



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

“BE STRONG IN THE GRACE THAT IS IN CHRIST!” – 2 TIMOTHY 2:1

COLORADO

APRIL 29, 2014

Dan File, P.O. Box 1088, Lake City, CO 81235-1088/303-345-8830 / filefamily@centurytel.net

Timothy was heavy on Paul's heart as he writes this one last letter to his son in the faith, reminding him of what matters most. Paul had labored for 30 years to share the gospel since he came to know Christ on that road to Damascus and he wore the brand marks of a servant of Jesus Christ. (Galatians 6:17) Now, as he sat in a cold dungeon chained until he would be led to his execution, martyred for his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. He had been faithful to his calling in spite of persecution and much hardship. He took seriously his responsibility to the gospel of Christ. Paul is fatherly, practical and very personal as he writes to his son in the faith, Timothy, with a sense of finality to his words. His concern is expressed on every page as he exhorts Timothy to remain strong in the grace that is found only in Christ Jesus.

I. “BE STRONG IN THE GRACE!” – 2 TIMOTHY 2:1

2 Timothy 2:1, “You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.”

Timothy was clearly discouraged as Paul writes this second letter to him. He faced unimaginable hardships and persecution as the pastor of the church in Ephesus where so many had already deserted the faith. Maybe Timothy was even questioning his calling, purpose and abilities. So Paul writes in chapter one to remind him of his great salvation, his Savior Jesus Christ and the purpose to which he had been called. He reminds him of God's divine provisions to carry out his calling which enables every believer to remain strong and endure.

A. “YOU THEREFORE, MY SON...” - 2 TIMOTHY 2:1

Clearly there was a contrast between those who were ashamed of the gospel and those who were not and Paul connects these next verses in 2 Timothy 2:1 with his previous ones. In contrast to the unfaithful ones in Asian Minor, Paul writes to Timothy, “*You therefore*”, or “*as for you Timothy*”, exhorting him to imitate the obedient pattern of those faithful ones God had placed in his life and not the many deserters which were all around him. Paul had already reminded Timothy his Mom's faith, his Grandmother, Onesiphorus and of course Paul himself. He exhorts Timothy to remain strong and faithful to the Lord Jesus Christ, spreading the good news of His gospel! Do not become discouraged or disheartened by those who are unfaithful. We know we can all become discouraged when life and adversity overwhelm us or when fellow believers cave to pressure rather than rise to it. Sadly, there will always be the unfaithful many and so Paul's message is just as needful for every devoted believer as it was for Timothy.

So Paul expresses great love for Timothy as a father reaching out to his precious son with these words, “*You therefore, my son...*” There is tenderness in these words from Paul's heart just as there is a loving

tenderness in God's heart for his children as He calls us to a worthy walk.

B. “BE STRONG” – 2 TIMOTHY 2:1

Paul strongly exhorts Timothy to “*be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.*” Even the Lord's strongest commands are given in love. God admonishes His children firmly but lovingly.

“**be strong**” Greek **ἰσχυροῦμαι** present, passive imperative verb that means to make strong, vigorous.

Paul commands Timothy now, to be strong and not weak. Be courageous and not disheartened by insurmountable obstacles. The sense is continuous, present, keep on being strong remembering that God is actively strengthening you and you must be actively cooperating with God. The effectiveness of Timothy's ministry was not simply dependent on having been called by God. Nor was it effective just because God promised divine provisions and abundant resources to accomplish that ministry. But it necessitated faithfully using them in God's power and for His glory. ¹ And so Timothy didn't need more from God, but needed to put into use all God had already given him. So the *present tense* is continuous, keep on being strong because God is actively strengthening you.

Our source of strength to do the work of God doesn't come from ourselves, but rather constant, dependent, trust and reliance upon His abundant, gracious provision. And God doesn't act in ways where we are most comfortable, rather in ways that bring Him glory and hopefully people to their knees. Remember the story of Gideon? Timothy would have known about Gideon. In Judges 7:1-20 when Gideon assembled an army of 32,000 men to fight the allied armies of the Midianites numbering some 135,000, the odds did not look very good to Israel! The Midianites had a four to one advantage. Classic military wisdom today says that you need a one to four ratio to defend a position and that a one to four ratio when attacking is suicide. No wonder most of the army of Israel trembled with fear. And God didn't like the odds either but for different reasons. So God said to Gideon, “*You have too many men for me to deliver Midian into their hands...announce now to the people, ‘Anyone who trembles with fear may turn back.’*” But God still didn't like the odds so He ordered a screening process in which all the remaining soldiers were observed as they drank from the Jordan River. Only the 300 who cupped their hands and drank were retained. Now the odds were one Israelite to 450 Midianites. We know the end of the story, how God used those 300 to surround the Midianites in the night with blaring trumpets

