God is not bound in chains!"*

Paul was very proud of his heritage as a Jew and he was looking forward to Jesus establishing Himself as the King of kings on the throne of David in Jerusalem. It must have amazed him (as it does me) to contemplate the fact that Jesus was both fully man and fully God.

He reiterates that he is in prison because of his testimony of the gospel—the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. He calls it "my gospel" because it declares the salvation that so dramatically changed his life. Though he is suffering in the bondage of chains because of his testimony, he rejoices that the truth of the word of God can't be bound and will continue to be declared through faithful servants like Timothy to the salvation of many and the glory of God. It is this truth that helps him to endure the suffering as he contemplates the salvation of all that have been known and set apart by God to inherit eternal glory as part of the family of God through the testimony of the obedient servants who would follow in his footsteps.

Romans 8:29–30 "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified."

I think it is important to note that Paul's emphasis is on the resurrection of Jesus. As he stated in his letter to the Corinthians, without the resurrection we are in a miserable state.

1 Corinthians 15:14–19 “And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ...And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.”

2Timothy 2:11 It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with *him*, we shall also live with *him*:

2Timothy 2:12 If we suffer, we shall also reign with *him*: if we deny *him*, he also will deny us:

2Timothy 2:13 If we believe not, *yet* he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself.

“faithful saying” = trustworthy

Paul is saying that it is our relationship with Jesus that determines our eternal future. If we die in company with or in fellowship with Jesus, it will result in eternal life with Him. If we endure and persevere in fellowship with Jesus, we will be allowed to reign with Him. When? During the millennium.

Revelation 20:6 “Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.”

Jesus declared that true faith is evidenced by endurance and perseverance, and Apostle John reiterated that same truth.

Matthew 10:22 “And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.”

1 John 2:19 “They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.”

Jesus clearly taught that if we deny or reject Him as our Lord and Savior, He will reject us as part of His family before the Father.

Matthew 10:33 “But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.”

In verse 13 the Greek for “believe not” equates unbelief with disobedience. Paul is saying that no matter what our response is to the Lord, He will be faithful to the truth of His word. His character will not allow Him to contradict or renounce Himself.

Malachi 3:6 "For I am the LORD, I change not...."

1 Peter 1:25 "But the word of the Lord endureth for ever."

2Timothy 2:14 ¶ Of these things put them in remembrance, charging them before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers.

I like the NLT translation of this verse: *"Remind everyone of these things, and command them in God's name to stop fighting over words. Such arguments are useless, and they can ruin those who hear them."*

I like this strategy. No matter how people might try to twist the truth of God's word towards their own objectives, just keep repeating the truth of God's word and let it speak for itself. Arguing often results in confusing those who are witness to it. God's word is living and powerful and will accomplish God's intended purpose.

Hebrews 4:12 "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

Isaiah 55:11 "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."

I like this quote from David Guzik: "If we take the focus off the message of God, and put the focus on human opinions and endless debates, it will result in the ruin of the hearers."

2Timothy 2:15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

In this verse Paul instructs Timothy to be a diligent student of God's word. When we study and are able to share His truth correctly with others, God is pleased with us. When we share the truth of God's word, we can stand before Him blameless and confident.

I think it is important to note that our focus should be on pleasing God—not men.

I enjoy studying the word of God and am very privileged to have the time and tools to facilitate such study. I pray constantly for the Lord's guidance in the process because I tremble at misrepresenting Him, but I am thrilled at having the opportunity to share my journey with others. Obviously, I still have much to learn and always try to be careful in declaring my conclusions as just that—my conclusions, subject to change upon further revelation from the Holy Spirit. I will say, however, that I know that I have made many correct conclusions. God knows my heart and that I work very hard at considering context and comparing

scripture with scripture. I continually pray for Him to correct me where I am wrong.

2Timothy 2:16 But shun profane *and* vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness.

2Timothy 2:17 And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus;

2Timothy 2:18 Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some.

