

Lesson 18: Live in the Grace of God for the Rest of Your Life!

Text: 2 Timothy 4:22

Introduction

There's something tragic about a shipwreck..

but do you know what's even more tragic?

A ship that makes it all the way across the ocean...

only to crash just before it reaches the shore.

It survived the storms.

It endured the waves.

It made it through the worst of it...

and then... it didn't finish.

Listen, there are a lot of Christians like that.

How will you finish well?

Not how will you start well.

Not how do you get through a season well.

But how do you finish your life... faithful to Christ?

Because the longer you live, the more you realize something:

The Christian life is not easy.

There are days when you feel strong.

There are days when you feel weak.

There are moments when you feel close to the Lord...

and moments when you feel distant.

There are victories...

and there are battles.

Paul understood this all too well. And he is now facing the end of his life and ministry.

And he says this:

"I have fought the good fight.

I have finished the race.

I have kept the faith."

This is what it means to finish well.

So what do you actually need to endure... and finish well?

As Paul writes the final words of his life in 2 Timothy, he is not giving Timothy a strategy.

He is not giving him a program.

He is not giving him a list of things to do.

He gives him something far more important.

Two simple statements:

“The Lord be with your spirit.

Grace be with you.”

Why are these two phrases so crucial?

Because...

Main Idea: Christ’s Presence and God’s Grace Are All You Need to Finish Well.

What does it look like to live every day in the presence of Christ and the grace of God?

In this final verse, Paul shows us two realities that will sustain you for the rest of your life.

1. The Lord’s Presence Strengthens Your Inner Life (v. 22a)

2 Timothy 4:22 ESV

The Lord be with your spirit.

As Paul wraps up this letter, he leaves Timothy with a simple but profound desire:

“The Lord be with your spirit.”

This has been the defining reality of Paul’s entire ministry—the presence of the Lord.

Paul understood the crucial nature of the presence of the Lord.

After all, it was Paul who wrote these amazing words in his letter to the Galatians.

Galatians 2:20 ESV

I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Paul’s dependence and need for the indwelling presence of Jesus was critical not only for his powerful and effective ministry, but for his life as a Christian.

As Paul is finishing this letter he is pointing out the theological reality that Christ is in us and we are in Christ.

And as Paul finishes this letter, he is pointing us to a profound theological reality:

Christ lives in you... and you are secure in Him.

This is not abstract theology—this is the Christian life.

Paul explains it this way in [Galatians 2:20](#),

“It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.”

That means the Christian life is not about trying harder in your own strength. It is about living from a new source of life.

Christ lives in you.

[Colossians 1:27](#) says,

Colossians 1:27 ESV

Christ in you, the hope of glory.

Through the Holy Spirit, the risen Christ dwells within every believer.

He strengthens you.

He convicts you.

He guides you.

He empowers you.

You are not left to live this life on your own.

But there is another side to this truth.

Not only is Christ in you...

you are in Christ.

That means your identity is no longer defined by you—it is defined by Christ.

But don't miss the other side of this truth...

[Romans 8:1](#) says,

Romans 8:1 ESV

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

[Ephesians 1](#) tells us that we are chosen in Him, redeemed in Him, secured in Him.

Ephesians 1:3–14 ESV

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us **in Christ** with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴ even as he chose us **in him** before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love ⁵ he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, ⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us **in the Beloved**. ⁷ **In him** we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, ⁸ which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight ⁹ making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth **in Christ** ¹⁰ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things **in Christ**, things in heaven and things on earth **in him**. ¹¹ **In him** we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, ¹² so that we who were the first to hope **in Christ** might be to the praise of his glory. ¹³ **In him** you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed **in him**, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.*

Your standing before God is not based on your performance, it is anchored in Christ.

So think about this.

Christ in you — this is your POWER.

You in Christ — this is your POSITION.

And when Paul says, “*The Lord be with your spirit,*” he is reminding Timothy of something already true.

The presence of Christ is not distant.

He **is** with you.

