

The Book of 2 Timothy
Lesson 2 – 2 Timothy 1:15-2:13
A Blueprint for Living
“Endurance”

All in Asia had forsaken Paul. The two men he names may have been members of the Ephesian church, men whom Timothy would know personally. But there was another man who had remained true, Onesiphorus. This godly man was probably a deacon at Ephesus. This man came to Rome, sought Paul, and served him without fear or shame.

“My son” in 2:1 suggests that Timothy had been born into God’s family by faith in Christ. In Eph. 2:19, Paul calls the local church the “household of God.” The only way to enter this family is by being born of the Spirit and the Word.

Every Christian is already a soldier in God’s army; it is just that some troops are loyal and some are not. We have been “enrolled” by Christ, the Captain of our salvation. Christians must learn how to endure hardship for Christ. The Christian life is not a playground; it is a battleground.

There are in Paul’s letters more than two dozen references to athletics: boxing, wrestling, running, to name a few. No matter how skilled the athletes were, they had to obey the rules of the game. If they won the race but broke the rules, they were disqualified. It takes discipline, dedication, and direction for an athlete to be a winner, and it takes these same qualities to produce a winning Christian life.

We now see the picture of the hardworking farmer. The church is a garden, and the seed is the Word of God. Various servants plant, water, and harvest the seed in due season. It takes time, patience, and hard work to develop a fruitful garden.

Paul now reminds Timothy that he too was suffering, but that their suffering had a dual blessing in it: they were suffering for and with Christ, and their suffering was for the benefit of the church.

Timothy was being attacked by false teachers, just as the church is attacked today. What are we to do? First, remind the people to stick to essentials and not to argue about empty words and philosophies. Second, be sure to rightly divide the Word, being diligent to handle it carefully. Paul warns that false doctrine “eats like a cancer or ulcer,” and that the only remedy is the “healthy doctrine” of the Word of God.

Read 2 Timothy 1:15-18 and answer the following questions.

1. In 1:15-18 Paul describes the actions of some Christians. Many had deserted him, but Onesiphorus has remained committed to Paul. Why do you think Paul inserted these comments and prayers between 1:1-14 and 2:1-13?

2. What four good things are said about Onesiphorus?

3. In verses 16-18 what two things did Paul desire of the Lord?

Read 2 Timothy 2:1-9 and answer the following questions.

4. In what did Paul want Timothy to be strong in?

5. In your own words, define God's Grace?

6. What did Paul want Timothy to do with the things he had taught him?

7. What three illustrations does Paul use to encourage Timothy to endure hardship and to work hard?

8. Paul encourages Timothy to “endure hardship,” and then uses three examples to motivate him. What point is Paul making about Timothy’s work with each of these examples? To answer, first describe the characteristics Paul says make a soldier, athlete, and farmer effective. Then explain how those characteristics apply to the Christian servant.

9. Choose one of Paul’s three examples in 2:4-6. How does its lesson apply to you in your serving the Lord?

Read 2 Timothy 2:10-13 and answer the following questions.

10. Paul reveals his attitude toward others in 2:10. How can you develop a similar attitude? Does it require any action on your part?

11. According to verses 10-13 what convictions enable and encourage Paul to have this attitude?

12. In 2:1-13 what motivates you the most to endure in serving the Lord?

Mentoring, Kingdom Style

“And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.” 2 Timothy 2:2

Here Paul describes the powerful process of mentoring (Advise or train someone, especially a younger colleague). Just as he had helped Timothy during a period in his development, he challenged him to mentor others, who in turn could become mentors and keep the reproductive cycle going. Believers today should model this pattern of older believers working with younger ones to “pass on the things they have learned.” Here are a few examples from the New Testament.

Barnabas with Paul: A wealthy landowner from Cyprus, Barnabas stood up for Paul. He introduced him to church leaders and supported his conversion.

Barnabas with John Mark: In an intense split with Paul, Barnabas took young John Mark home with him to Cyprus and rebuilt his confidence (Acts 15:36-39). Years later, Paul changed his opinion, describing John Mark as “useful to me for ministry.”

Priscilla and Aquila with Apollos: Manufactures of temporary living units (tents), Priscilla and Aquila drew alongside gifted but confused Apollos, tutoring him in the faith and sponsoring his ministry.

Paul with Timothy: Paul recruited young Timothy and built on the foundation laid by this young man’s mother and grandmother, enlisting him as a fellow traveler and mentored him in the faith.

Paul with Philemon: Paul helped Philemon, a wealthy leader in Colossae deal with a runaway slave who had broken the law.