Paul continues instructing Timothy by telling him to avoid irreverent and fruitless discussions; they inevitably lead to ungodliness. These are the types of discussions that can cause a believer to resort to anger and /or misrepresenting Jesus. False teaching tends to spread quickly like an ulcer or gangrene, and we should try to avoid giving it any type of platform. Paul then gives examples of individuals who employ such methods. He identifies Hymenaeus and Philetus as false teachers and then identifies the specific heresy they are promoting. That heresy appears to have destroyed the faith of some people. This reminds of the parable of the sower and the seed that tries to take root but is unable to grow because it fell on stony ground.

Matthew 13:20–21 “But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.”

I agree with the following quote from Ray Stedman: “We can be confident that those who really are Christians will ultimately see the error that is involved, and leave it. That is where our faith can rest.” I think this truth becomes clearer in the following verses.

Note again that Paul publicly names false teachers and identifies the lie they are promoting; in this instance it was that the resurrection had already occurred. Obviously, this is not talking about the resurrection of Jesus, but the resurrection of believers to eternal life. It was someone teaching that very heresy that upset the believers in Thessalonica and prompted Paul’s letters to that body of believers.

Some commentators conclude that the false teaching was that baptism represented our spiritual resurrection and there was no further expectation for the future.

2Timothy 2:19 ¶ Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

I like the NIV translation of this verse: “Nevertheless, God’s solid foundation stands firm, sealed with this inscription: “The Lord knows those who are his,” and, “Everyone who confesses the name of the Lord must turn away from wickedness.”

“God’s solid foundation stands firm” is the same as saying that the truth of His word will stand forever. (cf 1Peter 1:25 quoted above) That word declares two truths:

- The Lord knows those who have faith in Him.
- Those who believe Him will choose to obey Him.

John 10:27–28 “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.”

John 14:21 “He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.”

James 2:26 “For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.”

The mention of a seal is an exclamation point on this truth; the Greek states that the seal is to “protect from misappropriation” and to serve as a “mark of genuineness.”

2Timothy 2:20 But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour.

2Timothy 2:21 If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master’s use, and prepared unto every good work.

Scripture often refers to people as vessels or instruments for the Lord’s use.

Jeremiah 18:4–6 “And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it. Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying, O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the LORD. Behold, as the clay is in the potter’s hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel.”

Jeremiah 22:28 “Is this man Coniah a despised broken idol? is he a vessel wherein is no pleasure?”

Acts 9:15 “But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel....” (speaking of Saul)

To purge oneself speaks of maintaining cleanliness. I think the context is clearly comparing people of faith and obedience to vessels of honor that are set apart for the master’s use in doing good. In context, Paul is probably declaring those who rightly divide the word of truth as vessels of honor and the false teachers as

those of dishonor. In that context we know that it is the truth of the word of God that cleanses us.

Ephesians 5:25–26 “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word....”

2Timothy 2:22 ¶ Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

Paul goes on to encourage cleanliness and purity by instructing Timothy to flee the fleshly lusts that provide such great temptation in our youth. Instead, he should pursue and do that which is righteous and aligns with God’s word. He should persevere in his faith. His life should characterize love, kindness and unity with fellow believers.

The only way we have to judge purity of heart is by observing one’s character and how he acts in relationship to others. Obviously, only God knows what is in one’s heart; but we should always choose to err on the side of love.

2Timothy 2:23 But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes.

Again, Paul emphasizes the importance of avoiding participating in foolish and stupid arguments that can yield no spiritual benefit and can only cause fighting.

2Timothy 2:24 And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient,

2Timothy 2:25 In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;

2Timothy 2:26 And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.

As a servant of the Lord, we must strive to emulate His example. We should strive to be kind to everyone—even to those who would try to provoke us. We (especially pastors) should be ready to teach God’s word and be patient and meek in the process. Our hope should always be focused on the possibility that God will convict them of their sin and lead them to saving faith. That will deliver them from the power of Satan and from the captivity of sin that has caused them to follow his will.

“they may recover themselves” – God is working a work in their lives, but they are participating in the process.

As long as we are in sin, we are subject to the power of Satan over us.

1 John 3:7–8 “Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil

sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil."