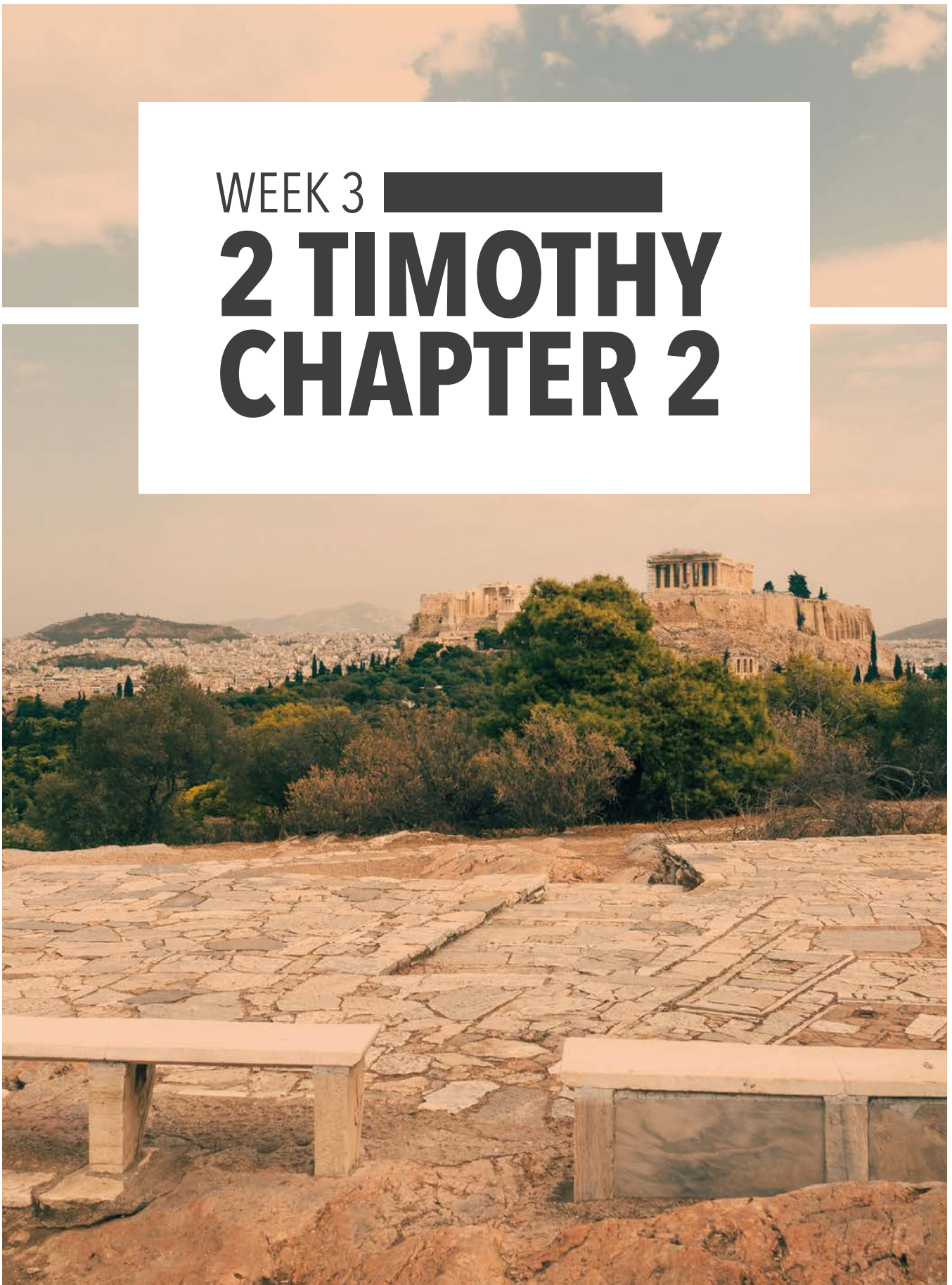


WEEK 3

**2 TIMOTHY  
CHAPTER 2**



## A GOOD SOLDIER OF CHRIST JESUS

<sup>2</sup>Timothy, my dear son, be strong through the grace that God gives you in Christ Jesus. <sup>2</sup>You have heard me teach things that have been confirmed by many reliable witnesses. Now teach these truths to other trustworthy people who will be able to pass them on to others.

<sup>3</sup>Endure suffering along with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. <sup>4</sup>Soldiers don't get tied up in the affairs of civilian life, for then they cannot please the officer who enlisted them. <sup>5</sup>And athletes cannot win the prize unless they follow the rules. <sup>6</sup>And hardworking farmers should be the first to enjoy the fruit of their labor. <sup>7</sup>Think about what I am saying. The Lord will help you understand all these things.

