

Entrusting the Gospel to Faithful People

2 Timothy 2:1–2

MAIN IDEA: *God advances His mission by multiplying disciples who faithfully pass on the gospel to others. Because the gospel is meant to be passed on, we intentionally invest our lives in discipling others so the message of Christ continues to bear fruit beyond our own generation.*

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT: Paul is writing what is likely his final letter. He is imprisoned in Rome (2 Timothy 1:16–17; 2:9), and he knows that his execution is approaching (4:6–8). Timothy, meanwhile, is serving as a young pastor in Ephesus and facing serious challenges—false teaching in the church, cultural pressure from the world around him, and the personal discouragement that often comes with ministry. So Paul writes to strengthen and encourage him. But Paul’s concern goes beyond Timothy himself. As he sits in prison, he is thinking about the future of the gospel. What will happen to the message of Christ after he is gone? How will it continue to spread from one generation to the next? Paul’s answer is multiplication: the gospel must be entrusted to faithful people who will pass it on to others. Some English translations say Paul tells Timothy to entrust it to “faithful men,” while others translate the phrase “faithful people.” The Greek word Paul uses, *anthrōpos*, can sometimes refer specifically to men, but it is also commonly used in a broader sense to refer to people in general. In this context, Paul is addressing Timothy as a pastor, and he likely has in view the training of future church leaders who will teach the church, an office elsewhere in Scripture given to qualified men as elders. Yet, more broadly, the responsibility to pass on the gospel is not limited to pastors or to men alone. The Great Commission was given to all disciples of Christ, and Scripture also instructs women to disciple and teach other women (Titus 2:3–5). So, while this verse certainly includes the training of faithful men who will shepherd and teach the church as pastors/elders, the larger principle extends to the whole body of Christ: the gospel is entrusted to all believers, and every Christian—men and women alike—is called to guard it, live it, and pass it on to others (cf. Matthew 28:18–20; 1 Peter 2:9; Philippians 2:16).

1. Strength Comes From God’s Grace in Christ, not Personal Ability (v. 1)

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

A. Gospel ministry requires strength

- Paul does not pretend that making disciples is easy. Timothy faced opposition, discouragement, and false teachers. Discipling others requires endurance.

B. The strength is not self-generated

- Paul does not say be strong in your “personality” or “leadership.”
- He says, “Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus”—it flows from Christ.

C. God’s Grace is the source of perseverance

- Grace does more than save us. His grace sustains us!
- Paul says in 1 Cor. 15:10: *“By the grace of God I am what I am... yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me.”*

D. Application: Begin discipleship with prayer. Depend on Christ daily. Refuse to rely only on personality or skill. Remember that spiritual fruit grows from grace.

2. The Gospel is Entrusted, not Merely Known (v. 2a) *“And what you have heard from me...”*

A. Timothy received the apostolic gospel of Jesus Christ

- Paul is speaking about the message Timothy had already heard/received that proclaims Christ Jesus crucified, risen, and salvation in Christ by God’s grace. This is the same Gospel we saw earlier in this series in 1 Cor. 15:1–4.

B. The Gospel is a sacred trust

- The word “entrust” later in the verse carries the idea of depositing something valuable for safekeeping. The gospel is not ours to edit. It is something we receive and guard. Paul says something similar in 1 Timothy 6:20: *“Guard what has been entrusted to you.”*

C. The Church is a steward of the gospel

- This is not limited to pastors/elders. Every Christian is entrusted with the Gospel of Jesus Christ—to not edit it, to communicate it, to stand on it. Jesus commanded the church: *“Go therefore and make disciples. ”...*” (Mt. 28:19)

D. Application: Ask yourself: Do I know the Gospel clearly? Can I communicate it to someone else, young or old? And am I ready to share it? If not, why not?

3. The Gospel advances through multiplication (v. 2b)

“...in the presence of many witnesses, entrust to faithful people...”

A. The mission is the multiplication of genuine Christ followers

- Paul envisions several generations: Himself, Timothy, faithful people, others
- The Gospel spreads from person to person (faith by hearing, Romans 10:17)

B. Faithfulness matters more than talent

- Paul doesn’t say entrust it to impressive, polished people
- He says, *“faithful people/men”*; the qualification for discipleship is faithfulness!

C. This is the pattern of the Great Commission

- Jesus disciplined the twelve; they disciplined others; the church multiplies through relational investment.

D. Application: Who are you investing in spiritually? A younger believer? Your children? A coworker? A friend? Discipleship often begins simply by: reading Scripture together, praying together, answering questions

4. Every Christian Shares Responsibility for Passing on the Gospel

A. Paul is addressing Timothy as an elder/pastor, but the principle extends to the entire church at large.

- *Why? Because Scripture consistently shows that every believer participates in the mission.* Examples: Mt. 28:19, Acts 8:4, 1 Peter 2:9
- The Gospel spreads through the entire body of Christ, not just pastors.

B. Application:

- Pray regularly for someone you can disciple.
- Invite someone to read Scripture with you.
- Teach your children the gospel.
- Share your testimony with unbelievers.
- Encourage younger believers in the faith.

Closing Challenge:

*Church, the gospel did not reach us by accident. Someone preached it. Someone taught it. Someone passed it on. Now the responsibility rests with us. The question is not simply: “Do we believe the gospel?” The question is: **Who are we passing it on to?** Because God advances His mission by multiplying disciples who faithfully entrust the gospel to the next generation.*