

Teaching Series: 2 Timothy
Passage: 2 Timothy 2:1-7
Title: Be Strong in the Grace

Summary: Here in chapter 2 we continue to build off of, and be reminded of the calling to “hold fast”, all for the sake of finishing well before and unto our Lord who is worth it. Today’s study we look at grace (unmerited favor of God for us), and the strength that is in grace, and the power it has in our personal relationship with the Lord, and our interpersonal relationship with others in our lives.

Verse one says, therefore. So anytime we see the word therefore we have to ask, what is it there for? And it takes us back to chapter one and all the instruction Paul had given Timothy in chapter one. And for us most specifically to hold fast to the pattern, finish well.

2 Timothy 1:13–14 (NKJV) ¹³ Hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. ¹⁴ That good thing which was committed to you, keep by the Holy Spirit who dwells in us.

And so the continual building off of how we are to “hold fast”, and the continual reminder to hold fast, and finish well, our text for today:

2 Timothy 2:1–13 (NKJV) ¹ You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. ² And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. ³ You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. ⁴ No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier. ⁵ And also if anyone competes in athletics, he is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules. ⁶ The hardworking farmer must be first to partake of the crops. ⁷ Consider what I say, and may the Lord give you understanding in all things. ⁸ Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to my gospel, ⁹ for which I suffer trouble as an evildoer, even to the point of chains; but the word of God is not chained. ¹⁰ Therefore I endure all things for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. ¹¹ This is a faithful saying: For if we died with Him, We shall also live with Him. ¹² If we endure, We shall also reign with Him. If we deny Him, He also will deny us. ¹³ If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself.

Prayer

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

(2 Timothy 2:1 NKJV) You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

Grace – unmerited favor.

Verse one, strength in grace. It's a beautiful release for us. It's God's performance over mine and it's freeing. Rather than looking at myself and how I am doing to determine my acceptance before him, I look at him and how he is doing. I can look down in verse 13 and see that he remains faithful even while I'm unfaithful or if I should be unfaithful. Therefore, the performance is solid because it's based on Him and not me because

- God is faithful to His word, it is done.
- God is faithful to His word, I will never leave you nor forsake you.
- God is faithful to all the words that he speaks to us.

He tells Timothy here, be strong in grace. The strength is in grace. Weakness is in works. Your works will always lead you to weakness and it will always leave you short. It will always leave you asking, did I do enough? It will always leave you in doubt of being accepted and it will always leave you have I done enough.

2 Timothy 2:13 (NKJV) ¹³ If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself.

Isaiah 55:11 (NKJV) ¹¹ So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.

Hebrews 13:5 (NKJV) ⁵ Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."

John 19:30 (NKJV) ³⁰ So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.

People, Christians pastors, and churches are often afraid to speak on this grace because they're afraid it would become a license to sin and it's literally the furthest thing from that. Grace leads us to repentance.

Romans 2:4 (NKJV) ⁴ Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?

This principle works in your relationships too, by the way. But I know for many it's just hard to apply because of what I just said. People are afraid that if they show someone grace who has hurt or offended them, that the person will use it to walk all over them and not take their offense seriously. But here's the point that I must say. Grace is either biblical or it is not. And if I am to be like Jesus, how can I be like him apart from grace? Grace is one of the core attributes of Jesus Christ. Grace, mercy, peace, love. These are core attributes of Jesus that can't be separated or put into compartments. If I'm to be like Jesus, grace is one of the attributes that I need to live by and give to others as I receive it myself from the Lord.

I challenge any and all Christians to apply grace in their relationships, to apply grace to that person over their performance and the expectation that's put upon them, that you simply give them grace and love them with grace in the relationship that you have with them. Yes, there is still discipline. Yes, there is still correction, but it's in the realm of grace.

What is it called when you owe a debt and have a period of time? A Grace Period.

