

Kiama Anglican Church
Christ Church Kiama with St. Paul's Minnamurra

Grace and Strength

“Strong in the Grace that is in Christ Jesus”



LEADER'S NOTES

2 Timothy

Studies in The Second Letter of Paul to Timothy

Bible Studies : Term 4 : 2010

Grace and Strength

“Strong in the Grace that is in Christ Jesus”

2 Timothy

It is the early 60s AD and Paul is once again in prison in Rome. When we studied Philippians he was also in Rome in prison but it would appear he was released, as he hoped, and was able to continue ministry. Now he has been arrested again and to the best of our understanding he will only leave prison on this occasion to be taken out and beheaded.

Timothy, Paul’s friend, associate and protégé, is a young church leader in the bustling cosmopolitan port of Ephesus where in Act 19 Paul had had a hand in establishing a growing church. Paul had written the church a letter, Ephesians, reminding them of what God had done for them by grace and encouraging them to live lives worthy of the gospel and stand strong in the faith. Now Timothy leads this maturing Church.

Paul has written an earlier letter and now writes again to Timothy, the elder apostle to the younger disciple and church leader. His message is one of encouragement and challenge, of love and support, of truth and warning.

This letter however is not merely for one Church Leader in one town nearly 2000 years ago. Our Lord God through His Holy Spirit has seen fit to preserve this letter to guide, encourage and challenge us as we too seek to live as followers of the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is my prayer that through the study of these 4 brief chapters we will all grow in our relationship to our Lord, to our church and to one another.

Greg Holmes - August 2010

THE STUDIES

Study Date	Topic	Passage	Page No	
1	Sun 17 Oct	Guard the gospel.	2 Timothy 1:1-12	5
2	Sun 24 Oct	Suffer for the gospel	2 Timothy 1:13-2:13	7
3	Sun 31 Oct	Stand firm for the gospel	2 Timothy 2:14-26	9
	Sun 7 Nov	<i>David Mansfield : Visiting Speaker.</i>		
4	Sun 14 Nov	Continue in the gospel	2 Timothy 3:1-17	11
5	Sun 21 Nov	Proclaim the gospel	2 Timothy 4:1-22	13

If you want a good introduction to this epistle Mark Dever’s overview sermon (a bit over an hour long) which can be found at www.capitolhillbaptist.org/audio/1999/12/26/loneliness-the-message-of-2-timothy/ is a great, thought provoking resource.

References:

- Earle, R. “2 Timothy” in Gaebelin, F.E.; Douglas, J.D. (Eds) The Expositors Bible Commentary (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1990) cited as EBC.
- Fee, G.D. 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus (New International Biblical Commentary) (Peabody, Hendrickson, 1988)
- Guthrie, D. “2 Timothy” in Carson, D.A.; France, R.T.; Motyer, J.A.; Wenham, G.J. (Eds) New Bible Commentary (21st Century Edition) (Leicester, Inter-Varsity Press, 1994) cited as NBC.
- Guthrie, D. The Pastoral Epistles (Tyndale New Testament Commentaries) (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1990)
- Liefeld, W.L. 1 & 2 Timothy / Titus (The NIV Application Commentary) (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1999)
- Stott, John, The Message of 2 Timothy : Guard the Gospel (Bible Speaks Today Series) (Leicester, IVP, 1973)

THE SECTIONS OF THE STUDIES

Read the Bible

This is the passage for the week. Most are short and should be read as a whole, in the group before you start the studies.

Discuss

The following three sections are the study proper. They are for the group meeting. As the leader you need to make some choices about which ones to do and how much time to spend on each.

Explore the Basics

These look at the basic ideas in the passage. I would recommend that each week you do these.

Deeper and Wider

As the heading suggests these dig deeper into the themes of the passage or look more widely at Scripture. It is probably among these that you as leader need to make some choices. Of course if you decide to have a go at them all I am sure it will be worthwhile.

Apply

These Questions should be done each week or at least you should work hard in your group each week to APPLY the lessons learnt to daily, everyday, hard slog, living in our world.

We need to make the rubber of the ‘idea’ hit the road of our lives, thoughts and actions. - One of the problems in writing ‘application’ type questions is not knowing where all the individuals in groups etc. are up to. If you, as the group leader, can see a better application of the material - DO IT. - The important thing is to relevantly apply what we are talking about to our lives.

For next week : This is the passage for next week.

Please note that my answers below are not the ‘correct’ answers or what you are trying to get to in the study. I have set them out as a guide to my thinking only and an assistance to you.

*These Leaders Notes are meant to be the start of the assistance I am willing to give in regard to the studies. If you need anything further DO NOT hesitate to contact me.
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From EBC:

Summary of 1 and 2 Timothy Paul begins his First Epistle to Timothy by warning him against false teachers, who seem to have been Judaizers (1:3-11). He thanks “Christ Jesus our Lord” for his amazing grace to him, “the worst of sinners” (1:12-20). Chapter 2 is taken up with instructions for public worship, chapter 3 with the qualifications of the overseers and deacons in the church. In Chapter 4 Paul gives personal instructions to Timothy, again warning him against false teachers (vv.1-5) and admonishing him to maintain sound doctrine and sound discipline (vv.6-16). Chapter 5 deals mainly with the place of widows in the church (vv.3-16) and the treatment of elders (vv.17-20). Chapter 6 has instructions for slaves (vv.1, 2) and more warnings against false teachers (vv.3-5) and the love of money (vv.6-10). After a personal charge to Timothy (vv.11-16), Paul gives special instructions to the rich (vv.17-19).

The second Epistle is much more personal, written near the close of Paul’s life. He talks more directly to Timothy than in the first letter, urging him to maintain the spiritual glow (1:1-7) and to be a faithful partner of his in suffering for the gospel (1:8-2:13). Again the apostle warns against the false teachers (2:14-19) and urges Timothy to be a noble servant of Christ (2:20-26). The third chapter contains a description of conditions in the last days (vv.1-9). Then the aged apostle gives his final charge to his son in the faith (3:10-4:5) and his own testimony (4:6-8). The Epistle closes with personal remarks about the current situation (4:9-18) and the final greetings (4:19-21) and benediction (4:22).

