

COMMUNICATING PERSONAL BELIEFS / Sunday School- April 3, 2011

Unifying Topic: REMEMBERING JESUS CHRIST

Lesson Text

I. Remembering, Suffering, And Enduring (2 Timothy 2:8-13)

II. Meeting God's Approval (2 Timothy 2:14-15)

The Main Thought: Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth (2 Timothy 2:15 KJV).

Unifying Principle: People find it difficult to articulate their beliefs and values. What can help us articulate our beliefs and values? The experience of worship moves Christians to a deeper understanding of what they believe.

Lesson Aim: To understand that suffering is a part of Christian discipleship.

Life Aim: To teach how Christ wants us to remember Him, suffer for His Gospel, endure the difficult challenges of living a faithful Christian life, and be aware of false doctrines concerning His nature.

- 2:8 Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel:
2:9 Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound.
2:10 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.
2:11 It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him:
2:12 If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us:
2:13 If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself.
2:14 Of these things put them in remembrance, charging them before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers.
2:15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

HISTORY:

In **1Timothy**, Paul had left Timothy behind at Ephesus with an awesome responsibility. Paul writes a letter addressed to a young evangelist charging him with the responsibility of working with a congregation and guiding them in the right way. Everything that is written is designed to aid both him and the congregation in doctrine and conduct. He warns Timothy about false teachings and instructs him on how to conduct himself while administering the affairs of the church—worship; shepherd; deacon; congregation, and Jesus' earthly ministry. He encourages Timothy by providing counsel concerning his own spiritual progress—teaching with your life by not departing from the faith. He gives instruction concerning the members of the church as a family and to give honor where honor is due.

In **2Timothy**, Timothy is to commit to others what Paul had taught him. Paul returned to Rome where he was imprisoned for the second and final time where he wrote Second Timothy. He had already appeared for his preliminary hearing before the Supreme Court of Rome, before Nero himself. It appears that his removal out of this world was not far off. He clearly anticipates his own death and the investment of his life will have results only if it is passed on to the next generation. He would never be able to write again. This was to be his last will and testament - the last words he would ever pen.

Paul's great concern was not for himself but for Timothy and the success of the Gospel ministry. As we have learned, Timothy was young. In his First Letter to Timothy (1Timothy)

Synopsis of 2 Timothy 1:1-18

Greetings: The apostle Paul begins this letter to his "*beloved son*" with a prayer for grace, mercy and peace in his behalf. Thankful to God for the unceasing memories that he has of Timothy in his prayers night and day, Paul greatly desires to see the young man. Seeing him again will bring great joy as Paul is mindful of Timothy's tears and his unfeigned faith which first came from his grandmother Lois and his mother Eunice (1-5). Paul's purpose in writing begins in earnest with a series of exhortations or charges toward steadfast service.

A CALL TO COURAGE:

Charge One: Endure Abuse for the Gospel:

- Stir up that special gift of God's ministry, received when hands were laid on him V6.
- Do not be fearful, but be fearless, for God has not given us the spirit of fear V7.
- Do not to be ashamed of the gospel; don't be ashamed of the testimony of the Lord nor of Paul, God's prisoner V8.
- Be ready to suffer for Jesus; for the sake of the gospel. Why? – Because God had saved them, called them with a holy calling and with the purpose of Salvation through Jesus Christ V8b-10.
- Look at me (Paul) as an example V11-12.

Charge Two: Hold Fast to the Lord Jesus Christ:

- Hold fast the pattern of sound words which was heard from Paul by faith and love V13.
- Hold fast one's trust, keeping it by the indwelling Holy Spirit V14.
- Hold fast without turning away, for many turned away. Paul reminds Timothy of those who had forsaken him V15.
- Hold fast following the example of those who have proven faithful: Onesiphorus had proven to be a true friend and brother by virtue of his courage, diligence, and service. He prayed that God would have mercy upon this dear saint in the great Day of Judgment V16-18.