And as you apply this grace in your personal relationships which should be applied as freely as we desire to receive it from the Lord himself, you will need to pray in a daily prayer, Lord, I choose grace. I give it to so and so grace. Lord, I'm going to give grace today. Give me the power to give grace and to stick with the grace that I give and not to

pull it back from the person I extended it to. You know, Christian, grace is a choice. It's a choice to receive it and it's a choice to give it. But grace is a choice.

Grace breaks hard hearts. It broke mine with Jesus. As Jesus gave me grace, he broke my heart and grace broke through and reached me as I see that it was his great grace that he loved me. And it was his kindness therefore of his grace that led me to repentance. And you will find truly the same when you give grace. It breaks through hard hearts. It breaks through and softens hearts. Be like Jesus. Give grace in your relationships.

In verse one we read a story in 2nd Chronicles 33 of Manasseh. He was an evil son and he was disciplined by the Lord. He was brought to a place where he cried out to the Lord asking for forgiveness of his wicked ways and the wicked things that he has done. And then we read that God heeded his prayer and forgave him. We read the ultimate grace. Then we read him tearing down idolatrous altars and we read him building up godly altars. And what we read is, and what we see is, grace broke through his heart and yes, the play on words altar/alterd his life. When you receive grace and you truly understand the grace that you received, your life **will be altered**, and you will respond in kind to the grace you have received.

2 Chronicles 33:1–9 (NKJV) ¹ Manasseh was twelve years old when he became king, and he reigned fifty-five years in Jerusalem. ² But he did evil in the sight of the LORD, according to the abominations of the nations whom the LORD had cast out before the children of Israel. ³ For he rebuilt the high places which Hezekiah his father had broken down; he raised up altars for the Baals, and made wooden images; and he worshiped all the host of heaven and served them. ⁴ He also built altars in the house of the LORD, of which the LORD had said, "In Jerusalem shall My name be forever." ⁵ And he built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the LORD. ⁶ Also he caused his sons to pass through the fire in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom; he practiced soothsaying, used witchcraft and sorcery, and consulted mediums and spiritists. He did much evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke Him to anger. ⁷ He even set a carved image, the idol which he had made, in the house of God, of which God had said to David and to Solomon his son, "In this house and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, I will put My name forever; ⁸ and I will not again remove the foot of Israel from the land which I have appointed for your fathers—only if they are careful to do all that I have commanded them, according to the whole law and the statutes and the ordinances by the hand of Moses." ⁹ So Manasseh seduced Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to do more evil than the nations whom the LORD had destroyed before the children of Israel.

2 Chronicles 33:10–13 (NKJV) ¹⁰ And the LORD spoke to Manasseh and his people, but they would not listen. ¹¹ Therefore the LORD brought upon them the captains of the army of the king of Assyria, who took Manasseh with hooks, bound him with bronze fetters, and carried him off to Babylon. ¹² Now when he was in affliction, he implored the LORD his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers, ¹³ and prayed to Him; and He received his entreaty, heard his supplication, and brought him back to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the LORD was God.

2 Chronicles 33:14–17 (NKJV) ¹⁴ After this he built a wall outside the City of David on the west side of Gihon, in the valley, as far as the entrance of the Fish Gate; and it enclosed Ophel, and he raised it to a very great height. Then he put military captains in all the fortified cities of Judah. ¹⁵ He took away the foreign gods and the idol from the house of the LORD, and all the altars that he had built in the mount of the house of the LORD and in Jerusalem; and he cast them out of the city. ¹⁶ He also repaired the altar of the LORD, sacrificed peace offerings and thank offerings on it, and commanded Judah to serve the LORD God of Israel. ¹⁷ Nevertheless the people still sacrificed on the high places, but only to the LORD their God.

(2 Timothy 2:2 NKJV) And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

Verse two. It's a teaching ministry and notice the teaching ministry is to faithful ministers who then go forth and replicate what they've been taught, what they've learned, and it goes on and on and on. That's why we take such a strong emphasis on teaching the word because it is what reproduces is the word of God.