Because these two letters were written primarily to an individual whom Paul loved dearly, they provide us with some valuable insights into his life and character. Yet, through his associate Timothy, Paul is speaking to the entire church at Ephesus, and indeed to the whole church of Jesus Christ today.

**Dever – “ So Paul writes to Timothy about three things:
keeping the message, counting the cost, enduring to the end.”**

Study 1: 2 Timothy 1:1-12

Day	Reading	To Think On	To Pray About	Personal Prayer Points
1	2 Timothy 1: 1-12	Paul’s unquenchable faith.	Thank God for the Christians who minister to you	
2	1 Timothy 1-2	The meaning of grace, mercy and peace.	For all those in authority over us.	
3	Psalms 34:1-10	The gracious and faithful God we serve.	Praise God for who he is.	
4	Matthew 5: 1-16	What it means to be ‘blessed.’	For strength to be ‘salt and light’	
5	Acts 19:1-41	Paul’s bold preaching in Ephesus.	For boldness from God to speak the gospel.	

NOTE : This grid for this set of studies is a bit different.

Day 1 is the 2 Timothy reading for the week.

Day 2 will have us read through 1 Timothy in the 5 weeks.

Day 3 is the Old Testament Reading that will be read in Church for this study.

Day 4 will have us read through the Sermon on The Mount in the 5 weeks.

Day 5 takes us on a Journey through the passages which relate to Ephesus in the New Testament.

Study 1: 2 Timothy 1:1-12

Guard the Gospel

It would be a valuable exercise to read aloud 2 Timothy together at the start of this series.

Liefeld – “Nevertheless, one has the sense in reading this letter of two friends talking. They are on the alert for trouble, but are reflecting mainly on their own lives and on how they are fairing in the conflict. Paul appears more as a mentor than as a commander. In 1 Timothy 1 he marveled at the grace of God in saving him and calling him to ministry. In 2 Timothy we see an additional element: Paul is suffering (1:11–12; 2:8–10; 3:10–13), but is trusting God for the future. Most scholars understand 4:6–8 as expressing his sense of impending execution. Picture Timothy reading this letter privately with deep emotion, possibly sharing some of it with the church (perhaps less of it than of the first letter, though eventually he gave it out for “publication”). We can only imagine his feelings when he read this again after Paul’s death.”

Explore the Basics

Read the passage carefully together.

1. Who is the letter to and from? What greeting is given?

Note the wording

The Letter is from Paul

He describes himself as:

an apostle of Christ Jesus.

By the will of God

According to the promise of Life

That is in Christ Jesus

He addresses the letter to Timothy

Who is Paul’s ‘dear son’.

NBC – “When he adds according to the promise of life, the words have a double meaning, referring to a future hope as well as to a present reality. The description of Timothy as my dear son adds a note of particular intimacy ”

Fee on ‘according to the promise of life that is in Christ Jesus– “It is not at all surprising, given the nature of this letter with its more intensified eschatological outlook, that Paul should reflect on his apostleship in such eschatological terms at the outset. The promise of life that which is ‘for the future’ in 1 Tim 4:8; but it is also ours in the present as we participate in the ‘life that is in Christ Jesus.’”

It is important to note here and to remember as we study the rest of the letter that Paul, as he writes, is in prison awaiting trial. The outcome is not expected to be good and indeed it is not. What we have in 2 Timothy is Paul’s last words. And last words should be paid heed to..
Dever – “Imagine for a moment an old man who is alone. He is in failing health. He is isolated from family and friends. And his so poor he cannot afford a winter coat. He changed careers in mid-life, but there is not pension plan or medical benefits with his own start-up organisation. Not only that, his new enterprise seems to be faltering. Oh, and one more thing: he is incarcerated under capital charges. If found guilty, he

could lose his life. And it looks like he will be found guilty.”

2. What does Paul pray for in v3-4?

First is a note of thanks for Timothy.

He then says he prays ‘constantly’ Timothy.

Then that he might see Timothy again.

Remember always throughout this letter that Paul is in prison facing almost certain death.

3. What is the believer’s role in his or her salvation (v8-10)? When was this decision made?

The believer’s role is passive it is God who acts.

Note well that this decision was made ‘before the beginning of time’.

This is an awesome fact. I don’t think I really understand it but it does speak of God’s faithfulness and his total control.

Liefeld – **“GRACE AND GOD’S PURPOSES.** *Immense and powerful truths are compressed in verses 8–10, ready to explode into the minds of the readers. Paul has already uncoiled some of these in his letter to the Ephesians, and the gist of Ephesians 2:1–7 finds expression in Titus 3:3–7. If Ephesians 2 teaches salvation by God’s grace, Ephesians 1:3–14 teaches the fact of God’s eternal purposes.”*

4. In v6 what is the gift of God? What is Timothy to do with it?

I take it from the context it is the grace of God and then Timothy’s own giftedness.

Timothy is to fan it into flame. To make it grow. To work at seeing it develop in his life.

NBC – *“Paul may have been thinking that he needed stimulating to put to the fullest use the gift received at his setting aside for the ministry. This gift was clearly connected with the Holy Spirit, as v 14 shows, and was therefore more than a natural gift. It is worth noting that even with the gift of the Spirit some human cooperation is needed if the flame is to be fanned.”*

Deeper and Wider

1. Read v7-8. What possible aspect of Timothy’s personality is Paul addressing? How does God help Timothy overcome this?

It would seem that Timothy, like lots of people, is not an overly confident person but rather ‘timid’.

God gives the Holy Spirit to overcome this.

It involves power, love and self discipline. – Worth discussing how you would use each of this to overcome timidity.

2. Verse 8 [Should be v7) speaks of ‘power’, ‘love’ and ‘self-discipline’.

What is the relationship between these three in the Christian life?

Each one is developed and constrained by the others.

