

# 2 Timothy - Part 8

by John Hunter

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*This sermon emphasizes the importance of enduring hardship and faithfully passing on the teachings of Christ through various metaphors of service.*

**Duration:** 33:57

**Scripture:** 2 Timothy 2:2-5, 2 Timothy 2:14-26

**Topics:** "Servant Leadership", "Biblical Stewardship"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses various metaphors used in the Bible to describe the role of a servant of God. These metaphors include the faithful steward, the dedicated soldier, the obedient athlete, the industrious farmer, the skilled workman, the sanctified vessel, and the gentle servant. The preacher emphasizes the importance of following the rules and working diligently for God in order to receive the rewards promised to believers. He also highlights the need for Bible teachers and expositors to skillfully interpret and explain the sacred text. The sermon concludes with a reminder of the hardships and rewards that come with serving the Lord.

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## Transcript

Chapter 2, reading please to verse 13. Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. 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.

Thou therefore endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that wereth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier. And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned except he strive lawfully.

The husbandman that laboreth must be first partaker of the fruits. Consider what I say, and the Lord give thee understanding in all things. Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel.

Wherein I suffer trouble as an evildoer, even unto bonds, but the word of God is not bound. 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. It is a faithful saying, for if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him.

If we suffer, we shall also reign with him. If we deny him, he also will deny us. If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful, he cannot deny himself.

Chapter two broadly divides into three. Verses one and two, you have brought before you the chain of teaching. You will notice that Paul communicates to Timothy and he in turn will pass it on to faithful men who in turn will pass it on to others.

A chain of teaching. Verses three to thirteen, you have brought before you hardship and reward. Endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

I suffer trouble as a criminal, even unto bonds and chains. Hardship and reward. When you come to verses fourteen to verse twenty-six, you have brought before you the servant of the Lord and doctrinal error.

The servant of the Lord and doctrinal error. Now, more expansion tomorrow night on the outline, especially from verses three to thirteen, but let me bring this before you. It may help you.

You are welcome to use it at any time. If I were asked not to expound second Timothy two verse by verse, as we shall be doing, but if I were asked to give an address on second Timothy two, in order to bring your attention to the salient important things in the chapter, then I should base my address on seven metaphors in the chapter. And these seven metaphors indicate the salient truths in the chapter.

Drop your eye to verse two. Verse two, the faithful steward. The faithful steward.

Timothy, that which was committed unto thee, you see that others receive it. Verse two, a faithful steward. Verses three and four, a dedicated soldier.

A good soldier of Jesus Christ that separates himself from everything else to serve the Lord. Verses three and four, a dedicated soldier. Verse five, an obedient athlete.

If a man contend in the games, yet is he not crowned except he keep the rules. So, verse five, an obedient athlete. If you're going to be in this business, then you'll need to observe the rules.

And possibly by Friday night, maybe tomorrow night, I shall indicate and spell out to you the rules of the game. Paul merely says you'll need to observe the rules if you want to be crowned. Well, I'll tell you what the rules are.

Possibly by tomorrow night or the beginning of Friday. Verse six, the fourth metaphor, the industrious farmer. The husbandman or the laboring farmer will first partake of the fruits so that you are viewed there as toiling energetically for God.

Come again please, verse fifteen, the skilled workman. A workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. More about that when we come to the exposition, the skill of the Bible teacher and expositor as he makes plain the sacred text.

Verse twenty-one, the sixth metaphor, the sanctified vessel. That you might be a vessel unto honor, sanctified and fit for the master's use. The servant must be gentle, must not strive but be gentle, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose.

The attitude of the servant as he comes across those who would oppose, he doesn't bludgeon them down, but patiently he instructs them in the ways of God. The faithful steward, the dedicated soldier, the obedient athlete, the industrious farmer, the skilled workman, the sanctified vessel and the gentle servant. What an all-round man is the teacher of divine truth.

All these bring before you aspects in which you take part in the service of God. These metaphors are most illuminating. Now let's come back now please, will you, to verses one and two.

Last night we dealt with the last four verses of chapter one. In verse fifteen we saw Asiatics that were deserting Paul. In verses sixteen to eighteen we saw Onesimus, loyal, faithful, devoted.

Coming alongside Paul in a difficult day to help him. Tonight we shall deal with Timothy and others. Timothy the constant companion.

Now look now please, will you, at verse one in which Paul speaks to Timothy personally. Thou therefore my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. I want you again to notice, as I've pointed out before, the affection that existed between the apostle and Timothy.

He makes his appeal, but he makes his appeal on the ground of a relationship that existed between them. It was like a father and a child. A relationship that was tender, warm, affectionate.

