

2 Timothy Chapter 2

Verses 1-7: Paul warns Timothy of the difficulties of the ministry and urges him to “be strong,” in contrast to those who defected. “Faithful men” were to be selected and trained to be leaders and teachers. Thus, personal discipleship was to be a vital part of Timothy’s leadership.

“Endure hardness” (“literally, “suffer affliction”): Paul illustrates this truth by a soldier, an athlete, and a farmer, all of whom suffer privation in order to be rewarded. “Strive lawful”, means to play according to the rules.

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

“My son”: Paul had led Timothy to Christ during his first missionary journey (1 Cor. 4:17; 1 Tim. 1:2, 18).

“Be strong”: Here is the main admonition in the first part of the letter. Paul is calling for Timothy to overcome his apparent drift toward weakness and renew his commitment to his ministry.

This is the same Scripture as the following one, just worded a little differently.

Ephesians 6:10 "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might."

It is not in our strength that we do anything; it is in the strength of the Lord. In our weakness, He is strong.

2 Timothy 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."

“Heard of me” (see notes on 1:13; 3:14). During Timothy’s many years of close association with Paul, he had heard divine truth which God had revealed through the apostle.

“Among many witnesses”: Such as Silas, Barnabas, Luke, and many others in the churches who could attest to the divine authenticity of Paul’s teaching, a needed reminder to Timothy in light of the many defections at Ephesus (1:15).

“Faithful men, who shall be able to teach others”: Timothy was to take the divine revelation he had learned from Paul and teach it to other faithful men, men with proven spiritual character and giftedness, who would in turn pass on those truths to another generation.

From Paul to Timothy to faithful men to others encompasses 4 generations of godly leaders. That process of spiritual reproduction, which began in the early church, is to continue until the Lord returns.

It seems to me, that Paul is more concerned about the work being carried on after his death, than he is of dying. He is also, very concerned that they do not teach another gospel, than the gospel that he had taught. Paul knows that Timothy will bring what he has taught him.

He is telling Timothy to seek out later ministers that had begun under his ministry, and encourage them to teach the pure gospel that he had brought. Paul was afraid that many of the

doctrines would be affected too badly by the customs of the people who they were ministering to. Paul felt that his converts would follow his teachings better, when they were teaching others.

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

“A good soldier”: The metaphor of the Christian life as warfare, against the evil world system, the believer’s sinful human nature, and Satan, is a familiar one in the New Testament (2 Cor. 10:3-5; Eph. 6:10-20; 1 Thess. 4:8; 1 Tim. 1:18; 4:7; 6:12). Here Paul is dealing with the conflict against the hostile world and the persecution (verses 9; 1:8; 3:11-12; 4:7).

There is a battle going on between the flesh and the Spirit, and it has been going on ever since Paul spoke this and before. Every person who ministers in any capacity is a soldier in God's army. We are in this war to the death. Paul knew this, as he faced death.

Since Paul was martyred, there have been many believers who have given their lives for the gospel's sake. This war is real. We are told, in the 6th chapter of Ephesians, to put on the whole armor of God in this battle.

We must be willing to face any hardship in the name of Jesus. Jesus is our Commander and Chief. We march at His orders. Paul speaks with full knowledge of this war that rages. He faced many hardships in his ministry, and is warning Timothy to be prepared.

2 Timothy 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."

“Entangleth himself”: Just as a soldier called to duty is completely severed from the normal affairs of civilian life, so also must the good soldier of Jesus Christ refuse to allow the things of the world to distract him (James 4:4; 1 John 2:15-17).

Paul is explaining to Timothy the necessity of having nothing else on his mind while he is a soldier of the gospel. He cannot divide his attention with other things of the world and win the battle. Soldiers must concentrate on one thing, and that is winning the war. This means that his thoughts cannot be divided with a job, or any other affair at hand.

A good soldier must be well trained. He must keep his weapon (Bible), with him at all times. He must watch his powder (Word of God), and not let it get wet. It greatly concerns me that many ministers today are using watered down versions of the Word of God.

Any version of the Bible that leaves out the blood, or that indicates in any way that Jesus was not God in the flesh, is dangerous. That would be getting our powder wet. The power of our weapon is the Word of God within its covers. The two-edged Sword is the Bible, Old and New Testament.

