

Guard the Gospel – 2 Timothy

2 Timothy 2:1-13

“Strengthened by God’s Grace” – June 23, 2019



Introduction

Getting through any challenge means we need to have the right expectations. If we *think* we’re going on vacation when we’re *actually* beginning military boot camp, you’re not only going to be in for a rude awakening – you’ll likely lack the fortitude needed to make it. Knowing the challenges Timothy is facing as a pastor in Ephesus...and knowing he and the church need to guard the gospel, Paul encourages him by setting realistic expectations for serving as a pastor *and* following Jesus.

Pray

Before you begin, take some time to ask God to help you understand His word, to reveal what needs to change in you, and for the grace to follow Him in response. To help, use [Psalm 119:33-40](#) as a prayer for God to open His word up to you.

Sermon Outline

- I. Following Jesus demands dedication (2:1-7)
- II. Following Jesus is worth it (2:8-13)

Read & Discuss

1. Read [2 Timothy 2:1-7](#)

To set the stage, Paul reminds Timothy in [v3](#) the Christian is in a spiritual battle and is thus called to be a faithful soldier (see Ephesians 6:10-20, 1 Timothy 1:18, 2 Timothy 4:7). To explain what that looks like he provides three metaphors – each showing what’s necessary to be a good soldier: 1) The single-minded soldier, 2) The athlete who competes according to the rules, 3) The hard-working farmer. Take some time to think over each of these metaphors Paul gives Timothy (and to us). Are you distracted by *civilian pursuits* that entangle you and keep you from following Christ? Are you at risk of cutting corners and watering things down in God’s word to avoid the difficulties that come with following Jesus? Are there ways you’ve grown lazy or impatient?

These metaphors remind us of the challenge of following Christ, but thankfully, God promises us help! Knowing that strength comes from the grace that is *in Christ Jesus* ([2:1](#)) what does it look like; what do we need to do to be *strengthened*? To ensure the church is guarding the gospel, Paul calls Timothy to entrust God’s word to others who will turn around and teach others also ([2:2](#)). Discipling is the idea of two (or more) people encouraging each other spiritually – meeting up on a regular basis to pray for each other, spur each other on, hold each other accountable, read and discuss the Bible together and help each other follow Jesus. Who are you meeting with to be encouraged and encourage them to follow Jesus?

Additional Reading: Luke 14:25-33

2. Read [2 Timothy 2:8-13](#)

Jesus once taught, "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field" (Matthew 13:44). This illustrates what Paul is showing Timothy: notice the field cost him 'all that he has' but he buys the field 'in his joy'! How can someone lose all they have with joy? By knowing that the treasure that is *in* that field far outweighs the cost. Why is the cost of following Jesus worth it? Because...

a) We get Jesus (2:8-9a). We need God to open our eyes to His value...but make no mistake knowing Jesus is the greatest privilege, treasure, and joy we can know. Take a moment to look carefully at [Philippians 3:7-8](#). Pray this would be true in our lives too!

b) We get to introduce *others* to Jesus (2:9b-10). This is why Paul endured suffering – that others may be saved. In light of [Romans 10:13-15](#), what does it look like for you to proclaim this gospel message...even if it hurts?

c) Because God is true (2:11-13). Here we see both encouragement and warning. It is not a call to work to *earn* God's favor (we are saved by grace through faith [[Eph. 2:8-9](#)]) – it is the fruit of God's Spirit at work in our lives to *help* us persevere. Take some time, even now, to ask God to hold us fast, help us to trust Him in difficult times and help us to endure to the end.

Additional Reading: Romans 8:18, 2 Corinthians 4:17

Prayer of Response

1) After hearing God's Word, what sin do I need to *confess*? From what do I need to *repent*?

2) How should my life be lived this week based on what I have heard? What should I *understand, believe, desire, or do*?

Spend time praying together in response to God's word asking for His help and greater faith to follow Him in the week to come.

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***Next week's sermon text:** we turn to **2 Timothy 2:14-26** "Rightly Handle the Word of Truth"