EBC – *“The Christian gospel could never be furthered by men of craven spirit. Instead, the Christian minister receives a triad of graces, i.e. power, love and self-discipline. The spirit of power means not that the servant of God must of necessity be a powerful personality, but that he has strength of character to be bold in the exercise of authority. The power of the Holy Spirit within him has enabled many a [Vol 14: Pastoral, p. 145] naturally timid man to develop a boldness not his own when called in the name of God to fulfil a difficult ministry. The spirit of love is indispensable to all Christians, most of all to the chosen ministers of Christ, and none understood its power more clearly than the apostle who wrote the incomparable hymn of love in 1 Corinthians 13. The third feature is self-discipline which is equally necessary in ministry for no-one can have discipline over others who has not first subdued himself. The apostle here has more in mind that stoical self-effort, for the self-mastery is part of the divinely bestowed gift.”*

3. What are we told about Timothy’s background (v5)? What conclusion does Paul draw from this?

He comes from a Christian home. Worth noting that only his mother and grandmother are mentioned.

It is possible that the faith Paul speaks of is a Jewish faith but I don’t think that is likely given the context.

4. Read v10. What specific space/time events are reflected in these words? Why is this important?

*10 but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, - Jesus’ birth
who has destroyed death and - Jesus’ death
has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel Jesus’
Resurrection*

Because it grounds the gospel, referred to in v11 to reality. This is not merely a philosophical system

NBC – *“Paul develops the idea of grace (9-10). It is centred in Christ Jesus; it is of ancient origin (before the beginning of time); it is revealed through the incarnate Christ who has destroyed death.”*

Apply

1. What can we learn from Paul’s words to Timothy here? You might like to think about your backgrounds, your personality traits, and your commitment to the Gospel cause.

For discussion.

Picks up a few of the issues in the questions above.

Liefeld – “There is, in short, a mutuality in which God’s supernatural gifts and our response in obedience and character development work together. The gifts alone may result in visible accomplishments, but unless those gifts are allowed to work inwardly as well as outwardly, the spiritual and character development they should produce will not take place. They will be like faith without works and like the gifts of 1 Corinthians 12 without the love of 1 Corinthians 13. In short, churches, like parents and grandparents, must be much more alert to find and encourage Timothys and provide them with the prayer, spiritual resources, and support they need to serve God.”

2. Meditate on v12. Do you have that sort of conviction?

These are great words of assurance.

NBC – “Having urged Timothy in v 8 not to be ashamed, Paul now affirms that he himself is not ashamed of his suffering. He is buoyed up by the conviction that God is able to guard what Paul has entrusted to him. His assurance here is based on his personal knowledge of God. Paul leaves no room for lack of assurance. His conviction here amounts to a virtual certainty.”

For Next Week: Read 2 Timothy 1:13-2:13.

Study 2: 2 Timothy 1:13-2:13

Suffer for the Gospel

Explore the Basics

Read the passage carefully together.

1. From 1:13-14 what is Paul asking Timothy to do?

First remember what has been taught.

Second keep this pattern – stressing its relationship to Jesus and to faith and love.

Third – to guard it – here with the help of the Holy Spirit.

Interesting to explore the relationship between ‘keep’ and ‘guard’

NBC – *“Timothy’s task is to guard the deposit in the sense of keeping it safe. Paul is acutely aware that this can be achieved only through the help of the Spirit, who is the true guardian of the truth.”*

Leifeld – *“The emphasis given to “pattern” (being the first word in the Greek sentence), considered along with the key phrase “sound teaching” and with the instruction about guarding the deposit in verse 14, makes it unmistakably clear that Timothy is not at liberty to deviate from the apostolic teaching. The words “with faith and love in Christ Jesus” echo the dimension of personal piety that characterizes the Pastoral Letters, beginning with 1 Timothy 1:4 (faith), 1:5 (love and faith), and 1:19 (faith).”*

2. Read 1:15-18. What can you say about Paul’s relationships here? What do we learn about the man, Paul?

Paul’s relationships are a bit typical. Some are positive and some are negative.

Worth considering the sorts of things Onesiphorus did.

Paul here, in prison, is very conscious of his friends and those who have failed him. And these things affect him.

This sort of thing is taken up again in Chapter 4

Liefeld – *“The opening verses picture three qualities that should characterize Timothy: strength (v. 1), foresight (v. 2), and endurance (v. 3). Verses 4–6 contain three images: a military image, an athletic one, and an agricultural one. Verses 8–10 encompass two foci: the remembrance of Jesus Christ, and endurance for the sake of the elect. To put it another way, Timothy, like Paul, should focus on the gospel and on the salvation it brings. All this is followed by another of the “faithful sayings” in the Pastoral Letters, this time dealing with conditions and results.”*

3. What three illustrations does Paul use to illustrate Christian life (2:3-6)? What does each encourage us to do?

Soldier, Athlete, Farmer.

Soldier 3 Endure hardship with us like a good soldier of Christ Jesus. 4 No one serving as a soldier gets involved in civilian affairs—he wants to please his commanding officer. This one is about focus and commitment.

Athlete 5 Similarly, if anyone competes as an athlete, he does not

receive the victor’s crown unless he competes according to the rules. This is about being obedient to the rules. Possibly has endurance in mind as well.

Farmer 6 The hardworking farmer should be the first to receive a share of the crops. This is about the fruits that come from the labour.

7 Reflect on what I am saying, for the Lord will give you insight into all this. Paul obviously sees these as important because he pointedly tells Timothy to think about, meditate on these things. There is an application question about this.

NBC – *“The three illustrations which follow (3-6) are designed to encourage Timothy to persevere even if the task is difficult. The military metaphor shows the duty of singleness of purpose; the athletic one the need for abiding by the rules; and the agricultural one the certainty of some reward for the hard work involved. All three metaphors, drawn from everyday life, complement each other.”*

Fee – *“As Barrett nicely puts it: “Beyond warfare is victory, beyond athletic effort a prize, and beyond agricultural labour a crop.”*

4. 1:15,2:3,9,10 speak of Paul’s suffering as a Christian. Why is he reminding Timothy of this?

2Timothy 1:15 You know that everyone in the province of Asia has deserted me, including Phygelus and Hermogenes.

2Timothy 2:3 Endure hardship with us like a good soldier of Christ Jesus.

2Timothy 2:9 for which I am suffering even to the point of being chained like a criminal. But God’s word is not chained. 10 Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they too may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory.

Paul is reminding Timothy as an example of what he may have to do. In fact suffering is to be expected.

Deeper and Wider

1. What is the good deposit (1:14)?

We need to look back into the previous verses for clues though obviously Timothy and Paul have a long history and Timothy has much more than this letter to look back on.