He **is** in you.

And because of that...

You have everything you need to stand firm.

Everything you need to endure.

Everything you need to finish well.

You are never alone in the Christian life, because Christ is not just with you... He is in you, and you are secure in Him.

John 15:4–5 ESV

Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. ⁵ I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.

“Abide in me, and I in you... I am the vine; you are the branches.”

Jesus gives us a picture.

He says, "I am the vine, and you are the branches."

Think about a branch.

A branch has no life in itself.

If you cut it off from the vine, what happens?

It dies.

It withers.

It produces nothing.

But when that branch is connected to the vine, everything changes.

The life of the vine flows into the branch.

The strength of the vine becomes the strength of the branch.

The fruit of the branch comes from the life of the vine.

That is what it means to be a Christian.

Christ is the vine.

You are the branch.

His life flows into you.

That is **Christ in you.**

But you are also **in Him.**

You are connected to Him.

Dependent on Him.

Sustained by Him.

And Jesus says, **"Apart from me you can do nothing."**

Listen...

The Christian life is not about producing fruit—it is about staying connected to the One who produces it in you.

This is what Paul desired for Timothy.

"Timothy, the Lord be with your spirit."

Of course, as a follower of Jesus this was true for Timothy as it is for all believers in Christ - including you!

But I believe Paul desired for Timothy to not only know it, but to sense the Lord's presence day in and day out.

If Paul says, "*The Lord be with your spirit,*" then the question becomes:

How do we actually experience that day by day?

Because let's be honest...

There are days when you don't feel it.

You feel distracted.

You feel dry.

You feel overwhelmed.

So how do we live with a real awareness of the Lord's presence?

1. Through the Word of God

[John 15:7](#) says,

John 15:7 ESV

If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.

The primary way you experience the presence of Christ is through His Word.

When you open your Bible, you are not just reading a book.

You are hearing the voice of your Shepherd.

As His Word fills your mind, His presence becomes real to your heart.

2. Through Prayer

[Hebrews 4:16](#) says,

Hebrews 4:16 ESV

Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Prayer is not a ritual.

It is relationship.

It is you consciously turning your attention to the One who is already with you.

And the more you talk with Him...

the more aware you become of Him.

3. Through Obedience

Jesus said in [John 14:21](#),

John 14:21 ESV

Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.”

There is a unique awareness of Christ that comes through obedience.

When you walk with Him,
you experience Him.

Disobedience dulls your awareness.
Obedience sharpens it.

4. Through Fellowship with Believers

[Matthew 18:20](#) says,

Matthew 18:20 ESV

For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them.”

God often makes His presence known through His people.

That is why isolation is so dangerous.

You sense the Lord’s presence when you are with others who love Him.

5. Through Dependence in Weakness

2 Corinthians 12:9 ESV

But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

Sometimes you sense the Lord most clearly when you are at your weakest.

When you realize, **“I can’t do this...”**

That is when His presence becomes most real.

So how do you sense the Lord’s presence?

You don’t chase a feeling.

You **anchor yourself in truth...**

You open His Word.
You speak to Him in prayer.
You walk in obedience.
You stay connected to His people.
You depend on Him in weakness.

And over time...

The more you walk with Christ, the more you become aware that He has been walking with you the whole time.

2. The Lord's Grace Empowers You for Daily Living (v. 22b)

2 Timothy 4:22 ESV

The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you.

Not only does Paul desire for the Lord to be with Timothy's spirit...
he also says, "*Grace be with you.*"

And some of you might be thinking, why spend an entire sermon on one sentence?'

Because if you miss this...
you miss how to live the Christian life.

Paul's desire for grace to with Timothy is profound.

Grace means receiving what you could never earn and do not deserve.

Grace is receiving something that is undeserved.

My parents, when I was two months old decided to adopt me, bring me in their home, and raise me as their own child.

I didn't do anything to deserve that (besides being incredibly adorable).

But seriously. I did nothing to receive that gracious gesture. They chose me and they brought me into their lives.