<sup>8</sup>Always remember that Jesus Christ, a descendant of King David, was raised from the dead. This is the Good News I preach. <sup>9</sup>And because I preach this Good News, I am suffering and have been chained like a criminal. But the word of God cannot be chained. <sup>10</sup>So I am willing to endure anything if it will bring salvation and eternal glory in Christ Jesus to those God has chosen.

<sup>11</sup>This is a trustworthy saying:  
If we die with him,  
we will also live with him.

<sup>12</sup>If we endure hardship,  
we will reign with him.  
If we deny him,  
he will deny us.

<sup>13</sup>If we are unfaithful,  
he remains faithful,  
for he cannot deny who he is.

<sup>14</sup>Remind everyone about these things, and command them in God's presence to stop fighting over words. Such arguments are useless, and they can ruin those who hear them.

## AN APPROVED WORKER

<sup>15</sup>Work hard so you can present yourself to God and receive his approval. Be a good worker, one who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly explains the word of truth. <sup>16</sup>Avoid worthless, foolish talk that only leads to more godless behavior. <sup>17</sup>This kind of talk spreads like cancer, as in the case of Hymenaeus and Philetus. <sup>18</sup>They have left the path of truth, claiming that the resurrection of the dead has already occurred; in this way, they have turned some people away from the faith.

<sup>19</sup>But God's truth stands firm like a foundation stone with this inscription: "The Lord knows those who are his," and "All who belong to the Lord must turn away from evil."

<sup>20</sup>In a wealthy home some utensils are made of gold and silver, and some are made of wood and clay. The expensive utensils are used for special occasions, and the cheap ones are for everyday use. <sup>21</sup>If you keep yourself pure, you will be a special utensil for honorable use. Your life will be clean, and you will be ready for the Master to use you for every good work.

<sup>22</sup>Run from anything that stimulates youthful lusts. Instead, pursue righteous living, faithfulness, love, and peace. Enjoy the companionship of those who call on the Lord with pure hearts.

<sup>23</sup>Again I say, don't get involved in foolish, ignorant arguments that only start fights. <sup>24</sup>A servant of the Lord must not quarrel but must be kind to everyone, be able to teach, and be patient with difficult people. <sup>25</sup>Gently instruct those who oppose the truth. Perhaps God will change those people's hearts, and they will learn the truth. <sup>26</sup>Then they will come to their senses and escape from the devil's trap. For they have been held captive by him to do whatever he wants. the day of Christ's return. And you know very well how helpful he was in Ephesus.

# DAY 1 - MONDAY ██████████

## STAY STRONG AND PASS IT ON

2 TIMOTHY 2:1-14, ROMANS 1:2-7, 1 CORINTHIANS 15:1-8

Paul realizes that his time on earth is near its end, so he encourages Timothy to stay strong and continue to pass the gospel on to others. His main goal is to ensure that the gospel perseveres for all generations. Paul's goal continues to reign as an important message for us today as we are responsible for passing gospel truth on to other people, much like passing a baton in a relay race. Think back on who shared the gospel with you; maybe it was a parent, a family member, a friend, a co-worker, or a pastor. That person also had someone who shared the gospel with them. This "good news" has been passed on through generations. Sharing the gospel with others can feel intimidating, but it's as simple as sharing who Jesus is to you, what He has done for you, and what you have done in response to following Jesus.

Simply put, this is the gospel:

Jesus is the Son of God, our Savior, Lord, and King. We have all turned from God's way and gone our own way; this is what the Bible calls sin. We are sinners in need of a Savior. Jesus died in our place, paying the penalty for our sins. He rose from the dead and is alive today, reigning as the Lord of all. As we understand who Jesus is and what He has done for us, we realize there is nothing we can do on our own to earn salvation from our sin and its consequences. Jesus Christ has done it all. The gospel reveals God's great love for us that "while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." (Rom. 5:8) In response to the gospel, we live lives that look more like Jesus in the ways we love and serve. We look to Jesus for peace, comfort, and strength to endure challenges and suffering.

Timothy was facing opposition to sharing the gospel in his time. In his humanity, Timothy likely felt defeated, weary, and lonely. We can often feel that way as we look to share the gospel today. But when we are strong in grace, our lives begin to look different, and people will notice; this is when we have the opportunity to share the good news of Jesus with them. As 1 Peter 3:15 says, "Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect."