Chapter One

1 ... the promise of life that is in Christ Jesus 2 ... Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord. 8 ... by the power of God, 9 who has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time, 10 but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. 12 ... I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him for that day.

You will note other elements of this in the rest of 2 Timothy 1 Timothy.

Dever – *“These are important commands for us too. As with Timothy, the message entrusted to us is unique. If we alter it, we lose it. So we must be careful to guard it. You and I are not called to give out another message; or to come up with something that has more surface appeal; or to craft a gospel better suited to modern needs, as we see them. We are called to give the gospel of Jesus Christ alone. If the gospel of Jesus Christ is altered it is lost.”*

Liefeld - ***“Holding a pattern of sound teaching.”*** *This is the first example in 2 Timothy of the characteristic theme of the Pastorals: the blend of sound teaching with godly living. Here the “pattern of sound teaching” is to be blended with “faith and love in Christ Jesus.” In this case, “faith” does not have an article and so may have to do with the application of faith in daily life rather than to the body of Christian doctrine (as it so often signifies in the Pastoral Letters). We are used to the words “sound teaching” in these letters, but the idea of a “pattern” has an added significance. A pattern or standard does not allow for deviation. There are objective ways of discerning when someone has deviated from a standard. Whether adding to, subtracting from, or changing the nature of a predetermined standard, no change is to be tolerated.”*

2. In 2:2 how does Paul envisage the gospel being spread? Where are we as a church in regard to doing this?

From one man to another.

There are four ‘generations’ of teaching here.

Paul -> Timothy -> reliable men -> others.

Liefeld – *“The word “entrust” is from the same root as the word translated “what I have entrusted” in 1:12 and “deposit” in 1:14. The teachings of Paul are something valuable that require “reliable” people to care for it and pass it on. The NIV “men” is unwarranted in the context, since the Greek word used (anthropos) is a generic term.”*

In our church do we see ourselves, personally and individually, fitting into this process? Do we each have people who ‘teach’ us and people we ‘teach’.

Liefeld – *“To mentor a Timothy means to be available, to spend time with him or her, and to seek to facilitate rather than to control the use of that person’s distinctive gifts. An athlete runs the race alone, but does so after months and perhaps years of training and encouragement. And not only the coach, but other friends and family may have a part in that encouragement along the way. In Paul Timothy had a person who was close to him, who listened and understood him, who recognized his individual giftedness, and who had confidence in him.”*

3. What does 2:8 tell us about Jesus? Why are these things important as part of the gospel

Jesus Christ – the names are significant

Raised from the Dead – Asserts in an important sense Jesus divinity – Notice that it is not ‘rose’ but ‘raised’ – it is the activity of God the Father to raise Jesus from the dead.

Descended from David. – Asserts Jesus’ humanity and his role as King, Ruler – And significantly reminds us that this is part of an eternal plan of God.

Liefeld – *“VERSE 8 MOVES from analogy to history. Whatever encouragement Timothy may receive from verses 1–7, it is the resurrection of Christ, the promised messianic descendent of David, that provides the strongest motivation.”*

NBC – *“In v 8 Paul gives a very brief summary of his gospel. It consists of three elements: Jesus was the Christ, God’s anointed one, the Messiah; he was raised from the dead (a statement which naturally involves his death); he was descended from David. The only other place where Paul mentions this fact is Rom. 1:3. It may have been included here to draw attention to the fulfilment of God’s promises.”*

Dever – *“Most fundamentally, the gospel of Christianity has to do with specific historical events, namely, the birth, the life and ministry, the death, and the resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth.”*

4. What does the ‘trustworthy saying’ in 2:11-13 tell us about ourselves and about God?

That God is no man’s debtor

That we are to persevere in the gospel.

That God will always be faithful because being faithful is part of being God.

It has been suggested that these verses look like part of an early

Christian hymn.

Apply

Liefeld – **Principles.** Embedded in this passage are at least two important principles. (1) The sound teaching Timothy has learned from Paul is to be passed on to those capable of transmitting it to other generations. This is the lifeline of Christianity. It has been said that Christianity is only one generation away from extinction. While that is improbable, it is theoretically true in that unless the life, faith, and teachings of vital Christianity are actively committed to the next generation, Christianity could become a footnote of history (cf. Jesus’ question in Luke 18:8). (2) Serving Christ is hard work, requiring total commitment. That is the message of the military, athletic, and agricultural images. However great the power of the Holy Spirit, unless Christians are wholly dedicated to the Lord and personally committed to his work, the channels through which the Holy Spirit wants to work will be clogged and atrophied. The fact that Paul urges Timothy in verse 7 to “reflect on what I am saying” and that he needs God-given “insight” into it show that these teachings require more than superficial assent.“

1. Paul asks Timothy to ‘reflect on’ what he says in 2:1-6. Share your reflections on these matters.

For discussion.

What actions are required.

Dever – *“In the new Testament Christianity always entails vocalising the gospel message to others. It is not something we can leave out. The very nature of this gospel requires it to be verbally spread.”*

2. Suffering for Christ is not a pleasant idea. How do you react to the idea that Christians should suffer for their faith?

For discussion.

Dever – *“If soldiers, athletes, and farmers endure for prizes less glorious and less lasting, can we not endure opposition for the sake of bringing the good news of Christ’s reconciling work to the world? Are you and I committed to being ‘obedient’ only when circumstances are favourable? Since when should circumstances be the lord of our lives, determining what we do and do not do?”*

For Next Week: Read 2 Timothy 2:14-26.

Study 3: 2 Timothy 2:14-26

Work for the Gospel

Explore the Basics

Read the passage carefully together.

1. In v14-16 what is Timothy’s task? ?

In the passage: 14 Keep reminding them of these things. Warn them before God against quarreling about words; it is of no value, and only ruins those who listen. 15 Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth. 16 Avoid godless chatter, because those who indulge in it will become more and more ungodly.

It is a bit hard to find a heading for these other than ‘leadership’.

The positives are ‘reminding’, ‘presenting yourself as one approved’ and ‘correctly handling the word of truth’.

Negatives are warning against quarrelling and ‘avoiding godless chatter’.

