

Entrusted: Advance In Mission

2 Timothy 2:1-13

MPS The message of the gospel is our means and our mission; the grace of God through Jesus Christ from first to last.

OBJ Every person can understand what it means to live entrusted by Five Exhortations.

INTRO Have you ever asked about a gift, “**What do I do with this?**” Sometimes I feel like people do this with the gift of grace and salvation.

As we come to Commitment Sunday and the completion of our Entrusted series, we return to our theme passage in Second Timothy and consider, “**How do we move forward from here?**” We looked at what it meant to be entrusted with the gospel, and how we live and give as stewards of the Lord Jesus. Now the work begins. **How do we advance in mission for the Lord Jesus from here?**

Paul, now advanced in years, writes to a younger Timothy while awaiting sentencing from his second imprisonment, with a seriousness to clarify what is most important, knowing this will likely be his last opportunity. Every chapter of Second Timothy grows weightier in its significance and the importance of all that it addresses.

READ 2 Timothy 2:1-13

You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, ²and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also. ³Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. ⁴No soldier gets entangled in civilian pursuits, since his aim is to please the one who enlisted him. ⁵An athlete is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules. ⁶It is the hard-working farmer who ought to have the first share of the crops. ⁷Think over what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything.

⁸Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, the offspring of David, as preached in my gospel, ⁹for which I am suffering, bound with chains as a criminal. But the word of God is not bound! ¹⁰Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. ¹¹The saying is trustworthy, for:

If we have died with him, we will also live with him; ¹²if we endure, we will also reign with him;

if we deny him, he also will deny us; ¹³if we are faithless, he remains faithful—

*for he cannot deny himself. **2 Timothy 2:1-13***

Once Paul reminds Timothy of the gospel that has been entrusted to him, he moves to exhort him in how the mission of the gospel should advance in the world. Chapter two begins in response to the last exhortation of chapter one. Paul contrasts Timothy and Onesiphorus against those who deserted him. And now he turns to exhort him in how to advance in the labor of gospel mission.

The message of the gospel is our means and our mission; the grace of God through Jesus Christ from first to last.

OBJ Five Exhortations to live as Entrusted with the gospel.

1. **Grace that comes through the gospel is God's power for us to serve His mission. .1**

Paul tells Timothy that his strength to “*follow the pattern of sound words*” and “*guard the good deposit*” (1:13-14) will come by God's grace in Christ Jesus. The grace of God that saves is the grace that strengthens and sustains us. We don't become a Christian by grace, then live by works, or any other means. That which saves is that which strengthens and sustains us, all the way to the very end, and throughout eternity. If you are not drawing from Him, you will never have the strength to do and to endure in serving His gospel mission. **Jesus Christ alone is our source of strength to serve Him.**



To not want more of Christ is to not know Christ at all. Charles Spurgeon states, “There are many professing Christians who are content so long as they are just saved. We are not content with being barely alive spiritually. We do not wish to have our life shivering with cold, but we seek after comfort as well as existence.”¹ To not want more of Christ, to not seek Christ as your first source of strength, comfort, and defense in all things, means you are either not truly saved, regenerated, or to find yourself in serious slumber and neglect. [When God’s grace is our strength, Jesus Christ is our all in all.](#)

The key is that if we are to be strengthened by God’s grace, we must regularly take it in, in response and proportion to the demand of our need. By the Word and Spirit, by prayer, and through singing and fellowship, grace greater than our sin teaches us that the only thing we must do is take it into our lives. [Grace not only gets us in with God but keeps us with Him!](#)

2. [The gospel is our mission, to entrust to others who will also serve to make more disciples.](#) .2

The strength that comes from God’s grace is exercised in the mission of the gospel. Paul instructs Timothy to entrust the sound doctrine that he has learned from Timothy to other faithful men who will teach others also. Surely, Paul is exhorting Timothy to make sure the men to whom he gives the message are faithful to it, as they will be charged to teach it to others. But the broader principle remains as well, that in all our disciple-making, we are handing off the gospel to every person to share it with others.

SONG We sing, “Hallelujah, all I have is Christ. Hallelujah, Jesus is my life.” not as trite cliché, but grace upon grace! What we take in and what we pour out is all of Jesus! It is the power of God **BY** which we live and the gospel of God **FOR** which we live. [Christians serve the gospel by the strength we receive from God’s grace through the gospel.](#)

3. [True gospel mission is always accompanied by suffering.](#) .3

“*Share in suffering*” Paul exhorts, “*as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.*” Suffering doesn’t mark you as a poor follower of Christ, but quite the opposite. [Suffering accompanies all true gospel mission because the Enemy is real, and he sifts those who serve Jesus faithfully.](#)

ILLUS In his famous work “The Loveliness of Christ”, the early 17th Century pastor-theologian, Samuel Rutherford, writes, “If your Lord call you to suffering, be not dismayed; there shall be a new allowance of the King for you when ye come to it. One of the softest pillows Christ hath is laid under his witnesses’ head, though often they must set down their bare feet among thorns.”

Why is it we read of all our heroes of the faith, many that died as martyrs, yet think we are exempt or become dismayed with God. Many interpret suffering as a negative blight or spiritual epidemic, whether upon self or others, so they run away. And in running, they so often run into the safe, comfortable setting of deception, false teaching, and apostasy. **You may not be burned alive at the stake for your Christian witness, but will you remain faithful if you are roasted by a friend / the world?**

Paul exhorts Timothy to share and endure because suffering is not greater than God’s power to bring good and glory. Rather, he instructs Timothy in how to remain faithful in the face of suffering by three analogies, a soldier, an athlete, and a farmer. Soldier is the prominent example Paul uses to remind that the very nature of our labor is most akin to warfare. His three analogies serve to provide principles for facing suffering as we serve the gospel of Jesus Christ.