In verses 5 and 6 we will see the analogy of being soldiers and athletes and farmers, and in all those cases there is a training that comes before the sending and the going.

Verse two that you heard from many witnesses, what that means to us is Timothy, the same teaching you've heard from me has been confirmed as the same teaching that I've given all others for all of my ministry. Paul stuck to the word and the word that was given to him of grace by the Lord Jesus. He didn't change his teaching to meet the favor of the day or what was acceptable among the popular opinion. He just stuck to the word and anyone that you would talk to would say, who heard Paul teach, that they all heard the same thing. They didn't hear something new, but they heard something that was consistently taught regardless of the ebbs and tides of the culture and the desire of the people and the times. And so too must we stick to the same thing.

(2 Timothy 2:3 NKJV) You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

(2 Timothy 2:4 NKJV) No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier.

Verse three. Soldiers go where the war is. That's how it works out. The soldier deploys to where the captain sends them.

Verse four. You don't have to quit your job to be a soldier for Christ but truly we are enlisted in the Lord's army when we ask him to become the captain of our salvation. If he is our captain of our salvation, if he is the king, our king is at war and therefore that makes us soldiers by default. Because if he's at war, there's a war that follows us. But as I said, you don't have to quit your job to be a soldier for Christ but you need to live your life to not be entangled with all the cares of the world and all the things that distract. But you have to be in a place that you're deployable, that you can go where the Lord calls you to go and what the Lord calls you to do. We can't let the things of the world, the things of work, the things of sports, the things of hobby keep us from deploying to where God has called us to be the witness for him.

Verse four. We read of a story of a man who was called but he said, let me bury my father, then I will follow you. And it's misunderstood that the man's father just died and that Jesus was being harsh, demanding the man not go to the funeral. Far be it. What was the context was the man said, when my dad dies, then I'll follow you. He was putting some condition before following Jesus. He put the affairs of the world above the calling of Jesus. He wasn't able to deploy when Jesus called him because he had determined that when his father died, then he would leave and that could've been for many reasons. He didn't want to battle his father saying, what are you doing? Why would you do this? Or, it could very well been, when my father dies, I'll get his inheritance. Then I can live off of his inheritance and then I don't have to walk by faith. [Matthew 8:19–22 \(NKJV\)](#) ¹⁹ Then a certain scribe came and said to Him, "Teacher, I will follow You wherever You go." ²⁰ And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air *have* nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay *His* head." ²¹ Then another of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father." ²² But Jesus said to him, "Follow Me, and let the dead bury their own dead."

But then we have another side. It's the story of Elijah and Elisha. Elijah came, called Elisha, and immediately as he was working it says, he burned his equipment, made sacrifice with an oxen and then followed Elijah to a calling that was put upon him. And it all comes down to the choice, the calling. As it says in verse four, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier.

[1 Kings 19:19–21 \(NKJV\)](#) ¹⁹ So he departed from there, and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he was with the twelfth. Then Elijah passed by him and threw his mantle on him. ²⁰ And he left the oxen and ran after Elijah, and said, "Please let me kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow you." And he said to him, "Go back again, for what have I done to you?" ²¹ So

Elisha turned back from him, and took a yoke of oxen and slaughtered them and boiled their flesh, using the oxen's equipment, and gave it to the people, and they ate. Then he arose and followed Elijah, and became his servant.

(2 Timothy 2:5 NKJV) And also if anyone competes in athletics, he is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules.

(2 Timothy 2:6 NKJV) The hard-working farmer must be first to partake of the crops.

Verse five. Athletics take discipline and commitment and sacrifice. There are no shortcuts in athletics if you're to win the crown. The word here for "competes" means to "strive for mastery", and hence we see the calling and the degree there of it. And, the word for "athlete" was the word used for a professional athlete and not an amateur, so again the depth and the degree of the calling.

Verse 6. And so too with farming. It takes discipline. It takes commitment. It takes sacrifice. There is no shortcut if you're to bring in the harvest.