NBC – *“There are two requirements—an unashamed approach and a right handling of the word of truth. The latter will reinforce the former. The Greek verb translated correctly handles really means cutting a straight road and suggests straightforward exegesis. This must be the aim of all true teachers of the word. ‘Reading into’ the text what is clearly not there is of help to nobody but is depressingly common.”*

2. What have Hymenaeus and his friend been teaching? What is the problem with this?

That the resurrection has already happened.

The problem is that this leaves the present Christians out.

It denies the real meaning of the resurrection. See 1 Corinthians 15 for Paul’s views on the resurrection.

It is interesting that in so short a time after Jesus life and death that people are distorting elements of the gospel.

3. What is Timothy warned about in v22 and what should he do to heed the warning?

He is warned to flee the evil desires of youth.

The antidote is to actively work at (pursue) righteousness, faith, love, and peace.

Notice also that this is done in the fellowship and encouragement of other Christians.

Liefeld – “THE WORDS IN verse 21 about cleansing oneself are now explained in plain language. Verse 22 presents two contrasting objectives: “the evil desires of [1 & 2 Tim., Titus, p. 261] youth,” from which one should flee, and the pursuit of “righteousness, faith, love and peace.” The idea of fleeing and pursuing is similar to 1 Timothy 6:11, where the desired objects are “righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness.” Paul will also mention righteousness later in 2 Timothy in 3:16 and 4:8 (see also Titus 3:5).”

4. What does being the Lord’s servant look like (v24-25)?

Kind, able to teach, not resentful, instructing gently, hopeful of the work of the gospel.

Dever – *“This is a daunting list for anyone who wants to be a public teacher of Scripture. Consider what it requires: tenacity without meanness; firmness without harshness; and the ability to both articulately speak and wisely remain silent. This is what a teacher should be like. Actually, this is what all Christians should be like – utterly resolved to sacrifice themselves for the good of others and the glory of God.”*

Deeper and Wider

1. Read v15. From this verse and the rest of the passage what does the ‘approved workman’ look like?

We need first to recognise that we are ALL to be ‘workmen’ for God v15 not ashamed, handles God’s word correctly.

v16 Avoids godless chatter.

v20-21 By implication he seeks to be used for noble purposes.

v22 Flees evil desire, pursues righteousness, faith, love and peace – in fellowship.

v23 Doesn’t have anything to do with senseless arguments

v24-25 not a quarreller but kind, able to teach, no resentful, deals gently with those who oppose.

2. What does the illustration about ‘articles’ (v20-21) tell us about being a Christian?

I must admit I am not sure what all this means – Here are some commentators opinions:

NBC – *“ The illustration in vs 20-21 continues the building metaphor in v 19. But Paul now concentrates on the utensils used in a great house. The various materials out of which they are made stand for different purposes, some noble, others ignoble. The application here is somewhat confused, for wooden vessels are as necessary as golden and in fact are more frequently used. But Paul thinks of Christian workers as precious in God’s sight. Yet what does Paul mean by cleansing from ignoble use? Perhaps the best explanation is that Paul is still thinking of Hymenaeus and Philetus (cf. 1 Cor. 5:7 for a*

parallel use of the verb meaning to purge or cleanse). Here Paul is looking at the situation positively. Note the descriptions, holy, useful and prepared, which show the characteristics of an instrument for noble purposes. Paul clearly has a high view of the ministry.”

Fee – *“Thus ‘if a man (probably purposely ambiguous as in v19 but certainly moving back to include Timothy) cleanses himself (using the language of the ritual cleansing of vessel) he will’ become a “vessel of honour” (NIV ‘an instrument for noble purposes’). In applying the imagery, Paul has thus moved from the house that contains all sort of vessels to the good vessels themselves and argues that only these, with their ‘honourable’ purposes count (although it is not the value of the vessels, but their contents, i.e., purposes, that is the reason for ‘cleansing oneself. In particular Paul is anticipating what he will say to Timothy in verses 22-26, in light of verses 14-19, so he must therefore ‘cleansing himself from all such false teachings and behaviour.”*

Liefeld – *“THE IMAGERY OF verses 20–21 continues the theme of false teachers and teachings in verses 14–19, which concluded with the necessity of turning away from wickedness. Paul then introduces a new imagery, that of utensils in a house, which is encompassed in the larger imagery of the house and household. The “large house” does not imply anything about the size of the church at Ephesus, but is in reference to the narrative world of the parabolic saying.*

A large house, owned by a wealthy person, would have a variety of utensils. This is not simply a matter of better versus everyday tableware (as is implied in the word “ordinary” in NRSV). It is rather that some utensils are used for purposes that have an overtone of “dishonor,” “disgrace,” or “shame.”⁴ Such a purpose might be for removing excrement. This would be better understood by readers in cultures where, for example, the left hand is reserved for the dirty functions of living. It is this strong description that gives sense to verse 21 and its requirement to “cleansing” oneself from the latter group of utensils. This accomplishes the shift from the impersonal utensils of the image to the personal world of Timothy, who is to be “an instrument for noble purposes,” “holy [and] useful to the Master.”

Although it is customary for commentators to refer to Jesus’ parable of the weeds (Matt. 13:24–30, 36–43) and to Romans 9:19–21, the imagery stands on its own. The lesson concerning personal holiness is clear, and the idea of being “prepared to do any good work” for the Master looks ahead to 3:17.” (See also comment on Q3 above)

3. What is the hoped for result as the Lord’s servant works (v25-26)?

Conversions – People turning to Jesus and living for him – being saved.
EBC – *“It must be the aim of every Christian minister to lead to repentance those who are in opposition. Paul speaks of repentance as a work of God, but this does not absolve the offender from the responsibility of acknowledging his sin. This must be the aim of right instruction, for God is a God of mercy ever ready to forgive. It requires a change of mind to come to a knowledge of the truth. Repentance implies such a change of mind, which delivers a person from being in bondage to error. The same expression for recognition of the truth used here is found in 1 Timothy 2:4 denoting the divine desire for all men.”*

4. ‘Quarrelling’ and ‘godless chatter’ (v14, 16,23-24) are spoken against in the passage. What do these mean? What is their result? What should the godly person do about them?