Summary of 2 Timothy 2:1-5

THE CALL TO SERVICE:

Remember Paul was facing death. These words are reminiscent of Moses' words to Joshua, suggesting to Timothy that God's work continues only when the work of ministry is passed on from generation to generation. Just as the day came for Moses to pass on his task to Joshua, the time had come for Paul to commission Timothy for a task that will continue indefinitely. Though others falter and fail, he expects more of Timothy. Paul dearly loved him as a son.

Charge Three: Be Strong in the Lord Jesus Christ: Paul give five pictures or illustrations: son, soldier, athlete, farmer, and workman.

CHAPTER 2 OF 2ND TIMOTHY (1-7)

2:1 Be strong: The source of strength is found in the Lord Jesus Christ. In particular, it is found in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. "*Grace*" means the undeserved favor and blessings of God which is only through His Son Jesus. **The point is this:** We must do just what Paul told Timothy, "*be strong*" but not in our own strength. Trust the sufficiency of Christ.

2:2 Commit what he has learned to faithful men who can pass it along. The picture is of a strong teacher.

1. **A strong teacher** receives truth. How? – Many will proclaim the promises of Christ to be true because when they trusted Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord, something happened to them:
 - They received a changed life, a transformation of life so dramatic that they became as new men and new creatures.
 - They received a deep sense of God's presence.
 - They received the absolute assurance of salvation from sin, death, and judgment to come.
 - They received the indwelling presence of God's Holy Spirit.
 - They received the assurance of living forever.

Timothy experienced this truth of Christ and of Salvation. Witness after witness down through the centuries confirms this truth.

2. **A strong teacher** trains others to transmit the truth. The truth is to be committed to faithful believers. By "*faithful*" (*pistos*) is meant a person: 1) who believes in Christ and in the Word of God. 2) who is loyal, reliable, dependable, and trustworthy.

The point is: **A strong teacher** will hear, receive, and transmit the truth to others which is passed from one generation to another. As a son, he is to be a strong teacher.

II. AS A SOLDIER

2:3 Endure hardness. As a soldier, he is to endure hardness.

1. **A strong soldier endures**, suffers, and shares hardships with all other soldiers. A soldier is at war. It may mean wounds and suffering. Paul did not ask timothy to do something he hadn't done. Pastors must lead the way.
2. **2:4 A strong soldier** does **not become entangled with the affairs of this life**. He stays focused upon the cause of Christ. The cause is to give the message of eternal salvation. His purpose is not...
 - To make money
 - To seek possessions
 - To covet position
 - To party
 - To live in pleasure
 - To indulge the flesh
 - To focus upon this life

Deuteronomy 20:5-8 warns a man not to go to war if there are unsettled affairs in his life. The battle is serious and a soldier cannot be distracted by entanglements of business or family affairs.

3. **A strong soldier** pleases or obeys his Commander-in-chief. **He seeks to please the king who has chosen him.**
 - not to another commander, for another commander would be a false commander.
 - not to himself, seeking to satisfy the lusts of his own desires.
 - not to loved ones who would have his time and waste his energies.
 - not to those in the world who seek his energies and pleasures.

The grand purpose of the minister and soldier of the gospel is to please Christ.

III. AS AN ATHLETE

2:5 Strive lawfully. "*Strive*" (*Gr athleō*) means to engage in athletic contests. To win the prize, he must "*strive lawfully*" (*Gr nominos*) or actually keep the rules of the game. The Christian believer is to be like a strong athlete in the cause of Christ. Therefore, to run the race of life one does not break God's rules and get away with it. As the umpire of the game of life, God calls the fouls real close, as we've seen with Moses. You might think you're getting away, but not so.