Tell me you good older brethren, is that your relationships with your younger brethren? Do they look upon you as a father? As one who wants to help them? And he is speaking like this because he recognizes that maybe one day Timothy will be in the same position as he's in. And Timothy will need to know the strength that supported Paul. And Timothy will need all that strength to continue to impart truth in the name of the Lord.

Now look again, verse one. Thou therefore my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And he lifts Timothy's mind away to the Christ of God in heaven, brings before him the person of God's Son, and tells him that all that he needs is vested in Christ.

Timothy, all the grace and strength that you need, you'll find in Christ. Lift your eye. Timothy, strengthen yourself in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

You see, Paul knew this. It was sustaining him at the present time. It will sustain Timothy in his difficult day.

And brethren, Christ and only Christ can avail for you in the hour of your need, at the time when you feel that you need divine support and divine help. He puts it like that to Timothy. If he's talking about himself, he'll put it in a similar way, but with different words.

In Philippians 4, verse 13, Paul says, listen to this, and I'll show you in a moment how it can be done. He says, I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. Have you got that? Now please, watch.

Nothing omitted. I can do everything through Christ who strengthens me. Or, again, another translation, I can do all things through Christ who pours his strength into me.

As if Paul was but a vessel through which the mighty power and energy of Christ flowed in unceasing measure. Or, again, another translation, I am strong to do everything in Christ who gives me power. Paul felt that his strength lay in the power of the risen Lord that came down to him constantly.

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. That means this, that you and I'll need to learn that in every circumstance in life and especially when things are hard and difficult, we'll need to learn to turn intuitively to Christ and to find the power of Christ sustaining us. Let me give you an illustration.

Do you remember in Mark 14, after the feeding of the thousands, that the Lord got his disciples to go into the boat and he told them to go to the other side. It was evening and as they went on their way, the Lord went up into the mountain. All through the night they struggled and rode.

The night was dark. The wind was contrary. The sea was boisterous.

They were toiling and rowing and it was heavy and slow going. And in the fourth watch of the night, possibly between three and six o'clock in the morning, suddenly they looked and they found that a person was coming toward them walking on the water. They didn't know it, but the Son of God had left his mountain retreat where he went to pray and he was making his way toward them as they struggled and rode.

As they saw this apparition coming, walking on the water, they're frightened, they're scared, they're terrified. They thought it was a specter. They thought it was a ghost.

They thought it was an apparition. There they were in the boat, terrified, when suddenly across the dark waters there spoke the familiar voice of the Son of God. It was the Master himself.

He says, Be of good cheer. It is I. Be not afraid. You can think of what that meant to them.

In the midst of the darkness and the difficulty, the Lord drew near. Drawing near in a most unusual way, they watched and they saw that the water had become a pavement for his feet. And the voice said, Be of good cheer.

Take courage. It is I. Be not afraid. Now in that boat there were twelve men.

One of them was Peter. And Peter jerks out of his fright. As he hears the voice of Christ, he speaks, Lord, if it be thou, bid me to come to thee upon the water.

Ah, you think that's impulsive, Peter? Well, you're wrong. Basically, basically to say it was impulse would take away from the faith of the hour and the moment. Lord, if it be thou, bid me to come to thee upon the water.

And across the water, as the Christ of God draws near, walking on the waves, his voice goes out to Peter. Come! So Christ is quite in agreement with the proposition. Christ recognizes the faith that rises in Peter.

Peter, come! And Peter's getting over the side of the boat. Now listen, Peter, don't be silly. It's dark.

But he's still getting over. Listen, Peter, it's not only dark, but it's dangerous. Stay where you are.

But Peter's over the boat. He's starting to walk. Peter, listen.

It's not only dark. It's not only dangerous. Peter, it'll be fatal.

Peter, don't go. But watch. Peter's walking in the water.

The water has become a pavement for Peter's feet. Peter's doing what Christ can do. Peter's walking contrary to nature.

Peter's above his circumstances. Peter has forgotten all about the storm and the wind and the tide. Forgotten all about the fear.

Forgotten all about the drudgery of rowing. And Peter's walking upon the waves of the sea, just as what Christ did. Do you believe that? Come on now.

Do you believe that? Listen to me, will you? Only one man in twelve could do it. Will you be that man? Will you be that woman? Will you be one of the twelve? Will you go out in a daring act of faith as he flung himself out at the command of Christ into a new realm, a new sphere? No one else had ever walked before, would ever dare to walk, but he's doing it. And in a situation that was dark and difficult and dangerous, he rose above everything.

Well, now he's superhuman. Under the attractiveness of the person of Christ, under the wonder and glory of divine power, the energy of Christ flowing out from his person, Peter sustained and upheld, and he's walking upon the water and doing what Christ can do. And it was only, it was only when he took his eye off Christ and began to look around at the darkness and the wind and the storm and the waves that he began to sink.