Both require work within the rules and laws of nature. There is no short cutting them. The farmer must till the land. He must plant the seed. He must water the seed and he must labor over it continually. There is no shortcut. The casting seeds and expecting a harvest, rocks have to be picked out, soil has to be turned over, seed has to reach underneath the soil. Trees need to be cleared, vines and weeds and the likes need to be taken out. Farming is hard. It takes tremendous discipline and there is no harvest apart from that discipline.

Verse 6 – Paul says you have to partake of the harvest before you can give it out. I must train before I can coach. There is no shortcut in this.

Paul is talking to Timothy about ministry, yes; but truly is pastoral ministry a higher calling the parenting and marriage? I think not. So the application and the degree and the depth of the calling and requirement to strive, to train, to sacrifice, to discipline, are the very same we must and should apply to our preparing for and leading of our parenting and marriages.

And hear ye this.... Athletes and farmers and soldiers yes they may start with zeal but zeal is not enough to carry you on and to keep you going on zeal is easily tampered down by the rigor and demands of everyday life that we face. There is a discipline that is involved, and people so often confuse spiritual things with emotional things such as when the Lord gives a calling, a person can say I'm waiting for the zeal of the Lord, the passion of the Lord, to give me passion and zeal to do this spiritual thing. Yes there are times where God does press upon us, but here in our passage we read the calling comes coupled with discipline, like that of being a soldier, of being a farmer, of being an athlete. Christian we must pray this prayer continually, Lord I chose to do this and be this, now Lord I pray empower my choice, empower the choice I made so I may do it well, be disciplined to not just start it, but to maintain it, and not just maintain it but to finish it well!

I remember years ago talking to a friend who went into the ministry and his ministry became very much a prosperity ministry and healings were to demonstrate to prove and

I truly believe that there were real healings and miraculous healings. But in conversation along the way, one night I remember him saying something that kind of came across as the ends justify the means to which I go, well, wait a minute, wait a minute. What are you saying? I go, the ends never will justify false means. False means will lead most likely the false ends and therefore not in agreement with what you're saying here. So what is he saying is that they have ready and staged, this is how I took it, that if miracles didn't happen, they had manmade miracles ready to roll out staged and that would stir the people. And then they would respond to what they believed was respond in faith, to which I believe simply responding in the flesh because the spirit wasn't moving. And when I called him out on that, and yes, I was young and the Lord maybe just six months to a year, but I could tell there were rules and you had to work within God's rules, not man's rules. And when I called him out on it, he and his wife actually questioned my salvation and started to witness to me like I wasn't saved.

In all competition there are rules and guidelines we have to follow, break the rules and you are disqualified. I remember in 9th grade football we were playing Seneca valley. They were a powerhouse, and one of the reason was that they were not very smart and everybody kept flunking, so they were in 9th grade but 2 years older than us. But anyway, they were betting us pretty good in the first half and our star player got thrown out of the game for fighting, we were done and they really started to pull away before the half was over. So at halftime our coach told one of the kids to change his jersey with our star players jersey, so when the second half began we had our star player in the game and we started to make a comeback. But he got in another fight, the coach from the other team ran out and looked at him and knew who he was (probably because he was the only one of us in 9th grade with a full beard. The coach called his players and walked off the field., it didn't matter that we made a comeback, we broke the rules and were disqualified. And, we were left on the sidelines, left on the field, all the people in the stands looking at us..... we were totally humiliated! And, that is what is the resultant when any Christian is exposed for trying to work outside the rules of spirituality.

I think Paul must have been a sports fan. He makes these reference in First Corinthians 9:24 and 25, Philippians Three verse 14, Hebrews chapter 12:1 and 2. Seems like he had some liking to sports. And I think that's a great thing and I think there is power in using our likes to reach people with the same likes. You like drawing, use that to reach people who like drawing. You like reading, use that to reach people who like reading. You like sports, you like cooking, you like hunting, you like sewing, just so many things that God uses for us to connect with people of the same likes.