1. The athlete is strong in discipline and self-denial. **Striving for masteries** is a picture of a professional athlete striving for his prize. The Christian is not to be an amateur in life; he is to be a professional striving for **the "Victor's Crown."** The struggle is not a part-time thing; it requires all the dedication, energy, and effort that the Christian athlete has, and then some. How? There must be no such things as...
 - An undisciplined believer
 - An indulgent, overeating believer
 - A part-time believer
 - An uncontrolled believer
 - A lustful, immoral believer
 - A half-hearted, complacent believer
 - A flabby believer
 - A licentious believer
 - a. A strong athlete is disciplined and controlled in mind, body, and soul.
 - His body may ache from tiredness, but he must push on.
 - He may wish to indulge, but he must reject the temptation.
 - He may desire to look, touch, taste, and have, but he must refuse and focus his thoughts and energies upon the race for Christ.
 - b. Continued in mind, body, and soul
 - In the worship of God through bible and prayer.
 - In bearing testimony to the glorious news of Christ Jesus our Lord—the glorious news of life eternal.
2. The athlete is strong as he strives lawfully; or else be disqualified from the contest.

Kenneth Wuest says:

- "The Greek athlete was required to spend ten months in preparatory training before the contest. During this time he has to engage in the prescribed exercises and live a strictly separated life in regard to the ordinary and lawful pursuits of life, and be placed on a rigid diet. Should he break training rules, he would... be a castaway (1Corth.9:27), adokimos, '*disqualified*,' barred from engaging in the athletic contest" (*The Ministerial Epistles*, Vol.2, p.129f).
- The athlete is strong who **obeys the rules** laid down by the official of the contest. The official is the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. The rules are: Believe and Follow Christ, that is obey the Word of God.

How many people declare that they are entering the Christian race, but they do not run by the rules? The terrible tragedy is this: they are disqualified and shall be cast away; and some don't even know it! To represent the Christian life Paul has used the picture of a son, the soldier, the athlete, and now he uses the picture of the farmer.

IV. AS A HARD-WORKING FARMER or HUSBANDMAN

2:6 Labors diligently. The word "*labor*" (*kopiaō*) means labor that is diligent, laborious, exhausting. The Christian believer is to be like a diligent hard-working farmer who toils for Christ. In the KJV, it is husbandman which is farmer and I'll use them interchangeably. It is not the lazy husbandman, but the husbandman who toils, who must be the first to receive the share of the fruits of the harvest. Some characteristics and practical truths found in the image of the husbandman/ farmer and field:

1. The husbandman must be content, first, to work, and, then to wait. If you leave a field to itself, it will produce mostly weeds.
2. The husbandman must be prepared to work at any hour. That's why he needs patience, waiting for the land to yield.
3. The husbandman deserves his share of the harvest. A farmer He must be the partaker of the first fruit.
 - i. The spiritual leaders who share the Word with the people are the first ones to enjoy its blessings. The preacher and the teacher always get more out of the sermon or lesson than do the hearers because they put much more into it. They also get great joy out of seeing planted seeds bear fruit in the lives of others. Farming is hard work, and it can have many disappointments; but the rewards are worth it.

Oliver Greene says:

- ii. "*Many Christians think that all will share alike in the rewards on that day when the righteous Judge will reward His faithful servants; but these dear people have a tremendous surprise in store for them! Each believer will be rewarded according to his faithful stewardship....I am sure there will be many in heaven without a reward*" (*The Epistles of Paul the Apostle to Timothy and Titus*, p.298).

¹One thing remains in all four pictures. The son is upheld by grace of Christ Jesus passed to many generations. The soldier is upheld by the thought of final victory. The athlete is upheld by the vision of the crown. The husbandman/ farmer is upheld by the hope of the harvest. Each submits to the discipline and the toil for the sake of the glory which shall be. It is so with the Christian. The Christian struggle is not without a goal; it is always going somewhere. The Christian can be certain that after the effort of the Christian life, there comes the joy of heaven; and the greater the struggle, the greater the joy.

2:7 Consider, let this sink in. it would do well to meditate much on these things (Josh.1:8). The conclusion is to think

¹ <http://theparkwaychurchofchrist.com/SermonsM-S/order20.htm>
<http://pitwm.net/pitwn-sundayschool.html>

over these things, consider what Paul had said and that the Lord will give understanding. Right from the beginning of this letter Paul has been trying to inspire Timothy to his task. He has reminded him of his own belief in him and of the godly parentage from which he has come; he has shown him the picture of the Christian teacher, the Christian soldier, the Christian athlete, and the Christian toiler. And now he comes to the greatest appeal of all—*Remember Jesus Christ as you communicate your beliefs.*

LESSON:

2 Timothy 2:8-13 Remembering, Suffering, And Enduring

Charge Four: Remember Jesus Christ Is The Resurrected Lord:

2:8 REMEMBER: Paul, a prisoner in Rome is really urging Timothy to remember three things.