When over 30,000 Israelites were with Gideon to fight, God had Gideon send all of them home but 300. This 300 did not even lay their weapon down to drink. It is important for a soldier of the Lord's to keep his Bible with him all the time.

Only one out of 100 pleased the Commander and Chief. They were all Israelites (symbolic of believers). Are you the 1 in 100 who will take up the battle for our Lord Jesus Christ?

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

“Strive for masteries”: The Greek verb *athleo* expresses the effort and determination needed to compete successfully in an athletic event (1 Cor. 9:24). This is a useful picture of spiritual effort and untiring pursuit of the victory to those familiar with events such as the Olympic Games and the Isthmian Games (held in Corinth).

“Crowned ... lawfully”: All an athlete’s hard work and discipline will be wasted if he or she fails to compete according to the rules. This is a call to obey the Word of God in the pursuit of spiritual victory.

Paul is saying, whatever you do, do it within the law. Do not take shortcuts. Fight the good fight within the law. Then when you win, you have done it honestly.

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

“Husbandman that laboreth”: “Hard-working” (husbandman), is from a Greek verb meaning “to labor to the point of exhaustion.” Ancient farmers worked long hours of backbreaking labor under all kinds of conditions, with the hope that their physical effort would be rewarded by a good harvest.

Paul is urging Timothy not to be lazy or indolent, but to labor intensely (Col. 1:28-29), with a view to the harvest (1 Cor. 3:5-8).

You cannot be a teacher of the Word of God, until you know the Word of God yourself. You cannot win people to Christ, until you are a Christian yourself. You must know how to work, before your work is productive.

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

Paul wants Timothy to read between the lines and understand what he is really saying to him. Jesus spoke in parables and then told His disciples the meaning of the parables. Paul is saying, let the Holy Spirit within you open your understanding to what I have said. You have ears to hear. Understand in your inner man.

“Consider”: The Greek word denotes clear perception, full understanding, and careful consideration. The form of the verb suggests a strong admonition by Paul, not mere advice, to give deep thought to what he was writing.

Verses 8-10: Paul cites two examples of endurance: the supreme example of One who endured such hardship, “Jesus Christ”, and the human example of one who endured such hardship, Paul himself.

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

“Remember ... Jesus Christ”: The supreme model of a faithful teacher (verse 2), soldier (verses 3-4), Athlete (verse 5), and farmer (verse 6). Timothy was to follow His example in teaching, suffering, pursuing the prize, and planting the seeds of truth for a spiritual harvest.

“Raised from the dead”: The resurrection of Christ is the central truth of the Christian faith (1 Cor. 15:3-4, 17, 19). By it, God affirmed the perfect redemptive work of Jesus Christ (see note on Rom. 1:4).

“Seed of David” (see notes on Rom. 1:3; Rev. 22:16); As David’s descendant, Jesus is the rightful heir of his throne (Luke 1:32-33). The Lord’s humanity is stressed.

There are some things that are basic to Christianity. One of the things is to believe that Jesus Christ rose from the dead.

Romans 10:9 "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."

You see, believing that Jesus rose from the dead is basic to salvation. Paul throws in that Jesus fulfilled the law of the Jews (He was seed of David). Mary was descended from David.

"According to my gospel", just means that Paul preached and taught the resurrection of Jesus.

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

“I suffer ... but the word ... is not bound”: Paul contrasts his imprisonment for the sake of the gospel to the unfettered power of the Word of God.

Preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ, and in it proclaiming the resurrection of Jesus, is what brought Paul to Rome in chains. His trouble with the Jews, which started his imprisonment, was because he told them they had rejected their Messiah.

Some Jews do not believe in life after death, and that was another thing he had taught. They had him imprisoned, and he had appealed to Caesar in Rome.

2 Timothy 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."

“For the elect’s sakes”: Those of the elect, having been chosen for salvation from before the world began (see note on 1:9), who had not yet come to faith in Jesus Christ (see notes on Acts 18:10; Titus 1:1).

