

Title: Lesson 6: Be A Great Investor!

Text: 2 Timothy 2:1-7

Back in December of 1980, Apple went public. If you had invested just \$1,000 in that stock, you would have purchased 45 shares at \$22 each.

*After all the stock splits, those 45 shares would have turned into over 10,000 shares today. At current prices, that \$1,000 investment would now be worth more than **\$3 million**.*

That's the power of a wise investment.

Most of us hear numbers like that and think, If only I had gotten in early!

But here's the thing—no matter how much money you make in the market, you can't take it with you.

Earthly investments may pay big dividends here, but they stop at the grave.

Paul reminds Timothy—and us—that there's a far greater kind of investment.

One that doesn't rise and fall with the Dow Jones, one that pays eternal dividends.

It's the investment of pouring your life into people with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

That's what Paul is talking about in [2 Timothy 2:1-7](#)—*being a great investor in eternity.*"

We are currently working through our sermon series called "The Art of Finishing Well" 18 Christian life lessons from Paul to Timothy.

So far, we have discussed that you should...

Align Your Life With God's Will

Embrace the Faith of your Family

Never Be Ashamed of Jesus!

Guard the Good Gospel

Stand with the Gospel When Others Fall Away

Remember these lessons are coming from the life of a seasoned, weathered, Apostle who is in prison awaiting his execution.

His run for the Lord is about complete.

He is taking his last lap, and he wants to finish his discipleship process with Timothy - the one he has poured his life into.

Investing in others was Paul's passion because it was Jesus' directive.

Paul loved Jesus and kept his command to make disciples.

This is the way of the Christian life.

Christian, are you making disciples?

Nothing has changed since Paul was sitting in that cold, dark cell.

Discipleship is still God's plan.

Are you engaged in it? Is investing in others part of your normal walk as a follower of Christ?

If not, today is a great day to change that.

But let's be clear: this is not something you can do in your own strength.

You need the power of God!

Main Idea: Invest In Others Through The Strengthening Grace of Christ

Someone once invested in you, now you must, as a follower of Jesus, pay it forward!

Why? So, you engage in the same kind of investment opportunity!

If a \$1,000 investment could grow into millions, think about the eternal payoff when you invest in people with the gospel.

But here's the thing—you can't invest in others if you're bankrupt yourself.

That's why Paul starts with Timothy personally in verse 1.

Before you can pour into others, you must first be filled with the strengthening grace of Christ.

That's where investing well begins.

Let's look at the first one.

1. Invest In Yourself So You Can Invest in Others (vs. 1-2)

2 Timothy 2:1-2 ESV

*You then, my child, **be strengthened** by the grace that is in Christ Jesus,² and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.*

Paul had just reminded Timothy of Onesiphorus—a man who didn't shrink back in his faith but courageously refreshed Paul, even in Rome.

Timothy knew him well—he was from Ephesus.

He says in a tender, encouraging way...

2 Timothy 2:1 ESV

You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus,

In a sense, Paul was saying,

“Do what Onesiphorus did. He found his strength in God’s Grace, you find it too.

Timothy, I know you are under a lot of stress and there are many who are falling away, don’t you fall away too - instead find your strength in the grace of Christ Jesus.

What does it mean to *“be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus?”*

First of all, there is no spiritual strength apart from Christ.

All such pseudo strength is impotent. It has no eternal impact or influence.

Timothy’s only hope to be strong and resolute for Christ was the grace Jesus alone provides.

And He doesn’t give this grace to everyone, only to those who are part of His everlasting Kingdom, those He has **enveloped** into His family.

This is the gospel - explain...

Let me remind you of the verse that Paul desired Timothy to live by...

2 Timothy 1:7 ESV

for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.

Fear and timidity are from the flesh and exacerbated by the Devil.

No, we are not a fearful people, but a powerful people through the grace of Christ alone!

Listen to the words of Drew Hunter.

“The strength in grace is essential for a strong Christian life.” - Drew Hunter

Or John Calvin

"If we seek strength, it lies in His dominion; ... since rich store of every kind of good abounds in Him, let us drink our fill from this fountain, and from no other." - John Calvin

Christian brothers and sister, our spiritual strength does not and cannot come from us.

It comes from Christ.