Good to discuss what they can mean in our ‘modern’ church context. Their result is division, increasing ungodliness, unbelief, opposition to the teacher of the truth.

First thing to be done is to recognise them for what they are, Then to avoid them, don’t have anything to do with them.

Need to note that we do need to stand up for the truth and ‘gently instruct’ (v25) those who oppose the truth not just for arguments sake but with a view to repentance and belief (v25-26).

Liefeld – *“The advice Paul gives recalls some of the wisdom in the book of Proverbs:*

Whoever corrects a mocker invites insult... . Instruct a wise man and he will be wiser still. (Prov. 9:7, 9)

A man of knowledge uses words with restraint, a man of understanding is even-tempered. (17:27)

Do not speak to a fool, for he will scorn the wisdom of your words. (23:9)

Do not answer a fool according to his folly. (26:4)”

Apply

1. It is not only youth who have ‘evil desires’. How do we go about ‘fleeing’ them and pursuing righteousness (v22)?

For Discussion

2. One approved, a workman, noble ‘articles’, servants. How does this passage assist us to be truly godly people?

For Discussion.

The list in ‘Deeper and Wider’ Q1 will help.

For Next Week: Read 2 Timothy 3:1-17.

Study 4: 2 Timothy 3:1-17

Continue in the Gospel

Explore the Basics

Read the passage carefully together.

1. What times is Paul talking about in v1-5? What sort of people will characterise the age?

Paul is talking about the ‘last days’

I take it that this means the days between Jesus first and second comings. (Though not all the commentators would agree). It may be that there is an intensifying of this in the time immediately before Jesus return.

Note Daniel 12:1

The type of people are listed in v2-4

There is an interesting contrast between the first phrase of v2 and the last one of v4.

Examples – Just watch the news.

Liefeld – *“The reasons why the last days are so terrible are cited in verses 2–9, introduced by the word gar (“for,” omitted in NIV).”*

NBC – *“ There is clearly a close connection between the present and the future since although in this passage Paul speaks of the false teachers in the future, he has previously referred to them in the present. He is most concerned about the moral degeneracy which sets in as a consequence of wrong teaching. ”*

2. Read v6-9. What is Paul warning about here? How do we take heed?

We need to be careful, both men and women, of those who ‘look fair but are indeed foul’ to paraphrase Tolkien.

We can see some examples in our world.

The much maligned tele-evangelist in their extreme forms would seem to fit.

We need to be sure that v9 can be true of us. That we are biblically well informed enough to be able to see ‘their folly.’

Liefeld – *“Paul’s main point in verses 6–7 is not to malign women but to show the treachery of the false teachers. One of the ways in which these people carried on their skullduggery is underhandedly to “worm their way into homes” and victimize women. What these men do when they get into the homes is to “gain control over” the kind of women who will respond to them. This verb means literally “to take captive,” but is, of course, not used in a literal sense here. If the word “captivate” (NRSV) were a little stronger—it usually conveys the idea of charming someone—it would be a clever choice.”*

NBC – *“As in the case of all false teachers there is an assurance that their supposed progress is no more than illusion. Their ultimate folly will become clear to everyone, even if there may be an interval of time before this happens. Paul is convinced that error cannot triumph in the end.”*

Liefeld – *“Verse 8 contains another description of the false teachers, this time by reference to “Jannes and Jambres,” two figures known*

from extrabiblical literature. These are the names Jewish tradition gave to the Egyptian magicians who tried to imitate the signs performed before Pharaoh by Moses and Aaron (Ex. 7:11; 9:11).¹³ What they had in common with the false teachers at Ephesus was that they also stood against the truth, had “depraved minds,” and were rejected “as far as the faith is concerned” (cf. also Titus 1:16, where “unfit” is the same word translated “rejected” in the NIV here).”

3. Whose example is Paul expounding in v10-13? What is the point he is making?

Liefeld – *“IN VERSES 10–11 Paul both encourages Timothy and counters the negative characteristics described in verses 2–9 by adducing the example of his own life. He has not hesitated to do this elsewhere in the Pastorals (1 Tim. 1:12–16; 2 Tim. 1:8, 12–13; 2:8–10; 4:6–8). Paul then moves to Timothy’s life and what influences have shaped him (2 Tim. 3:14–15). In doing so, Paul refers to what the Scriptures are and what role they play in a person’s life (vv. 16–17).”* Paul is in fact expounding his own example.

His point is that Timothy is in fact to look to that example as one to follow even to the point of persecution and suffering.

Of course Paul point out elsewhere that his example is to be followed insofar as it expressed the example of Christ.

NBC. *“It is worth noting moreover that the reference to those spiritual qualities (faith, patience, love, endurance) which Paul had shown are the very qualities that he has already urged on Timothy himself (cf. 1 Tim. 6:11).”*

Fee – on v10-17 *“The paragraph is in two parts (v10-13, v14-17) The two parts hold the keys to timothy’s abiding loyalty: first, to recall the past, especially Paul’s teaching and example, learned through long a ssociation, and second, to give heed to the Sripture, with which he has also had a long association and which both lead to salvation through Christ and are useful for all the tasks of his ministry.”*

Liefeld – *“PAUL’S AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL NOTES in the Pastorals serve several purposes. They demonstrate the sovereign grace of God in his life, acknowledge that faithful service does bring suffering, and provide a model for Timothy. The present passage accomplishes the second and third of those purposes.”*

4. In v14-17 what is Timothy to continue in? Follow the thought through to the end of the chapter.

As well as following the example of Paul, Timothy is to look to his own background and continue in it.

NBC *“ Basically he must continue in what he has learned and knows from personal conviction (14). Such advice is applicable to every Christian leader. Naturally the source of the imparted knowledge is important—“*

The elements of this.

14 what you have learned and have become convinced of, ...

15 ... known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

16 All Scripture is God-breathed and

is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in

righteousness,

17 so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work

So the train of thought is that Timothy is (and we are) to look to his background in the gospel and to see that important in that is the Scriptures knowing that they are God’s words ‘breathed’ and can assist both positively and negatively in his growth so that he can be a Godly person ready to do what God wants him to do.