“The salvation which is in Christ Jesus”: There is salvation in no one else (Acts 4:12; Rom. 8:29; Eph. 1:4-5). The gospel must be proclaimed (Matt. 28:19; Acts 1:8), because the elect are not saved apart from faith in Christ (Rom. 10:14).

“Eternal glory”: The ultimate outcome of salvation (see notes on Rom. 5:2; 8:17).

Elect has to do with election or predestination. I do not believe we are chosen to be saved. I believe that all mankind who believes in Jesus Christ are chosen to be saved. This is an act of our own free will. I do believe that Almighty God foreknew who those who would believe were and wrote their names in the Lamb's book of life.

The "elect" then, would be those who will choose to follow Jesus Christ as their Savior. Paul endured these hardships, so that all who would believe would have that opportunity.

Colossians 1:27 "To whom God would make known what [is] the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory."

When we are born again, we no longer live this life, but Christ lives the life within us.

Galatians 2:20 "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

Verses 11-13: The principles of endurance are enumerated on the basis of the assurance of salvation.

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

"Faithful saying": The saying is (in verses 11-13; see note on 1 Tim. 1:15).

"Dead with him ... live with him": This refers to believers' spiritual participation in Christ's death and resurrection (Rom. 6:4-8), including also the possibility of suffering martyrdom for the sake of Christ, as the context would indicate.

In water baptism, we bury that old man of flesh in that watery grave and a new man of the spirit rises from that grave. The flesh represents sins of this life. We rise a new creature in Christ. Our sin died on the cross on the body of Jesus Christ. Our new nature is a spirit nature. Jesus is the quickening Spirit.

Read the 15th chapter of 1 Corinthians beginning with the 40th verse to understand this better. Because He arose, we shall rise also. To die with Him, is to put our affections on things in the heavens, and not on things of this sinful earth.

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

"Suffer": Believers who persevere give evidence of the genuineness of their faith (see note on Matt. 24:13; Matt. 10:22; John 8:31; Rom. 2:7; Col. 1:23).

"Reign with him": In His future eternal kingdom (Rev. 1:6; 5:10; 20:4, 6).

"If we deny him, he also will deny us": Speaks of a final, permanent denial, such as that of an apostate (see note on 1 Tim. 1:19), not the temporary failure of a true believer like Peter (Matt. 26:69-75). Those who so deny Christ give evidence that they never truly belonged to Him (1 John 2:19), and face the fearful reality of one day being denied by Him (Matt. 10:33).

We read of this very thing (in Mark 8).

Mark 8:38 "Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

Romans 8:17 "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with [him], that we may be also glorified together."

The following Scripture is in the very words of Jesus when He is saying what will happen to those who recognize Him and work for Him on the earth.

Matthew 25:21 "His lord said unto him, Well done, [thou] good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord."

2 Timothy Chapter 2 Questions

1. What does Paul call Timothy in verse 1?
2. What Scripture, from Ephesians, is saying the same thing?
3. Where does the strength of the believer come from?
4. What is Paul more concerned about than his death?
5. Who did Paul tell Timothy to commit his teachings to?
6. What was Paul afraid might happen to the gospel?
7. Paul told Timothy to endure hardness as whom?
8. What is the battle that is raging even today between?
9. This war is so real, that many will be _____.
10. Where do we find what the whole armor of God is?
11. Who is our Commander and Chief?
12. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the _____ of this life.
13. What should soldiers be concentrating on?
14. What is the Christian's weapon?
15. How can you tell, if you are reading a watered down version of the Bible?
16. How many of the 30,000 Israelites, finally went to war with Gideon?

17. Why were these 300 chosen?
18. Are you in the 1 in 100 who will take up the battle for our Lord Jesus Christ?
19. Verse 5 says we must war _____.
20. You cannot be a teacher of the Word, until what?
21. What must you be, before you can win someone to Christ?
22. What is verse 7 really saying?
23. Who was Jesus Christ seed of in verse 8?
24. What are some of the things basic to Christianity?
25. What does "according to my gospel" mean?
26. What had brought Paul to Rome in chains?
27. Paul endured all things for the _____ sake.
28. Who are "the elect"?
29. What should happen in water baptism?
30. Where can we read thoroughly about the resurrection of the dead?
31. If we suffer, we shall also _____ with Him.