Ephesians 6:10 ESV

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might.

Paul is reminding Timothy that you can't pour into others if you're spiritually empty.

Ministry is not like drawing from a bottomless well of your own energy—it's drawing from the inexhaustible grace of Christ.

Unless Timothy keeps being strengthened in grace, he won't have the courage, the clarity, or the consistency to entrust the gospel to others.

This is true for all of us.

You can't disciple your kids if you aren't first drinking deeply of Christ's Word.

You can't encourage your friend if you're not daily being encouraged by the gospel yourself.

You can't serve faithfully in the church if you're running on your own fumes.

Invest in yourself—in **time** with the Lord, in **prayer**, in **grace**, in His **Word**—so that you have something real to give away.

What are we to do with the strength that God provides us through the Grace of Christ?

Look at what Paul says about this in verse 2...

2 Timothy 2:1-2 ESV

You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, ² and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.

If you were to guess, based on your knowledge of Paul's close relationship with Timothy (for some 15-20 years), what do you think Timothy consistently heard from Paul?

Acts 20:27 ESV

for I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God.

The MacArthur Study Bible Chapter 20

Whole counsel of God - The entire plan and purpose of God for man's salvation in all its fullness: divine truths of creation, election, redemption, justification, adoption, conversion, sanctification, holy living, and glorification.

And Paul's challenge to Timothy was this.

Be strong in the grace of Christ Jesus and teach the **whole counsel of God** to faithful men who could repeat the process.

Paul was specifically thinking about the next generation of elders who would lead local churches.

That's why he says 'men.' But the principle doesn't stop there—all of us are called to invest in others, whether we're training elders, discipling a younger believer, or teaching children at home.

But it doesn't negate the principle that this kind of investment needs to happen across the board in the local church.

The oldest to the youngest, male or female - all need to be discipled and be able to disciple THE WHOLE COUNSEL OF THE WORD OF GOD.

Paul expected Timothy to invest in others so they would be able to teach and train others as well.

Paul did this in front of many people - Barnabas, Silas, Luke, and many others.

They had to be faithful men - men who followed and loved Jesus well.

And they had to be men who would be willing to teach the Word of God accurately and without fear.

Timothy first had to be strengthened himself.

He needed to know the whole counsel and also understand how to be strengthened in the grace of God as well.

The idea of investing in the lives of others wasn't just something talked about.

It was the way of his Christian life.

Listen to his words in...

Colossians 1:28-29 ESV

Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. ²⁹ For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.

This verse is our blueprint for the Christian life.

Again, I ask you - who are you investing in?

It is not an option for the believer in Christ!

D. L. Moody once said,

"It is better to train ten men than to do the work of ten men. But it is harder." - D.L.Moody

He was right.

It takes time and energy to invest in others.

It's far easier to just do the job yourself.

But if you do it all yourself, the work dies with you.

If you invest in others, the work multiplies long after you're gone.

That's exactly what Paul was telling Timothy.

Be strengthened by grace, and then entrust that truth to faithful men who can teach others also.

In other words, invest in yourself so you can invest in others.

The grace that strengthens you is the same grace you pass on to others.

And though it's harder, the return is eternal.

How are you investing in yourself?

What daily practical steps are you taking to grow in the knowledge of the Whole Counsel of God.

Work with someone in your connection group to grow in faith.

Share with a coworker how your faith gives you hope in uncertain times.

Review:

- Invest In Others Through The Strengthening Grace of Christ

- Invest In Yourself So You Can Invest in Others
- Paul now gives three illustrations on persevering in suffering. What does this have to do with investing in others? More than you might realize...

2. Invest in **Suffering to Persevere** (vs. 3-6)

2 Timothy 2:3–6 ESV

Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. ⁴ No soldier gets entangled in civilian pursuits, since his aim is to please the one who enlisted him. ⁵ An athlete is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules. ⁶ It is the hard-working farmer who ought to have the first share of the crops.

Verse three is an interesting statement that seems to come out of nowhere.

We go from the Apostle telling Timothy to invest in himself so that he can then powerfully invest in others to now talking about suffering as a **soldier**, an **athlete**, and a **farmer**.

Why would he do this?

Well, first let's walk through the analogies and then come to understand why.

