

## 2 Timothy 2:1-7 Bible Study Guide and Commentary with Questions

### Outline:

- I. Be strong (1-2)
- II. Be diligent (3-7)

### I. Be strong (1-2)

#### Discussion Questions

- What is the “therefore” there for?
- What is the connection between the beginning of this passage and chapter 1?
- What is the main theme of both passages?
- What is the key command in verse 1?
- What might discourage Timothy from being strong?
- What are some things which may discourage us from being strong?
- How can we be strong in grace?
- Use one word to summarize verse two.
- What was Timothy to do with what he had learned?
- What about us? Are we called to do the same thing?
- How can we practice this?

#### Cross-References

1 Peter 2:9 – But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

Romans 10:14-15 – How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!”

Luke 10:1-3 – After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go. He told them, “The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field. Go! I am sending you out like lambs among wolves.

Mark 1:17 – “Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will send you out to fish for people.”

#### Verse by Verse Commentary

1. Be strong – This could be the summary for the first two chapters. Paul wanted Timothy to be strong in his faith. It was not to be based on his own efforts, but he was to rely on God’s grace. Many other believers were not being strong. Many turned away from Paul in fear of persecution. Here he uses the word “therefore” to connect this passage with the previous one. Because of the example of Onesiphorus, Timothy should be strong.

**Application:** We should be strong too. Because God is able to guard your soul, be strong. Because God called you with a purpose, be strong. Because God has not given you a spirit of timidity, be strong.

2. The principle of multiplication –

Here we see a very important principle about discipleship, the principle of multiplication. Jesus entrusted a huge mission to the church, to reach the world for Christ. The twelve disciples could not possibly hope to accomplish this by themselves. Accomplishing this by addition is too slow.

The most powerful way to spread the gospel is through multiplication. It is far more effective to make two disciples who make two more who continue that process than to simply reach one hundred people for Christ who never reproduce.

- How can you aim for multiplication rather than addition?
- What can we do to follow this principle in our own lives?
- Can you start to disciple others?
- Why or why not? If not, when?
- God wants all of us to pass on what we have learned to others (see Mark 5 as an example that all people, even new believers should do this work.)
- What if you don't know all of the answers?
- Who can you share with about what you have learned today?

3. Look for faithful men and women. (What does faithful look like? By that criteria, are you faithful?) Entrust the Word to them. This means we expect them to obey it and to pass it on to others. You don't entrust something precious to someone who will not use it and take care of it properly. If you find faithful men and women who will in turn train others, then it can will accomplish generational discipleship. In this verse, there are four generations. The gospel keeps going and going. This is the goal of discipleship.

## **II. Be diligent (3-6)**

### **Discussion Questions**

- How would you summarize Paul's main point from verses 3-6?
- What can we learn from the example of a soldier?
- In what way are we soldiers for Christ?
- What are some things which may entangle us?
- What is the goal of the soldier?
- What can we learn from the example of the athlete?
- In what way are we like athletes?
- How can you be a better athlete?
- What can we learn from the example of the farmer?

### **Cross-References**

2 Corinthians 10:3-5 – For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

Ephesians 6:13 – Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.

1 Peter 1:13 – Therefore, with minds that are alert and fully sober, set your hope on the grace to be brought to you when Jesus Christ is revealed at his coming.

James 4:4 – You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world means enmity against God? Therefore, anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God.

Hebrews 12:1-2 – Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

### **Verse by Verse Commentary**

1. A soldier – Paul uses three examples which Timothy would have been very familiar with to illustrate the type of Christian life Timothy should pursue.

- A soldier should be willing to face hardship.
- A soldier has a master. Ours is Jesus.
- A soldier is not attached to the world.
- A soldier does not allow entanglements to distract him from his mission.
- A soldier's job is to obey and please his master.

We are in a spiritual battle. We have enemies much worse than the worst terrorists in the world. Our enemy wants to destroy our lives and pollute our souls. He will not be satisfied unless we are in hell.

2. An athlete – The Olympic games and other similar athletic competitions had already been established at this time in history. So Timothy would have been quite familiar with the life of an athlete and their single-minded focus on winning the prize.

- Athletes are in a competition, a race. We too are in a race.
- Athletes must be self-disciplined. We too must say "no" to our flesh.
- Athletes seek a temporary crown/prize/medal. We seek an eternal crown, eternal rewards that will not fade.
- Athletes will be disqualified and thrown out of the competition if they break the rules. God is the one who sets the rules. We cannot pick and choose which ones to follow.
- We cannot make up our own rules as we go. We must commit ourselves to following God's standard, not our own.
- Athletes train hard. They avoid distractions. They are goal focused. They aren't complacent. They always try to improve. We can learn these and much more from athletes.

3. A farmer – Timothy would have been very familiar with farmers as most of the world at that time was dominated by agriculture. One would likely pass many fields and crops as part of daily life.

- Farmers are hard-working.
- Farmers don't work in vain. Before they sell the crops, they keep some for themselves and their family. Paul's point is that serving God comes with a reward. We don't serve God in vain. God rewards those who are faithful to Him.
- Farmers may work for a long time without any visible results. They face setbacks and challenges. Sometimes they reap a large crop. Sometimes they reap a very small crop.

But they faithfully keep sowing the seed, hoping and believing that they will reap. Making disciples and sowing the seed of the Word is often like this as well

4. Verse 7 – In this verse we see both God's work and our responsibility. God is the one who grants understanding. He is the one who enlightens our hearts. He is the one who opens our spiritual eyes. At the same

time, Paul told Timothy to “consider what I say.” We must meditate carefully on the God’s Word to increase our understanding of it. Many things in the Bible are simple, but not everything. Sometimes when we read it, we don’t understand. Maybe we don’t understand the logic, the culture, the principle, or the doctrine.

What do you do when you don’t understand the Bible? What should you do?

**Application:** You should meditate on it. You should study it more. Don’t just forget it and move on to something easier. In the book of Hebrews (5:14), the author says that their minds had become dull. They kept drinking milk and would not move on to solid food. Their minds were not sharpened by practice. Instead they were lazy spiritually. Instead of diligently pursuing answers, they lazily just said, “never mind.” When we listen to sermons, we should meditate. When we read the Bible in our quiet times, we should meditate. When we join Bible study, we should meditate. What practices can help you to do this?

Being a faithful disciple requires diligence. Just as athletes, farmers, and soldiers are hard-working, we must be hard-working spiritually. Prayer is hard work. Teaching the Bible is hard work. Loving our family is hard work. Studying the Word is hard work. But if you want to grow, you must be willing to do it the hard way. There are no shortcuts.