

2 TIMOTHY

Lesson 2

2 Timothy Chapter 2

We continue our study of 2nd Timothy, as Paul continues to encourage Timothy in light of the challenges he is facing in Ephesus. We will see from Paul's teaching that, if we are to join in the battle to win lost souls to Jesus, then we are also joining in the suffering that comes along with the work of spreading the Good News.

Suffering is clearly something that many Christians don't like to acknowledge, but the plain truth is that the world hated Jesus, and they will hate us for the same reason, i.e., that the Gospel proclaims (1) that all have sinned, and (2) that there is only one way to be saved—faith in Jesus. This is "good news" that the world cannot tolerate. Rather, it will try to distort the truth of the Gospel by proclaiming that there is more than one way to be saved, or that Jesus wasn't born of a virgin, or that Jesus never died on the cross, and so on. But the truth is that they are lost, living in a lost and dying world, and headed to an eternity of pain and suffering if they do not accept Jesus.

Paul reminds Timothy of this and actually uses it to encourage him in his work at Ephesus. Paul provides instruction to Timothy that, even today, we can apply in our lives. As followers of Christ, we will face challenges—and perhaps even hardships similar to those surrounding Timothy. However, with Paul's instruction, we can be better prepared to face our challenges and be victorious for Christ, just as Timothy did.

Read 2 Timothy Chapter 2 and consider the following:

1. What is one responsibility that we all have as followers of Christ, as Paul instructs Timothy to do in the opening verses? (2 Timothy 2:1-2)
2. In 2 Timothy 2:3-8, Paul uses three types of people to illustrate each lesson he is passing on to Timothy. Identify the person, and the lesson, that Timothy is to learn from studying each of them:
3. Paul provided us the above three examples so that "the Lord will give you insight into all this." We, as well, can learn much from studying these three people; and through this study, the Lord will give each of us insight that will strengthen and encourage us in the work that He has planned for us to accomplish. Paul then used another example of someone who endured for the Gospel. Who did he cite, and what are we to learn from this example? (2 Timothy 2:8-9)

4. Paul goes on to show Timothy how he, Paul, endured everything—but none of that mattered; because he endured all of it for the "sake of the elect." His driving concern was that all of God's children would hear the Gospel. Further, in 2 Timothy 2:11-13, Paul lays out four simple truths that he wants Timothy to remember. List these below:

5. Next, Paul addresses the best way for Timothy to deal with false teachers. Nowadays, we don't seem to pay much attention to false teachers. I think we tend to see them as an early New Testament phenomenon. But the Bible is clear that they are with us today, and will grow in number as the return of Christ approaches. Note that in Paul's instruction to Timothy about this, he does not tell Timothy to become a good debater or crafty speaker who can counter all of the claims of the false teachers. Rather, Paul takes a different approach. What are his instructions, and why are they effective? (2 Timothy 2:14-19)

6. Having instructed Timothy that "Everyone who confesses the name of the Lord must turn away from wickedness," he now tells us how to do this. In 2 Timothy 2:20-24, Paul gives Timothy and us specific guidance on how to live a holy life; but first, he gives an illustration to Timothy regarding why living a holy life is important. Read these verses (20-24), note why Paul tells us to live a holy life, and how he instructs us to actually live it.

Paul concludes this section by pointing out to Timothy that those who are quarrelsome and in opposition to the Gospel are to be gently instructed, because they are currently in Satan's trap, and thus are being held captive to do his will. It is important today for us to remember that, within the church today, there are likely to be those in the devil's grip, arguing for doctrine that are lies and half-truths. It is just as important for us to remember Paul's instruction to teach these people gently, but firmly, in the knowledge of the truth; in hopes that they will awaken, see the truth, and be saved.

Combating false teaching and unholy behavior within the church body is always a difficult challenge, but just as with Timothy, Paul wants us to know that the struggle is worth it. We are not to give up, nor are we to compromise our salvation. Living a holy life is, and should always be, our primary goal—a goal we can only achieve by living through Christ in us.

May God richly bless you as you read and study His Holy Word with us.

In Christ,

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