2 Timothy 2:3–4 ESV

Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. ⁴ No soldier gets entangled in civilian pursuits, since his aim is to please the one who enlisted him.

How does a soldier suffer?

A soldier suffers by giving up normal civilian comforts, enduring danger, hardship, and maintaining single-minded focus.

The soldier's will is no longer his own. His life is not his own. He is owned by the military.

But look at the next analogy...

2 Timothy 2:5 ESV

An athlete is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules.

How does an athlete suffer?

The Greek verb for the word “**competes**” expresses the **effort** and **determination** needed to perform well in the athletic event.

An athlete suffers through discipline, training, and the hardship of competing by the rules (no shortcuts).

And the last example...

2 Timothy 2:6 ESV

It is the hard-working farmer who ought to have the first share of the crops.

How does a farmer suffer?

Paul uses the word “**hardworking**” which means to labor to the point of exhaustion.

A farmer suffers through long, backbreaking work, often with delayed results, trusting the harvest will come.

What does this have to do with investing in yourself and investing in others?

The word suffer that Paul uses is

κακοπαθέω, συγκακοπαθέω, κακοπάθεια - sense of “**enduring suffering, toil, exertion**”

[The Theological Dictionary of the New Testament](#)

It is enduring the hard work of investing in yourself and others.

A soldier endures in obedience.

An athlete endures in training and competing.

A farmer endures in planting, watering, fertilizing, and waiting.

And a disciple-maker, whether he is a pastor, or any other member of the body of Christ suffers or endures through the laborious process of conforming themselves to the image of Christ and at the same time helping others to be more and more like Jesus.

Can I remind you again of [Colossians 1:28-29](#)?

This was the passion of Paul’s heart and the blueprint for the Christian life.

Colossians 1:28–29 ESV

Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. ²⁹ For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.

And this passion of his wasn’t without pain and suffering.

And it won’t be without pain and suffering for you as well.

Hear me!

Ministry on behalf of the Lord Jesus Christ, is not glamorous.

MINISTRY IS MESSY!

Just three ways...

The Burden of People's Sin and Struggles

For Timothy: He had to confront false teachers ([1 Tim 1:3–4](#)), deal with defections ([2 Tim 1:15](#)), and carry the weight of others' immaturity and failures.

For us: When you disciple others, you enter their battles — addictions, doubts, marital strife, wandering hearts.

Their burdens become yours ([Gal 6:2](#)). That's emotionally exhausting, but it's what loving investment requires.

The Reality of Opposition and Rejection

For Timothy: Some abandoned Paul ([2 Tim 1:15](#)). Others resisted Timothy's leadership ([1 Tim 4:12](#)). Investing in others didn't always mean loyalty or fruit.

For us: Discipleship isn't always welcomed. Some resist accountability, bristle at correction, or even walk away after you've poured into them.

That rejection stings deeply — but it's part of the suffering bound up with faithful ministry.

The Cost of Time, Energy, and Patience

For Timothy: Training faithful men ([2 Tim 2:2](#)) required long-term teaching, modeling, and mentoring. It wasn't quick or flashy.

For us: Discipleship takes consistent presence, prayer, and patience. Like farming, it involves slow growth.

Results may not be visible for years. It can feel tedious or discouraging — but that's where the fruit eventually comes.

"If you, my brother, will but serve God in little things, doing what you can, and bearing patiently the trial which arises out of it, you shall be as true a soldier of Christ as he who has won many a battle for his Lord. It is not the suffering in itself that is to be dreaded; it is the dishonor of shrinking from it."

— C. H. Spurgeon, Sermon #1558, "A Good Soldier of Jesus Christ" (preached December 12, 1880)

You will suffer when you grow in your personal discipleship - Pursue it anyway!

You will suffer when you disciple others - do it anyway.

Frankly many who call themselves Christians refuse to disciple because they don't want to deal with the immense challenge of the process.

Perhaps this is a result of poor teaching in local churches?

Perhaps this is a result of apathy?

Question - If you refuse to obey Christ and make disciples, are you a believer in Christ?

Who are you discipling?

Review: Recap the Point

- Invest In Others Through The Strengthening Grace of Christ
- **Summarize the Previous Point(s):**
 - Invest In Yourself So You Can Invest in Others
 - Invest In Suffering To Persevere
- There is one last thing Paul wants Timothy to invest in and I think we should as well...