BIBLE STUDIES

LEGISLATORS, GOVERNOR & SPOUSES: TUESDAY AT 7:15AM, CAPITOL BASEMENT, ROOM 0109

STAFF, LOBBYISTS, JOURNALISTS & SERGEANTS: TUESDAYS AT NOON, CAPITOL BASEMENT, ROOM 0109

Colorado

“BE STRONG IN THE GRACE THAT IS IN CHRIST!” – 2 TIMOTHY 2:1

and flaming torches, causing the Midianites to fall in to confusion, destroying each other. God doesn't do things the way we do.²

Paul laid before Timothy the challenge, the hardships and the hard work of the gospel. He has encouraged him with his giftedness by God for ministry equipped with abundance, divine resources. He has reminded him of his salvation, his Savior and his purpose and calls him to stand tall and be willing to suffer. He charges Timothy to retain the pattern of truth he has been taught and guard the treasure of the gospel. Now, he lovingly but sternly issues the command for Timothy as a faithful, fervent disciple of Christ to “*be strong*”. And to carry out the work of God it will require a constant reliance on Him to accomplish that work so be strong and not weak.

When Joshua was about to lead Israel into the promised land, carrying out the work God had for him to do, the Lord said this to him, “*Only be strong and very courageous; be careful to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you, do not turn from it to the right or to the left, so that you may have success wherever you go. This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth but you shall meditate on it day and night so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous and then you will have success. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you where you go.*” (Joshua 1:7-9) If you think about it, it almost sounds like 2 Timothy!

B. “IN THE GRACE THAT IS IN CHRIST JESUS” – 2 TIMOTHY 2:1

2 Timothy 2:1, “You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.”

The verb, “*be strong*” while an imperative command, is also *passive*, indicating that the source of strength is not in Timothy, but rather “*in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.*” We are saved by the grace of God, we are kept by the grace of God and we are empowered by the grace of God each and every day. God's grace is made available to all believers only through the Lord Jesus Christ.

Strength for the journey in this life is not found in ourselves, but in the grace God supplies. It is God's grace that strengthens us to carry on God's work especially when we just feel like giving up. But the resource for our strength will never come from ourselves. We must always remember it is God's divine grace.

From John 1:16-17 we are told that grace and truth have been realized in Jesus Christ and we have grace upon grace. James 4:6 reminds us that God gives us a greater grace; greater than any hardship or adversity. His grace is abundantly all I need and God gives grace to His humble and faithful followers. And God's grace can never be depleted. Grace is heaped upon our lives without any

end. Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 15:10 that “*But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me did not prove vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me.*” Paul life was all about the grace found in Christ alone. That's how he endured and why he could encourage Timothy to the same.

You see, grace is the unmerited favor and gift of God to help! Isn't that just what we need each and every day? That's what Timothy needed. He needed to be reminded that nothing would come his way but what he would have the grace of God to handle it ... *no person, no pain, no tragedy.*

There is no time when we cannot stand tall and be strong. That is true for all who are in Christ and thus under His grace. If He calls you to do something, He will supply sufficient strength through His grace. If He calls you to step forward, He will give you the power. If He calls you to endure, the strength you need will be found in “*the grace that is in Christ Jesus.*”

Heed the command from Paul to Timothy, from God to you:

2 Timothy 2:1, “You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.”

And God will abundantly give all you need; more than you could even think or ask for. When you think you are at your end, when you have nothing left, remember what God said to Paul in 2 Corinthians 12:9-10: “*My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness. Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may dwell in me.*”

This is my prayer for you:

*“The Lord bless you and keep you;
The Lord make His face shine on you
And be gracious to you;
The Lord lift up His countenance on you,
And give you peace.”
Numbers 6:24-26*

¹MacArthur, John, *MacArthur Commentary on 2 Timothy*. Moody Press: Chicago, 1998. Pg.37-38.

²Hughes, R. Kent and Chapell, Bryan, *1 and 2 Timothy and Titus; To Guard the Deposit*. Crossway Books: Wheaton, Illinois, 2000. Pg. 191.

³Hughes, R. Kent and Chapell, Bryan, *1 and 2 Timothy and Titus; To Guard the Deposit*. Crossway Books: Wheaton, Illinois, 2000. Pg. 193.