This is grace.

Grace is at the root and heart of the gospel message.

Explain the Gospel...

Grace is not only at the heart of your salvation; it is the power behind your growth as a Christian.

That means you don't graduate from grace.

You live in it.

And I think this is what Paul is driving at in this verse.

His hope.

His prayer for Timothy is that he would recognize the grace that is constantly washing over him each and every day of his life as a follower of Christ and as a pastor.

When Paul says, ***“Grace be with you,”*** he is not talking about a one-time gift.

He is talking about a constant companion.

Not something distant or abstract, but something present.

Wherever Timothy goes... grace goes with him.

In discouragement... grace is there.

In temptation... grace is there.

In weakness... grace is there.

In uncertainty... grace is there.

Even in sin... grace is there!

Because grace is not just what saves you once...

It is what sustains you every day.

Paul prayed that grace would walk with Timothy through the rest of his life.

I pray that for you all here this morning as well.

When Paul says, “Grace be with you,” he is not just saying, “I hope things go well.”

He is saying, ***“May the very favor of God go with you wherever you go.”***

Think about that.

God’s grace is not something you use up.

It is something you live in.

Like air you breathe...

Like light that surrounds you...

Grace is always there.

Every moment. Every step.

You never take a step in the Christian life without the grace of God being present with you.

This is why God clearly tells Paul in...

2 Corinthians 12:9 ESV

“My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.”

You and I walk in frailty, completely dependent on the unending supply of God’s AMAZING GRACE!

Grace saves you.

Grace sustains you.

Grace transforms you.

Grace does not just meet you at the beginning of your walk with Christ. It walks with you every step of the way.

Some of you need to hear this clearly.

The grace Paul is talking about is not just help for living...

It is the grace that saves.

[Ephesians 2:8–9](#) says,

Ephesians 2:8–9 ESV

⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

You don’t earn this grace.

You don’t work your way into it.

You receive it.

Through Jesus Christ.

If you are here today and you have never trusted Christ, then hear this:

The grace of God is available to you right now...through Jesus Christ.

Your sin can be forgiven.

Your past can be washed clean.

Your life can be made new.

Not because of what you’ve done...

But because of what Christ has done for you.

So come to Him.

Believe in Him.

Receive His grace.

For those of you who already know Christ...

You need this grace just as much today as the day you were saved.

[Titus 2:11–12](#) says,

Titus 2:11–12 ESV

¹¹ For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, ¹² training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age,

Grace doesn't just save you.

Grace changes you.

Grace strengthens you when you are weak.

Grace helps you fight sin.

Grace enables you to obey.

Grace sustains you when life is hard.

So, stop trying to live the Christian life in your own strength...

You were never meant to.

Depend on the grace of God.

Lean into it.

Walk in it.

Every one of us needs grace.

If you don't know Christ, you need **saving** grace.

If you do know Christ, you need **sustaining**, sanctifying grace.

And here is the good news:

God has not run out of grace.

[Romans 5:20](#) says,

Romans 5:20 ESV

²⁰ Now the law came in to increase the trespass, but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more,

There is more grace available to you than there is sin in your life.

You will never out-sin the grace of God.

Grace does not just get you into the Christian life—

It carries you all the way to the end.

Conclusion

Christ's presence and God's grace are all you need to finish well.

Many people start the Christian life well, but without dependence on Christ and His grace, they do not finish well.

Remember!

Christ is with you.

Grace is with you.

That is enough.

You are not alone.

You were never meant to carry this life by yourself.

So stop trying to power your way through it.

Depend on Christ.

Walk in His grace.

There's an old prayer from Saint Patrick that captures this so well:

*"Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me,
Christ in me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me." - St. Patrick*

That is the Christian life.

Christ with you.

Grace sustaining you.

From beginning to end.

Paul starts this letter with grace (chapter 1 verse 2)
and he ends it with grace.

Two beautiful and gracious bookends!

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Because the Christian life begins with grace,
continues by grace,
and is sustained forever by grace.