First is the **Principle of Commitment**. The one who serves Jesus Christ stays engaged and focused on His mission and does not get entangled in affairs that distract. This first principle reminds us that the way we live should be aligned with why we exist! We remain committed because we remember **WHY** God has saved us! Paul’s whole teaching on the armor of God (Ephesians 6:11-17) is not for a fashion, but for daily provision and necessity! Paul states this to the Thessalonians.

“But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation.” ⁹ *For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,”* ¹

Thessalonians 5:8

¹ Charles Spurgeon, [Spurgeon Commentary: 2 Timothy](#), ed. Elliot Ritzema, Spurgeon Commentary Series (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2014), 136.



Second is the **Principle of Self-control and Discipline** in how the athlete competes because of the motivation to win. Paul uses this analogy with the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 9:24-27) when he states, “

“Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it. ²⁵Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. ²⁶So I do not run aimlessly; I do not box as one beating the air. ²⁷But I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified.”

Third is the **Principle of Preparedness** and the analogy of the farmer. The daily tasks of a farmer are never about that day, but always being prepared and laboring for harvest. We will always succumb to suffering if we are not prepared for it.

ILLUS In his amazing work, The Character of God’s Workman, Chinese theologian Watchman Nee captures this in a chapter titled, “Have a Mind to Suffer”, based on 1 Peter 4:1, which states, “*Forasmuch then as Christ suffered in the flesh, arm ye yourselves also with the same mind...*”. In this chapter Nee exhorts NOT of suffering, but of our willingness to suffer when he states, “Hence to suffer is something chosen by us; it is not ordained. We choose before God to suffer. We are willing to do so for the sake of serving the Lord. To arm ourselves with such a mind is a basic characteristic of any person who would wish to serve God. Without such willingness, we will not be able to serve well in anything. Lacking this, our service will be very superficial.” He continues, “Having the mind to suffer speaks of my readiness before God to suffer. I am willing to go through trial, and I choose the path of hardship. It is up to the Lord whether or not to put suffering in my path, but on my part I am always prepared to suffer.” [Christians develop a mind to suffer for the gospel to ready ourselves because we know that grace is greater still.](#)

TRANS Once Paul exhorts Timothy to share in suffering, he reminds him of a sufficient motivation to suffer.

4. Remember – the glory of Jesus Christ is greater than any suffering. .8-10

Christians do not endure suffering because we have some sick, twisted, demented mind. Nor do we endure because through it we believe we earn favor with God. We endure because our Lord endured for us. And this is what Paul tells Timothy, “⁸Remember Jesus Christ,”; “risen from the dead,” Christ is our life and our victory. “*The offspring of David*” He is the promise of God’s eternal Kingdom. And He is worthy of any suffering we may endure because He is the good news we proclaim to the world! And though we may become contained or chained, “*But the word of God is not bound!*” [Remember Jesus Christ to endure suffering that as many as possible may hear the gospel and “obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.”](#)

ILLUS [Do you ever watch Rugby?](#) That may be the greatest illustration for us here. They all huddle up shoulder to shoulder and push around. Then SUDDENLY – someone breaks out of the huddle, the team spreads across the field, and begins to run down the field. They just keep throwing the ball to the next guy and running. And almost every time one throws the ball, they are instantaneously met by a seismic blow that flips them over and slams them into the ground. But the ball is gone by now, advancing down the field.

Christian, you need not be dismayed by suffering because the Word of God is not bound, and God will take care of you!

Hymn Be Not Dismayed Whate’er Betide [#GWTCOY](#)

V1 Be not dismayed whate’er betide, God will take care of you! Beneath His wings of love abide, #GWTCOY!

Chorus God will take care of you, through every day o’er all the way; He will take care of you; #GWTCOY!

V2 Through days of toil when heart doth fail, #GWTCOY! When dangers fierce your path assail, #GWTCOY!

V3 All you may need He will provide, #GWTCOY! Trust Him and you will be satisfied, #GWTCOY!

V4 Lonely and sad, from friends apart, #GWTCOY! He will give peace to your aching heart, #GWTCOY!

V5 No matter what may be the test, #GWTCOY! Lean, weary one, upon His breast, #GWTCOY!

Remember Jesus Christ, Christian, and know that God WILL Take Care of You! [Christians do not fear suffering because Christ Jesus is greater and the Word of God is not bound.](#)



5. Our faithfulness is determined by our hiddenness in Jesus Christ. .11-13

Paul concludes this portion by reminding Timothy of what has been said throughout the Scriptures to remind us of God's faithfulness. So friend, do not miss this one; your faithfulness will not be determined by your giftedness or your grit, but only by your hiddenness in Christ. When we remain with Christ, we remain faithful in all things at all times. But if we run out on our own understanding, our own capability, feeling, whim or desire, we run out from our own provision.

¹¹The saying is trustworthy, for:

*If we have died with him, we will also live with him; ¹²if we endure, we will also reign with him;
if we deny him, he also will deny us; ¹³if we are faithless, he remains faithful—for he cannot deny himself.”*

Christian, your faithfulness to Jesus Christ and the gospel in life is measured and rewarded only by this, that you remain *hidden with Christ in God.*(Colossians 3:3)

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