Tara-Leigh Cobble points out in The Bible Recap that:

*Paul likely worries that Timothy will shrink back from speaking the truth because of the consequences Paul has experienced. He encourages Timothy to dig his heels in even more to do the hard work of spreading the gospel and to not be surprised when it's challenging. He's willing to endure whatever it takes for the gospel to reach those who will believe it, and he wants to impress this same urgency on Timothy: Do not abandon the gospel, no matter what.*

This is the same challenge for us today: "Be strong through the grace that God gives you in Christ Jesus. You have heard me teach things that have been confirmed by many reliable witnesses. Now teach these truths to other trustworthy people who will be able to pass them on to others."

### REFLECTION

What can you do to ensure the gospel reaches the next generation?

Ask God to show you if there is someone in your life who needs to hear the "good news."

# DAY 2 - TUESDAY ██████████

## BE ARMED FOR BATTLE

2 TIMOTHY 2:1-14, EPHESIANS 6:10-18, 1 THESSALONIANS 2:1-8

Paul uses three illustrations in 2 Tim. 2:3-7 of a soldier, an athlete, and a farmer to encourage Timothy in the work he was called to as a believer. All three of these show us how, as believers, we are to be committed to a fight that is bigger than ourselves. This fight will take sacrifice, and will require real effort from us.

*The ESV Study Bible* explains it this way:

Paul sets forth the call to service and suffering. Verse 4 calls for single-minded desire to please God. Verse 5 reiterates that one must obey God's rules in order to succeed. Verse 6 seems to encourage hard work by holding out the promise of blessing.

The first is the mention of a good soldier in battle. Scripture often talks of the Christian life as a battle against Satan in a hostile world. Paul paints a similar picture in the Ephesians 6 passage we read today of putting on armor to fight the battle. To be victorious, the soldier can't get distracted by civilian affairs but seek to please their commanding officer (the LORD). We should strive to serve him without distraction. We must stay alert and prepared.

The ESV Study Bible points out that verse 4 is often misinterpreted as "a call away from "secular," pursuits. The Bible, however, does not separate life into distinct realms of "spiritual" and "secular." We are spiritual beings, so all of life is to be lived in obedience to the Spirit according to the Word of God. Paul is simply warning Timothy not to allow anything (so-called "secular" pursuits or even perhaps seemingly good "spiritual" pursuits) to distract him from pleasing God. "Our purpose is to please God, not people. He alone examines the motives of our hearts." (1 Thess. 2:4)

The second illustration involves an athlete. The athlete won't gain victory unless he follows the rules, or in other words, the believer gains victory over sin when he is obedient to God's Word. Disregarding God's boundaries and rules leads to us making our own rules, and that's a dangerous place to be. We don't make very good gods for ourselves. We flourish when following God's boundaries and guidelines for life, much like an athlete flourishes when following the rules of the game.

Third, Paul compares Timothy's work to that of a farmer. Farmers are diligent, hard-working, and patient, knowing the harvest might take a long time. "So let's not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don't give up." (Galatians 6:9). Laziness will fail to produce a harvest. We must sow the seeds of faith, cultivate good soil for growth and prune away the things in our lives that aren't producing good fruit. Following Jesus is not always easy—it takes effort, obedience, and patience but He is worth it.

### REFLECTION

Which of the three illustrations do you find that you relate to the most in your walk with the Lord? Why did you choose this one?

# DAY 3 - WEDNESDAY ██████████

## TO DIE IS GAIN

2 TIMOTHY 2:1-14, ROMANS 6:3-11, GALATIANS 2:19-20, EPHESIANS 2:1-10

**This is a trustworthy saying:**

**If we die with him,  
we will also live with him.  
If we endure hardship,  
we will reign with him.  
If we deny him,  
he will deny us.  
If we are unfaithful,  
he remains faithful,  
for he cannot deny who he is.  
2 Timothy 2: 11-13**

This was possibly a familiar poem or hymn among first-century Christians. If we die with him, we will also live with him refers to our union with Christ. When we trust Him as our Savior, sin loses its grip on us as we put that old self to death. We are then raised to new life with Christ, where we have the power of the Holy Spirit to help us overcome temptation and sin. Your eternal future is secure because we have died to ourselves and are now living for Him. "For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain. (Philippians 1:21)

As we endure suffering, we can look forward to a day when our suffering and hardships will end, and we can reign with Jesus forever. If we deny him, he will also deny us, which seems harsh, but if we seek to please ourselves rather than to please the Lord, God will honor that decision and give us what we desire. But that self-seeking desire will lead us to an eternity separated from Him. In this context, to deny him must be a more severe offense than being unfaithful. Denying Christ is a permanent denial or rejection of Jesus, in contrast with a temporary lapse in trusting Christ.