1. **Remember Jesus Christ, born of the seed of David.** This is speaking of Jesus' humanity, His lineage being of the seed of David, and rightful heir to the throne of David.
 - Jesus the Messiah was man. He was a man in human form just like David, born of the roots of David. God sent His Son into the world in human flesh. The Son of God became a man—flesh and blood—just like all other men.

The point is this: Jesus Christ knows exactly what we face in life. Therefore, He is able to succor (aid) us through all the trials of life. No matter what the sufferings are, Jesus Christ can deliver us through the sufferings and cause us to triumph over them.

2. **Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead.**

- Jesus the Messiah was divine. The gospel will proclaim the humanity and deity of Jesus Christ. He was of the very nature of God Himself. How do we know this? - Because He was raised from the dead. The Greek perfect tense denotes the certainty of the fact. The resurrection from the dead declares that Jesus is the Son of God. All other men are dead and gone. The proof is demonstrated by one simple question: "*Where are they?*" Once they have left this world, they are gone. But not Christ! He died, but He arose and lives forever in the presence of God. Death does not hold Him because He is the Son of God and possessed the perfect Spirit of Holiness. Paul is saying to Timothy "**Remember your risen and ever-present Lord.**" To a Christian, we do not depend on a memory, however great it may be. We are to enjoy the power of a presence—the presence and the power of the risen Lord who is with us forever, here and hereafter.
3. **Remember the gospel, the good news. My gospel** means the gospel which Paul preached and if anyone preaches any other, he is to be accursed (Gal.1:8, 9). Preach it even ²when it leads to an effort which seems to be beyond human ability and to a future which seems dark with every kind of threat, remember that it is good news, and remember that the world is waiting for it. However hard the task the gospel offers, that same gospel is the message of liberation from sin and victory over circumstances for us and for all mankind.

So Paul ignites Timothy to service by calling upon him to remember Jesus Christ, to remember the continual presence of the risen Lord, to remember the sympathy which comes from the manhood of the Master, to remember the glory of the gospel for himself and for the world which has never heard it and is waiting for it.

2:9 SUFFERING: Who better to talk about suffering, than Paul? Preaching the gospel of the resurrection of Christ brought about Paul's persecution which landed him in prison. The preaching of God's Word will carry one through suffering and assure the victory of one's purpose. God protects His servants but He also preserves them through the suffering of trouble. Sufferings or troubles are not always the chastening of God or the result of sins. A good soldier should expect suffering while in an enemy's country (Phil.1:29). This gospel did not bring Paul a life of glamour and ease. He suffered as an evil doer. Before, persecuting Christians and consenting to their death, didn't make him a criminal, but preaching the gospel did, in the eyes of the Jews. He had not done any crime, but he suffered as if he were a criminal. Paul was not free, he was even in chains, but that did not stop the spreading of the gospel. The Word was not chained; not bound. The reverse is often true today: People are free but their tongue is bound! Well, people may think they can stop God's Word but it is free to go wherever God sends it. Proclaim it loud and clear as you go through troubles, your trials, and your circumstances.

2:10 ENDURING: The gospel stirs one to endure all things. How? By results! God has promised to save people by the gospel. Therefore, no matter what it costs—no matter how much suffering we have to bear—we must endure it all for the salvation of people. We might have expected Paul to say he endures all things for the sake of God. Yet Paul knew that his love for God could reliably be measured by his love for God's people and the gospel. The gospel must be proclaimed because the elect are not saved apart from faith in Christ. The elect, having been chosen for salvation from before the world began, who had not yet come to faith in Jesus Christ will receive salvation in no one

² <http://theparkwaychurchofchrist.com/SermonsM-S/order20.htm>
<http://pitwm.net/pitwn-sundayschool.html>

else but Christ. The ultimate outcome of salvation is eternal glory.