Living above your circumstances, taken out of them completely by the supreme power of God's Son, oh, the magnetic Christ that drew him, drew him out of the little ship, drew him out away from the other eleven, making him that day a giant among pygmies, making him that day a big man among small men, but he had the faith to leave the boat and put his foot on the water. He might have thought he would go down, but the waters become a pavement for his feet, and he's doing, he's doing what's superhuman. One man and twelve could do it.

And when he turned away his eye, oh, the glory of that hour was cut short. The wonder of that moment faded away. As he turned to look at the elements, he began to sink, to find that the Lord is always gracious.

The Lord put out his hand and caught him. As he cried, Lord, save me, he put out his hand and caught him. It's not a sinner being saved, oh, you can make your application.

It's a saint stepping out on a glorious venture to Christ to find that circumstances around him overwhelmed him. The Lord, the Lord took him by the hand, to bring him into the boat. Do you know what he's saying to them? Oh, thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt? Eh? Isn't that it? Isn't it the lack of faith? Isn't it the lack of faith that stops you from stepping out boldly? Isn't it the lack of faith that keeps you back from doing the things that nobody else does? Isn't it the lack of faith in Christ and his magnetic power and invincible strength that holds us back till we become just like one of the crowd, one of the common herd? Eh? Oh, the things that you could do if you just faith to look to Christ and he'll make you, make you do the things that he can do.

Eh? I can do all things through Christ who pours his strength into me. Now, that's two. In the context, the strength is to be given in order to set forth and communicate divine truth.

Listen again. He says to him, Timothy, 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. You will notice, please, won't

you, so to speak, four generations.

There's Paul. There's Timothy. There's faithful men.

There's others. But behind that set up, there stands the person of Christ. For all truth flows from Christ.

T'was he who gave the truth to Paul. And t'was he who encouraged Paul to teach Timothy, Timothy to teach faithful men, faithful men to teach others. Upon this the Roman Catholics would build the infallible communication of truth.

They would talk to you about truth received and vested in the church. They would say that this would give them authority to lay their hands and consecrate men and give them authority. There's nothing like that in the passage.

It's just an communication of truth from generation to generation. Paul was the first to receive it. He gave it to Timothy and Timothy to others.

You'll notice what it says. The things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses. Do you remember verse 13 of chapter 1? Hold fast the form of sound words which thou hast heard of me.

So it was in meetings like this that Paul stood up to teach divine truth. Timothy was there among and others were in the audience. Now you'll appreciate won't you? I'm sure you do.

That in an audience like this as we teach divine truth there will be those sitting who are gifted and will be gifted of the Lord to communicate truth. But there's many another who witness to the teaching and they themselves might never be able to communicate it but they love it just the same. Love it every bit as much as the man that communicates it.

And there they're all gathered to listen to the truth. You might never be able to stand and set it forth but in your heart you love it and in your life you'll prepare to live it. So that among many witnesses the truth was publicly taught.

You know this is a great thing Brethren and Sisters. I don't know whether you appreciate. Please I'm not talking about your own meetings particularly but meetings like this.

Meetings for the exposition of the word of God. Meetings for the declaration of divine truth. When all that is in the scriptures is set forth intelligently and accurately and carefully for reception by others.

What we give you is not copyright. The truth is not ours. Like Timothy we have received it from others.

Now he says, listen Timothy, the things that thou hast heard of me the same commit thou so that truth stands unchanged. You got that? Truth is unchanged. And he says you commit the same to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

Now that's interesting. The men to whom Timothy would communicate truth would be faithful men with ability to teach. Have you quite a number of them around Vancouver? The preachers are not the only ones who are able to communicate divine truth.

Please get it straight. Elders are apt to teach. You see what he's looking for is this.

Faithful men indicate those who are loyal and devoted to Christ. It means men whose hearts are so set on Christ that no element of danger or persecution will turn them away from that loyalty and no seduction of false teaching and error will lure them away from the straight plain paths of truth. These are men who are staunch and devoted to Christ and they will receive the truth from Timothy and in turn they will pass it on to others.

Christianity has been maintained by a successful committal passing on of truth. The true apostolic succession is men teaching the word of God like this to others and it has come down the pure fount of truth from the risen head. He gave it to Paul.

I've no doubt when Paul passed it on to Timothy it hadn't lost anything in the passing on. Now listen to me. When Timothy received it he received it in violet from Paul.

He in turn he passed it on to other men. This is the truth and they received it and in turn they passed it on to others until the Lord controlling from the throne that casket of truth enshrined in the sacred scriptures have come right down to our generation to the 1980s. Now brothers and sisters the men that taught me divine truth are all in heaven.