1 Corinthians 9:24–25 (NKJV) ²⁴ Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. ²⁵ And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown.

Philippians 3:14 (NKJV) ¹⁴ I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

Hebrews 12:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

And if God calls you to do some type of ministry, whatever it may be, using your likes, just do it. Don't worry about people's opinions and judgments and criticality. I can

remember myself 30 years ago speaking to my one friend who had a Camaro and was leading the Camaro Club. And I was like, "What a worldly thing to do. What an excuse," and all those things. And yes, I'm being critical and judgmental, I know it, and I thank God that he shows me my heart. But it was interesting because the point that I make about what God showed me was it was a growing church. It was a great teaching church. They were on the radio, they were doing outreaches, and all these things.

But here's what I can say with all honesty. I met more people when I would say, "How did you find the church?" And I met more people who said, "Through the Camaro club," than I did of people who said through the radio and through the community outreaches. And that is a fact. So maybe God's calling you to use your likings, cooking and sewing, whatever it may be. Do it. Don't wait for someone's opinion and don't wait for someone's approval. God gave you the go, go and do it. Just like Elisha, and don't look back.

(2 Timothy 2:7 NKJV) Consider what I say, and may the Lord give you understanding in all things.

Verse seven. God gives the understanding. Notice that pastor, parent, youth leader, children's church here is a vital key after you teach and speak verse seven. Consider what I say and may the Lord give you understanding in all things. We need to then go and pray to the Holy Spirit to give them understanding supernaturally, to apply it to their life of what we just taught from the word of God.

Look at Ezekiel 36-37. What an amazing story we have here as he's continually told to prophesy, to speak the word of God. Over and over and over he speaks the word of God. But then we read that he's told to speak to the breath and the breath is the Holy Spirit. He's to now go pray to the Holy Spirit that the Holy Spirit does the revelation of the words that were spoken. And it's when he goes and prays to the Spirit of God that the bones come to life. We see just a great application for us as leaders, as teachers, as parents teaching our children, that after we speak, there's a place to go and pray to the Holy Spirit that he will go and speak and make it clear what the word of God that was just spoken to them.

Ezekiel 37:3-8 (NKJV) ³ And He said to me, "Son of man, can these bones live?" So I answered, "O Lord God, You know." ⁴ Again He said to me, "Prophesy to these bones, and say to them, 'O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD!' ⁵ Thus says the Lord God to these bones: "Surely I will cause breath to enter into you, and you shall live. ⁶ I will put sinews on you and bring flesh upon you, cover you with skin and put breath in you; and you shall live. Then you shall know that I am the LORD." ' ' ⁷ So I prophesied as I was commanded; and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and suddenly a rattling; and the bones came together, bone to bone. ⁸ Indeed, as I looked, the sinews and the flesh came upon them, and the skin covered them over; but there was no breath in them.

Ezekiel 37:9-10 (NKJV) ⁹ Also He said to me, "Prophesy to the breath, prophesy, son of man, and say to the breath, 'Thus says the Lord God: "Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe on these slain, that they may live." ' ' ¹⁰ So I prophesied as He commanded me, and breath came into them, and they lived, and stood upon their feet, an exceedingly great army.

And Jesus makes that a promise (John 16) that when he goes, he will send the Holy Spirit who will be our teacher, our helper to help us understand the word. Oh, Christian, the power of prayer after you teach, after you speak and after you give instruction. I pray that you make that a non-negotiable part, every one of you teachers, that after you teach, you go pray for every person that you just taught. And I pray that we do it here in

the church. That on Sunday, groups of people will pray that what the word was just spoken will go and the Holy Spirit will make it understandable. I go and pray after my teachings. Lord, I pray that the Holy Spirit you would make it understandable to them, the word that was just taught. And then on Tuesday night, we do the same. Many times we come and we pray the same passages that we covered on Sunday to bring them back again and pray for those who heard the word.

John 16:13–15 (NKJV) ¹³ However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. ¹⁴ He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. ¹⁵ All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you.

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The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

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