2:11-13 A FAITHFUL SAYING : FOR IF: This saying is in verses 11-13. It is a saying you can count on, it's trustworthy. "For" connects what he had been saying—Salvation in Christ Jesus with Eternal glory—and the conclusions he now draws from these verses. He says, "If", it complies with a stipulation or condition of your actions. The gospel assures eternal glory and eternal judgment. There is a choice to receive or not receive!

2:11 The glorious promise: "If we die with Christ, we shall also live with Him." How can a person die with Christ? This is the death which occurs in baptism. Dying with Christ is a metaphorical reference to denying one's self, contrition and repentance experienced at the time of being baptized "into his death." The basis of our eternal life is our personal identification with Christ and acceptance of Him. When the believer dies with Christ: (1) he is automatically entitled to all the privileges of the death of Christ; (2) he is dead to the Law of Moses; (3) he has already paid (through the death of Christ) all the penalty of sin, etc. When we die we live! This is a faithful and trustworthy saying! Count on this promise!

2:12 "If we suffer, we shall reign with him." Enduring hardship with Christ, assures you of reigning forever with Christ. Those who do remain loyal to Christ will rule with Him in heaven. However, **the tragic result** of denying Christ: "If we deny Him, He also will deny us." Two things to remember here:

1. First, Peter denied Christ three times, even though he was saved, but his reaction was conviction and contrition.
2. Secondly, 1 Jh.2:19 tells of those who "went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us." These were apostate. This is the final permanent denial not the temporary failure of a true believer like Peter. Those who so deny Christ give evidence that they never truly belonged to Him and face the fearful reality of one day being denied by Him (Matt.10:33).

V13 God means what He says: He will keep His Word. "If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful; he cannot deny himself." "Believing not" (*Gr apisteuō*) refers to unfaithfulness on our part and this is not a good option for us. If we do not believe, he is still faithful and will remain true. He cannot deny who he is; He cannot deny His character, His Word, His nature. He is faithful to His threatenings; faithful to His promises; neither one nor the other shall fall to the ground, no, not the least jot or tittle of them. If we be faithful, he will certainly be faithful to us. If we be false to him, he will be faithful to his threatening. He cannot deny himself, cannot recede from any Word that He hath spoken, for He is yea, and amen, the faithful witness....If we deny him, out of fear, or shame, or for the sake of some temporal advantage, He will deny and disown us, and will not deny himself, but will continue to be faithful to His word when He threatens as well as when He promises" (Matthew Henry. *Matthew Henry's Commentary*, p.839). His promise of glory and His pronouncement of judgment are sure. Some people will be saved and glorified, and others will be denied and condemned.

2 Timothy 2:14-15 Meeting God's Approval

Charge Five: REMIND THE CHURCH ABOUT THE DANGER OF WORDS & THE FOUNDATION OF GOD:

V. AS A WORKMAN

V14 Put them in Remembrance. This charge was to be done before the Lord. He should look to God as witness to what he tells them.

1. Do not argue or strive over petty matters or over religious theories, speculations, and ideas; they do not profit the hearers. Paul dealt with false teachers, deceivers who used human reason to subvert God's Word. This was not only foolish and futile, but also dangerous. A faithful pastor will keep off the side issues. There are essentially three kinds of unprofitable talk that go on among believers.
 - First, there is the trivial talk that passes the time away, talk that fails to build up the believer.
 - Second, there is the talk that engages in criticism and gossip, talk that tears a person down.
 - Third, there is the talk that enjoys discussing the theories and speculations of theology that lead to arguments.

If it continued, it would subvert (undermine and weaken) the hearers; it would overturn the hearers which is the opposite of to build-up. The point is this: the preacher and teacher must remind believers—do not argue and strive over words that do not profit the hearers. Do not upset or tear down people with your words.

V15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God: "Study" (*Gr spoudazō*) means to set your heart upon—be diligent, hurry, rush, and seek the approval of God.