NBC – “ *This emphasis on the Scriptures is important here because Paul himself based so much on the testimony of Scripture. He is not expecting that Timothy will rely simply on what he has learned from Paul, without backing it up from Scriptures. There is a reminder here that a good reliable background of instruction is indispensable for the minister of the gospel. It should be noted that in v 15, Paul uses the expression the holy Scriptures, drawing special attention to its sacred character, presumably in contrast to the secular sources of the false teaching which he has just mentioned.* “

Deeper and Wider

1. Consider the list in v2-5 and its seeming ‘ordinariness’. What does this say to us about how our lives as Christians ought to be?

Most of these could describe the average Yr 9 class or even many larger workplaces.

None of the ‘BIG’ sins of adultery, theft, murder are part of this yet they are still deadly sins, separating people from God.

Of course the one biggie is not being ‘lovers of God’.

The challenge of the list for us is to not fall into the trap of being like this.

The further challenge is that being not like this list will make us stand out like sore thumbs in this present age.

NBC – “ *The contrast between the first and the last words in the list brings out vividly the difference between love of self and love of God. This list shows, in fact, the disastrous consequences of self-centredness.* “

2. Considering v10-13 what impression do you have of Paul who, as he writes these words from prison, faces almost certain death?

It is the phrase ‘Yet the Lord rescued me from all of them’ (v11c) that captures my attention.

All the trials mentioned can be found in Acts but Paul knows that this is God’s work in his life and that the more important things are those mentioned in v10.

Paul, who most probably realises that his life expectancy at this point is not great, is one who has served faithfully and well in spite of, and sometimes because of, the great trials put in his way.

Paul sees this as an example of a Christian life and reminds Timothy (and us) that we too can expect ‘persecution.

3. 3:15-17 are about the Scriptures. What is the nature of the Scriptures, their purpose and their outcome according to this passage?

Nature : 16 All Scripture is God-breathed

Purpose : and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness,

Ourcome :17 so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Liefeld – *“Verses 16–17 are the strongest statement in the Bible about itself. We understand that the word “Scripture” (graphe) includes the New Testament, since 2 Peter 3:16 cites the writings of Paul among the “Scriptures” (also graphe). The word translated “God-breathed” (theopneustos) in the NIV is more commonly translated “inspired,” which is less awkward but also less accurate. The term inspired is much too broad in its common usage today to convey the force of the Greek theopneustos, which is formed from theo (the root form of the word “God”) and pneustos (from a Greek root having to do with breathing).”*

So Leifeld – *“We may have expected that the final effect of a proper use of the Scriptures would be doctrinal maturity or knowledgeable ministry. Instead, Paul once more encourages good works (v. 17), showing that God is mainly interested in the life and actions of the believer, not simply or even primarily in professional church ministry. It is no accident that this passage on Scripture occurs in conjunction with the pictures of the persecuted Christian, the persecuting opponent, and the person who serves God. The Bible contains many pages of narratives concerning ordinary people who live, work, and walk in God’s presence. It is these examples, along with specific doctrinal teachings, that equip us “for every good work.””*

4. What does the last section of this chapter (v14-17) have to say to the issues raised in the first 9 verses?

The antidote to the problems and difficulties of the first 9 verses is Firstly the Scriptures.

Secondly, a maturing faith based on the scriptures.

You could also delve into v10-13 and say that thirdly following good Christian examples.

NBC – *“ Paul is assuming that Scripture in its entirety is God–breathed. But why does he need to inform Timothy of this? It would seem better to suppose that the main point of the passage is not so much the inspiration of Scripture as its profitableness. Timothy would know of its inspiration, and this would enhance its usefulness. “*

Apply

1. Whose example do you look to? Why are Christian examples important? What sort of example are you?

We need to speak about those who are our examples.

We also need to recognise that we are ALL examples to others – what sort of example becomes the question.

2. Discuss the list of ‘sins’ in v2-5. How do you avoid these temptations, which are so evident in our world?

For Discussion.

Fee – *“As always such lists seem to come down a bit heavily on the human race and are the object of attack by those with humanistic tendencies. But unfortunately the list is only too realistic reminding God’s people over and over again that these, too, are the ‘last days’”*

Liefeld – *“A form of godliness. The amazing thing about 3:1–9 is not that people are boastful, proud, and conceited or that they are*

unforgiving or without self-control, but that these words can describe people who have “a form of godliness but [are] denying its power.” Paul is not describing pagans engaged in crime or biological warfare but false teachers penetrating the Christian church. Non-Christians often level the charge that the church is full of hypocrites. Actually that charge is mild compared to the insidious character of these protean false teachers. They could adopt a “form of godliness,” but in their “depraved minds” they were preying on vulnerable women. Unlike Paul (1 Thess. 2:5) they used a mask of piety to cover up greed.”

For Next Week: Read 2 Timothy 4:1-22.

Study 5: 2 Timothy 4:1-22

Proclaim the Gospel

Explore the Basics

Read the passage carefully together.

1. What charge does Paul give to Timothy now (v1-2 and 5)? How serious is he about it?

When you look at v1 it is obvious that he is very serious about this.

His emphasis is three fold (or fivefold)

In the presence of God

and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead,

and in view of his appearing and his kingdom,

Again the charge is multi faceted but all under the heading of Preach the Word

Timothy is to do this:

In season and out of season

To correct rebuke and encourage (note the connecton to 3:16).

With great patience.

With careful instruction.

We need of course to note that this is a word to us as well.

2. What will men prefer to sound doctrine?

Teachers who will say what their itching ears want to hear.

This is a very important warning to us for I fear that indeed the time has come.

3. What happened at Paul’s ‘first defence’ (v16-17)? What was Paul concerned should happen?

All deserted him no one came to my support.

YET Paul was concerned that this not be held against them.

4. In all of this where is Paul’s primary confidence? Why? (note 1:12)

Paul’s primary confidence is in ‘the Lord’ to whom he has committed his life.

1:12I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him for that day.

Deeper and Wider

1. Look at each of the elements of v2. Discuss what they are and how they relate to one another?

As noted above the primary element is the first and the others each relate to it. So first we are commanded what to do, then we are told when to do it, then what for, then how we go about it.

2 Preach the Word;

This is not just for all the ‘Timothys’ of the church. We all have some responsibility to proclaim God’s truth.