We will not live this Christian life perfectly, so the last sentence reminds us that when we are unfaithful, he remains faithful. When our faith grows weak or fails, God remains true to his promise to love and draw us back to Himself. He will never leave us or forsake us. To fail to keep his promise would be for him to deny himself, and he cannot deny himself. This trustworthy statement moves from comfort to challenge and back to comfort. God is loving, merciful, kind, and gracious but also all-powerful and seeks justice for all. He will get the final word when He comes to restore what is broken and make it whole again; until then, may we learn to live faithful to Christ.

### REFLECTION

Reflect on 2 Timothy 2:11-13 and take some time to write what it means to you in your own words and turn it into a prayer.

# DAY 4 - THURSDAY ████████████████████

## WORDS MATTER

2 TIMOTHY 2:15-26, 1 PETER 3:13-18, GALATIANS 5:22-25, EPHESIANS 4:29-32

Paul's warning (2 Timothy 2:15-17, 22-26) is that how we use our words to share truth matters. We have to be able to share God's truth with others in a way that isn't argumentative or aggressive. He reminds Timothy not to "get involved in foolish, ignorant arguments that only start fights. A servant of the Lord must not quarrel but must be kind to everyone, be able to teach, and be patient with difficult people. Gently instruct those who oppose the truth."

We must approach others first with a posture of humility before they are even willing to listen to the truth we have to share. Often we care more about being right and proving our point than displaying the fruit of the spirit to others; if that's true, we must reevaluate our motivation. We will not reach people with the gospel if we are engaging in foolish talk. We see in these scriptures that some have turned people away from faith with their words. We are to be people who speak the truth in the context of genuine relationships and love. God is the one who changes hearts, but we are His representatives to the world; they see Him through us, so choose your words wisely.

Peter echoes this same idea in 1 Peter when he says, "If someone asks about your hope as a believer, always be ready to explain it. But do this in a gentle and respectful way." Our aim is to live our lives for the approval of God rather than men, seeking to keep a clear conscience and a good reputation. We will not do this perfectly, but let this be our aim. "Be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you." Ephesians 4:32

*"We cannot be too careful about the words we use; we start out using them and they end up using us. Go out into the world uncorrupted, a breath of fresh air in this squalid and polluted society. Provide people with a glimpse of good living and of the living God." - Eugene Peterson*

### REFLECTION

Take some time today to meditate on what the Spirit produces in our lives, as listed in Galatians 5:22. How can you use this list as a filter for your words?

# DAY 5 - FRIDAY ████████████████████

## PURE HEARTS

2 TIMOTHY 2:15-26, EPHESIANS 4:17-27, PSALM 119:9-16

Paul encourages Timothy to “flee youthful lust and pursue righteous living.” Here he is addressing Timothy’s personal holiness. Our personal holiness is a pursuit of progress over perfection.

John Stott, in his book *The Message of 2 Timothy*, describes 2:20-22 like this:

The Master of the house lays down only one condition: the articles which he uses must be clean. His promise hinges on this. It is evident at once that some kind of self-purification is the essential condition of usefulness to Christ, but exactly what is it? Purity of doctrine and purity of life – is the essential condition of being serviceable to Christ. Timothy is to flee the evil desires of youth and pursue the four essential marks of a Christian – righteousness, faith, love and peace – and he is to aim for these in good company (maybe to compensate for the company he will have to avoid if he is to ‘cleanse himself from what is common’), the company of those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart, that is, who share with Timothy the same hunger for righteousness and who cry to God with complete sincerity to satisfy their hunger. We are to recognize sin as something dangerous to the soul. We are not to come to terms with it, or even negotiate with it. We are both to run away from spiritual danger and to run after spiritual good; both to flee from the one in order to escape it and to pursue the other in order to attain it. Thus, we are to deny ourselves and follow Christ. We are to put off what belongs to our old life and to put on what belongs to our new life. We are to put to death our earthly desires and to set our minds on heavenly things. We are to crucify the flesh and to walk in the Spirit. It is the ruthless rejection of the one in combination with the relentless pursuit of the other which Scripture reveals to us as the secret of holiness. This is the only way we can hope to be fit for the Master’s use.

We know we will never reach perfect holiness this side of heaven, but our aim should be to grow in holiness every day. This pursuit is almost impossible to do alone. Our connection with a like-minded community of believers will be essential to our progress and ability to persevere in hard times.

### REFLECTION

Is there an area of your life that God is prompting you to flee from in order to pursue holiness?

Who in your community can you ask to hold you accountable in that area?