2. The charge is to study. It is God's approval we seek. It pleases God. It says you are my son, my daughter, my child, my student of the Word! To be a good worker, ask yourself these questions.
 - How can a workman know what the Master needs from him unless he studies the Master's Word?
 - How can the workman be one in relationship with the Master unless he studies?
 - How can one have the same spiritual mind-set with the Master unless he studies?

You show yourself approved by knowing God Word...

- When you are in conflicts.
 - You know the battle is the Lord's and not yours.
 - You can count it all joy because you win.
 - You are not settling but going to God in prayer with the Word.
- When you lose something or someone.
 - You refuse to be depressed for a long time.
 - You are allowing God to have it.
 - You know there is a purpose in your learning.
- When you begin to pray for someone.
 - You seek God's Word and allow His Spirit to do the rest.
 - You come into agreement with God and what He wants.
 - Your faith in God gives you peace.
- When you do not allow the enemy to get you down.
 - You are smiling from the inside out.
 - You are re-emphasizing who you are in God.
 - You know trouble won't last; it's only for a season.

Paul tells Timothy not to be ashamed because you have studied to show yourself approved to God; because you have rightly divided the Word of Truth. There is no one conflicting with that Word you have given because it came from the mouth of God to set the people free; because it was made clear to all believers. To "*rightly divide*" (*orthotomeō*) meaning "*to cut a straight course*", or "*lay out a road*", or "*correctly interpret*." All of God's Word is true. There are no contradictions when rightly laid out. You cannot add to nor take away any of it (Rev.22:19). We are to study the truth and rightly divide it. Once we have studied and learned the Word of God, we are to accurately teach the Word of God. We are not to teach our own ideas; what we think; what other men think; the theories of other people. We are not to mishandle the Word of God: twist it to fit what we think or want it to say; over-emphasize or under-emphasize its teachings. Any person who mishandles God's Word is not approved of God. This is the point of this verse: if we want God's approval—if we want to be acceptable to God—we must study, rush and seek to be a true teacher of God's Word. We must be workmen who study God's Word; workmen who study diligently; who correctly analyze and accurately divide—rightly handle and skillfully teach—the Word of Truth (Amplified New Testament). This is the believer who will not be ashamed when he faces the Lord Jesus Christ in the great Day of Judgment.

SUMMARY:

Paul challenges us to pass the faith on to the next generation. Paul's life was almost over. He was soon going to be with the Lord. The apostle is clearly passing the torch on to Timothy, and likewise he is urging Timothy to pass the torch on to others, who in turn will pass it on to others. The lesson is all about communicating personal beliefs. To communicate your beliefs, they would have to be apart of what was instilled in you; apart of your make-up and growing process. Therefore, as Paul instructed Timothy, he says remember. That's a key word. Remember what? Remember Jesus Christ! The seed of David; the One raised from the dead according to the gospel. Don't be fainthearted and forget this. You see there is going to be some suffering. Paul says he suffered for the sake of the gospel. He was in chains. Remember this, God's messenger may be in chains, but God's message cannot be chained.

The result of this kind of endurance is that many will come and obtain Salvation which is not in Paul or Timothy but in Christ Jesus where the elect will have eternal glory. The result of the suffering and endurance is that we're in it for a purpose. It's all about Him! It's all about His Word being true! Believe this because it is a faithful saying.

If we die in Him, we live in Him.
If we suffer, we reign with Him.
If we deny Him, He'll deny us.
If we believe not, He is still faithful for
He cannot deny Himself as being the only True God.

It all depends on the "If" If we, then He... Now that makes us responsible for something. As we continue in our responsibility we are to remind people about these great scriptural truths, charge them before God; remember to warn them not to strive about petty words that lead to endless arguments because it's not profitable; and strive to become an approved workman before God by studying His uncompromising Word, that you will not be made ashamed. Remember Jesus Christ, He approves you!

APPLICATION:

Jesus suffered and died for us to pass His "*Will and Testament*" on to those that don't know it; to those that have come up and know not the Lord. Communicate His Will and Testament to others that don't know Him!

<http://pitwm.net/pitwn-sundayschool.html>