3. Invest In Understanding the Lord (v. 7)

2 Timothy 2:7 ESV

Think over what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything.

I think it is helpful to process what Paul says in verse 7.

It is not a throw away verse.

"Think over what I say"

The Theological Dictionary of the New Testament 1. Linguistic Data.

"to direct one's mind to a subject,"

"to consider, to ruminate."

Neil Postman, in his classic book ***Amusing Ourselves to Death***, contrasted George Orwell's fear of censorship with Aldous Huxley's fear of distraction. Postman wrote,

"What Orwell feared were those who would ban books. What Huxley feared was that there would be no reason to ban a book, for there would be no one who wanted to read

one.” (Neil Postman, [Amusing Ourselves to Death: Public Discourse in the Age of Show Business](#), 1985).

Postman’s point is chilling—our danger is not that truth will be taken from us, but that we will become so distracted and entertained that we no longer care to think deeply about it.

That’s why Paul tells Timothy, *“Think over these things.”*

He was urging Timothy to reflect carefully on the cost and the importance of discipleship.

Yes, it will demand suffering like the **soldier**, the **athlete**, and the **farmer**—but the benefits are far greater than the cost.

Discipleship requires reflection, and when we think deeply, we see that investing in others is eternally worth it.

At the same time, as followers of Jesus, slowing down and thinking over these things is not merely an intellectual exercise.

As we grapple, wrestle, and reflect, the Lord Himself—through the agency of the Holy Spirit—meets us in our meditation and grants us understanding.

Paul doesn’t just tell Timothy to *“think”*, but he assures him that God will give insight.

Our responsibility is to pause, ponder, and reflect on the cost and the call of discipleship.

God’s promise is that, in the process, He will provide the wisdom and perspective we need.

Proverbs 2:6 ESV

For the LORD gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding;

James 1:5 ESV

If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.

Psalms 119:99–100 ESV

*I have more understanding than all my teachers, for your testimonies are my meditation. ¹⁰⁰
I understand more than the aged, for I keep your precepts.*

Meditation + God’s Word = understanding.

We live in an age that is subservient to amusement.

to “muse” is to think.

*“I shall **muse** over the teleological (design) argument for the existence for God.”*

What happens when you put the letter “A” in front of the word “muse?”

You get the word **amuse**.

What does amuse mean? We think of fun or laughing.

But literally the word **“amuse”** mean to **“not think.”**

Christian - you are called to **THINK!!**

Matthew 22:37 ESV

*And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your **mind**.”*

And specifically in the context of this passage, Paul wants Timothy to think long and hard about the importance of investing the whole counsel of the word of God in the hearts and minds of others.

Do you **THINK** about these things?

- Do you put yourself in the way of discipleship and growth?
- You can’t give out what you do not possess yourself!
- Do you have a heart and desire to see others grow in their knowledge and understanding of the Lord - so much so that it affects the way they live?
- Do you intentionally pursue people with the goal of helping them grow in Christ?
- Do you have a personal vision to reach others and “teach them all that the Lord has commanded them?”

This is what God expects us to do!

Matthew 28:19–20 ESV

*Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ **teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you**. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”*

Do you **THINK** about these things?

Are you growing in your understanding of the importance of your own growth and the intentional investment in others?

Review:

- Invest In Others Through The Strengthening Grace of Christ

- **Summarize the Previous Point(s):**
 - Invest In Yourself So You Can Invest in Others
 - Invest In Suffering To Persevere
 - Invest in Understanding the Lord

Conclusion

Think back to that Apple stock illustration. A \$1,000 investment could've turned into millions.

Impressive, yes. But even millions will burn away when this world passes.

Now picture standing before Jesus one day, surrounded by people who are there because you invested in them with the gospel.

Some were your children.

Some were your neighbors.

Some were people you barely noticed at the time, but your faithful word or prayer made an eternal difference.

That's the return Paul is pointing Timothy—and us—toward.

Not dollars, but disciples.

Not temporary profits, but eternal fruit.

So Christian, be a great investor.

Invest in others through the strengthening grace of Christ.

The dividends will last forever.