At their feet I sat for many years and now it has come right down to our day and it's mine, it's ours. I'm not alone in this. It's mine now to pass on the truth that has been received to teach from the same scriptures to set forth the same truth and to bring it to you that you might receive it and in turn in the passage of time pass it on.

You young men and women listen. You must become custodians of divine truth especially you young men who will be able publicly one day to take these things and teach them. I would like to think that when my little day is over whatever way that the truth that I received has lost nothing by my handling of it.

I would like to think that it was passed on just as I received it. I would like to think the same of you as you. Now I want you to note now please the things which thou hast heard the same commit thou to faithful men.

You remember that Jude when he wrote his little epistle he spoke like this. He says it was needful me to exhort you that you should earnestly contend for the faith once for all delivered unto the saints. Now that means this that all the truth that's in your new testament is all that you need.

Is that right? It was once for all delivered. Now that does away with the doctrine of development and now you say we don't understand you. What do you mean by that? Well now supposing that you went into some religious buildings and you stood and watched all the ceremony that goes on all the ritual and at the close of the service you approach one of the clergymen and you said you know I'm interested.

I read my new testament and I've watched here all the ceremony. You know I don't see anything in the new testament that talks about this and he would turn to you and he would say have you never heard of the doctrine of development? No you say I haven't. Now I'll tell you what he would say to you.

He would say to you well now the doctrine of development is this that after the apostles passed on their way we found that the climate changed. The situation changed and we found it was necessary to alter things to meet the prevailing climate and you might say very simply as I would say you might say well now I'm surprised. I know the climate can change but I never thought that truth changed and you would be right.

Now let me say this you can read it when you go home. When you go home if you turn to John's second epistle verse nine you'll find that he's talking about the doctrine of development and John says this. Whosoever transgresseth.

Now you know what transgressing is going beyond where you shouldn't. Whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ hath not God. Revised version says whosoever goes onward.

Revised version says whosoever takes the lead. Darby's translation says whosoever goes forward and abides not in the doctrine hath not God. What's that? Adding to the word of God.

The doctrine of development shooting thing making things suit the prevailing climate. That's the doctrine of development and strange as it may seem it's arriving amongst us. It's arriving amongst us.

You see the climate's changing all over. That's right and all around us they've all gone forward and transgressed. You take the Anglican communion and they have introduced ritual, rails, altars, the lot.

You take the Roman Catholic Church with its idols, with its confessional, with its teaching as to the bodily assumption of the Virgin Mary, with all the other things that go to make up that horrible system. All adding to the word of God. You take Mormonism.

They do not believe that the Bible is the final revelation. They believe that Joseph Smith brought it and they'll talk to you about Joe Smith with his vision of angels and mystic plates. It's all adding to the word.

They've all transgressed. They've all gone forward. But then again the climate's changing amongst us too.

I don't know much about this country but over in our country the climate's changing. They're transgressing. They'll tell you now that women have made their way in every other sphere.

Why can't they be allowed more active participation in the church? After all they've got to the top of the tree elsewhere. Why shouldn't they be allowed to actively participate? And so they're introducing women elders in the churches around and women ministers. And there are certain places amongst us where they are advocating that women take part in prayer meetings and in Bible readings, do everything but teach.

What is it? The climate affects us. Well make no mistake about it please. The climate affects us.

And it's beginning to penetrate. And I want to draw your attention that you must appreciate the truth of God that has been brought straight from the fountain head at the very beginning. Handed over to Paul who held it in violate.

And you can see I can understand an apostle getting the truth to hold. But what about us? All right. Timothy that which thou hast heard of me.

So it goes from Paul to Timothy and Timothy's not an apostle. Timothy hand it on to faithful men who in turn will teach others also. And so it reaches.

Now please don't misunderstand me. I don't mean for the first time. But so it has in the passage of time it comes right to Canada and Vancouver.

From Paul's day the testimony moved westward. And the casket of truth is ours. Will you hold it in violet? Will you seek to learn it that you might never forget it? Will you read your Bibles and listen to ministry that

you might grasp it intelligently and completely and accurately and finally.

So that you might in turn commit it to others also. And so it will be until the Lord come. Meanwhile.

Meanwhile. Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. Allow the risen Christ to uphold you.

Allow the man that walked upon the sea to lift you up and above. So that with strength not your own. Far beyond what is merely ordinary and physical and human.

The power of the living Lord might embrace us. Attract us. Hold us.

Lift us. Until we find ourselves men and women who can do what Christ can do. Held by the magnetism of the Son of God.

Thank you very much.

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