The force of the verb here is a command – we are being told to do it. be prepared in season and out of season;

This is about timing ... and a real challenge to all of us.

correct,

The word will sometimes need to be used to change people’s direction.

rebuke and

Sometimes it will need to be used to forthrightly say – ‘what you are doing is wrong!’

encourage—

It will also be used to build up. The word means to urge, comfort, exhort with great patience and

Very wise and important advice.

We are not to expect the quick fix, the sudden conversion, the dramatic turn around. Endurance may well be required.

careful instruction.

We are to be careful in the way we do all of this. But we are to be teaching and the content is given in the first element – the Word.

NBC – The other three commands (correct, rebuke and encourage) are complementary to each other. There is a combination of severity and gentleness here. The whole work demands patience and care.

TNTC – To rebuke without instruction is to leave the root cause of error untouched.

EBC - Bernard makes the sage observation: “Rebuke and exhortation must be accompanied with teaching, or they will be unprofitable” (p. 140). And it must all be done in patience and love.

Liefeld – “Among all of the verses in the sixty-six books of Scripture, 2 Timothy 4:2 is probably the most frequently heard in ordination services of ministers. It is selected, of course, because of the imperative “preach the Word,” its comprehensive time reference (“in season and out of season”), its specific instructions about correcting, rebuking, and encouraging (which cover a good deal of the pastor’s typical ministry), its reference to method (“great patience and careful instruction”)”

2. What warning is there for us in v3 and 4?

We must take seriously what is said in v2 about teaching and preaching the Word.

It is very easy to listen to people who promise all sorts of thing in this life – but it to the Word we must attend.

3. What is Paul saying about his life in v6-8? Where is his ultimate confidence?

Paul is saying that he now expects for his life to finish but that he has lived ‘well’ – he has fought the fight to the finish and completed the race and stood firm in Jesus.

The images are probably both athletic (rather than the first being military).

NBC – “ This section connects with the last as the word For shows. What Paul is about to say is intended to be an example to Timothy. He uses the same metaphor of the drink offering as he had already used in Phil. 2:17. It is a vivid image of the apostle about to pour out his life— blood for the sake of Christ. He senses that the end is near. He quickly changes the metaphor of sacrifice to those of conflict and the running track (7). In both cases he knows tasks are nearly finished. But there is a great confidence here. Paul is in no way ashamed of what he has done.”

Now he knows that whatever happens the Lord, the righteous Judge

has much greater things in store for him in heaven.

NBC – “ *V 8 has a triumphant ring about it. Paul has no doubt about the crown. He is probably thinking of the laurel wreath earned by those who competed in athletics races. The description of it as of righteousness, however, shows the spiritual nature of the prize he will be awarded. The righteousness is not achieved by Paul himself but is something given. Because God is a righteous Judge he cannot bestow anything that is not righteous. The day here is the final day of Christ’s appearing. It points to what Paul elsewhere calls ‘the judgment seat of Christ’. He sees this future day as applicable to all Christians, whom he assumes will long for that glorious event.*”

4. Consider carefully v9-22. What do they tell us about Paul and his attitude to his situation and to his personal relationships?

I am fascinated by these personal endings for Paul’s letters. In his journeying and preaching around the Mediterranean he has forged many close relationships. All of these are important to him, some are a great encouragement, some are a disappointment, yet he is concerned for all his brothers and sisters.

Liefeld – “*Paul’s final greetings and personal references in verses 19–21 are, in the best sense of the word, sentimental. ‘Priscilla and Aquila’ have meant a great deal to Paul.The reference to the ‘household of Onesiphorus’ (v. 19b) is a beautiful echo of 1:16–18. This may be a wonderful testimony to the entire household or, poignantly, a sympathetic word to his bereaved family if he had died. The possibility of his death is suggested by the unusual fact that his household is mentioned rather than Onesiphorus himself..... ‘Erastus’ (v. 20) may be the same person mentioned in the same breath as Timothy in Acts 19:22...‘Trophimus’ is also mentioned in Acts 20:4 in company with Timothy. He is ‘from the province of Asia.’ In Acts 21:29 he is called ‘Trophimus the Ephesian.’ ”*

NBC – “ *In contrast to the desertion of others, he was encouraged by the fact that the Lord stood by him. This reflects something of the spiritual resources which supported Paul in his trouble, and they can serve as an encouragement to all God’s servants when suffering for his sake. In Paul’s case he claims to have received courage to proclaim the gospel even at his trial.* ”

NBC – “*In the final benediction (22) the first part is directed to Timothy in the singular, while the grace is to Christians generally in the plural.*”

Dever – “*Finally Paul asks Timothy for help. He writes, ‘Do your best to come to me quickly’ (4v9). This is a plea. Some people think the way to inspire others is to look strong, as if there are no chinks, no problems, no difficulties and no weaknesses. But that is not correct. If you do too good a job of hiding your weakness people around you will give up. They know their own weaknesses, and they may not believe they can measure up to the standard you have set*”

5. Look at Matthew 6:13. How is v18 and answer to this prayer?

Matthew 6:13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

Paul recognises that his ultimate enemy is Satan and that Jesus will deliver – even through death.

Apply

1. “Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage– with great patience and careful instruction.’ Are these

just words for Timothy and other leaders of churches or are they for all of us?

For all of us

Liefeld – *“How, then, should the command to “preach the Word” be applied? Those who are so gifted and called should do it! They should preach with the authority of that Word.¹¹ And since the Pastoral Letters demonstrate throughout the need for shepherding, even though there is a focus on teaching truth against error, the preaching ministry of a church should be accompanied by broad, capably handled pastoral ministries.”*

2. Do you ‘long for His appearing’? Should you?

For discussion.

Fee – *“It is altogether fitting that the very last words from Paul should be a benediction, a desire for God’s grace to be with all his people”*

Dever – *“According to tradition, a few months, weeks, or even days after writing this letter, the emperor Nero gave his verdict on Paul. Paul was taken to one of the main roads leading into Rome, the Ostian Way, and his head was cut off his body. Nero had passed one verdict on Paul, while Christ passed another. Let me ask you again, was Paul successful?”*

For Next Week: Re-Read 2 Timothy right through.