



the Wilds

2 TIMOTHY

CHARACTER

IN

CRISIS

A SIX-WEEK BIBLE STUDY BY RAND HUMMEL

2 TIMOTHY

CHARACTER IN CRISIS

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All Scripture is quoted from the Authorized King James Version.

2 Timothy—Character in Crisis

A Six-week Bible Study

By Rand Hummel

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PO Box 509

Tailors, SC 29687-0009

Phone: (864) 268-4760

Fax: (864) 292-0743

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We are facing a crisis—a crisis that was as prevalent in Paul and Timothy's day as it is today. Crisis, simply defined, is a time of intense difficulty, trouble, or danger. It is a point in a story when the conflict reaches its highest tension and must be resolved. It is a crucial or decisive situation, a turning point. (www.thefreedictionary.com; Google definitions)

Paul's last letter before he was beheaded and freed from his earthly prison to his eternal home was a plea to young Timothy to continue running the very difficult spiritual marathon that he had started.

At first glance, it seems as if Paul was describing a four-fold crisis to Timothy as an attack on the Gospel message.

1. Animosity against the Gospel is increasing daily. (2 Timothy 1:1-18)
2. Living by the Gospel is being scorned. (2 Timothy 2:1-26)
3. Proclaimers of the Gospel are being attacked. (2 Timothy 3:1-17)
4. The truth of the Gospel is being ignored. (2 Timothy 4:1-22)

But although the Gospel was being scorned, attacked, and ignored, Paul seemed to have another crisis in mind. Gospel truth has been and always will be hated by those consumed with self-love. The real crisis is found in the individual hearts. Paul was concerned that the next generation of leaders after him would lack the character needed to face the constant animosity and opposition towards the Gospel message. What was needed then and is needed today is...

1. Fearless character that is never ashamed. (2 Timothy 1:1-18)
2. Strong character that is grace dependent. (2 Timothy 2:1-26)
3. Godly character that is Bible centered. (2 Timothy 3:1-17)
4. Enduring character that does not quit. (2 Timothy 4:1-22)

In this study we will attempt to unpack the truths found in 2 Timothy in order to gain an understanding of biblical character and how God can instill such character in each of our lives.

Desiring character that pleases God,



Rand Hummel

2 TIMOTHY

CHARACTER IN CRISIS

Table of Contents

Section 1: 2 Timothy 1:1-18

Animosity against the Gospel is increasing daily—fearless character is needed!

Monday: Paul was a friend with fearless character. (1:1-2)	8
Tuesday: Thankfulness and purity were not lacking in Paul's character. (1:3-5)	10
Wednesday: Fearless character uses its giftedness for God. (1:6).....	12
Thursday: Fearless character is of God; fear is not. (1:7).....	14
Friday: Fearless character refuses to be ashamed of the Gospel. (1:8).....	16
Saturday: Fearless character finds confidence and strength in the Gospel. (1:9-11).....	18
Sunday: Review (1:1-11)	20
Monday: Fearless character is confident in God. (1:12)	22
Tuesday: Fearless character understands conviction with compassion. (1:13-14).....	24
Wednesday: Fearless character refuses to run and hide. (1:15-18)	26

Section 2: 2 Timothy 2:1-26

Living by the Gospel is being scorned—strong character is needed!

Thursday: Strong character is dependent on the grace of God. (2:1-2).....	30
Friday: Strong character is committed to pleasing God and not self. (2:3-4).....	32
Saturday: Strong character strives and struggles to win. (2:5)	34
Sunday: Review (1:12-2:5).....	36
Monday: Strong character is willing to work hard, to work patiently, and to work alone. (2:6-7).....	38
Tuesday: Strong character endures suffering so others can enjoy Christ. (2:8-10).....	40
Wednesday: Strong character is willing to suffer for the Gospel. (2:11-13).....	42
Thursday: Strong character studies before it ever strives. (2:14-15).....	44
Friday: Strong character warns of false teaching and ungodly living. (2:16-18).....	46
Saturday: Strong character stays far from sin and close to God. (2:19)	48
Sunday: Review (2:6-19).....	50
Monday: Strong character is honored by God. (2:20-21).....	52
Tuesday: Strong character seeks friends with strong character. (2:22)	54
Wednesday: Strong character is discerning, patient, and meek. (2:23-26)	56

Section 3: 2 Timothy 3:1-17

Proclaimers of the Gospel are being attacked—godly character is needed!

Thursday: Godly character is hard to find during the last days. (3:1-2a).....	60
Friday: Godly character is not attracted to self-love. (3:2b).....	62
Saturday: Godly character refuses to be hateful in any way. (3:3).....	64
Sunday: Review (2:20-3:3).....	66
Monday: Godly character loves God more than any pleasure. (3:4-5)	68
Tuesday: Godly character refuses to give in to spiritual bullies. (3:6-9).....	70
Wednesday: Godly character lives for all to see. (3:10-11)	72
Thursday: For godly character to become a reality it must start as a desire. (3:12-13)	74
Friday: Godly character is wise through faith in Christ Jesus. (3:14-15)	76
Saturday: Godly character and spiritual maturity are best friends. (3:16-17)	78
Sunday: Review (3:4-17).....	80

Section 4: 2 Timothy 4:1-22

The truth of the Gospel is being ignored—enduring character is needed!

Monday: Enduring character is a patient teacher. (4:1-2)	84
Tuesday: Enduring character pities those who will not endure sound doctrine and turn their ears away from Bible truth. (4:3-5).....	86
Wednesday: Enduring character gives to the very end. (4:6-8)	88
Thursday: Enduring character spends time with God and loves others. (4:9-13)	90
Friday: Enduring character is no stranger to loneliness. (4:14-16)	92
Saturday: Enduring character endures because of the comforting presence and the extraordinary power of our wonderful God. (4:17-22).....	94
Sunday: Review (4:1-22)	96

Section 1

**Animosity
against the
Gospel
is increasing
daily—
fearless
character
is
needed!**

2 Timothy 1:1-18

1-6 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus, to Timothy, my dearly beloved son: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord. I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day; greatly desiring to see thee, being mindful of thy tears, that I may be filled with joy; when I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also. Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands.

7-11 For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel: whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.

12-18 For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day. Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us. This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me; of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes. The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain: but, when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found me. The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day: and in how many things he ministered unto me at Ephesus, thou knowest very well.

Character in Crisis—Week 1
**Animosity against the Gospel is increasing daily—
fearless character is needed.**

2 Timothy 1:1-2

Monday—Paul was a friend with fearless character.

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus, to Timothy, my dearly beloved son: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

Paul: Everyone would love to have a friend like the Apostle Paul. Timothy was partly who he was because of his friend Paul. We become just like those we spend most of our time with. Timothy, a student of the Old Testament writings, certainly was aware of Solomon and David's encouragements and warnings about friendship. Finish these verses.

Proverbs 13:20

Psalms 119:63

List the first names of your three best friends.

Are they wise? Do they fear God? Do they keep God's commandments? Do you think God is pleased with your circle of closest friends?

an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God: God's will is not just a list of demands, but an expression of what brings Him pleasure and joy. God's will for Paul was to be an apostle. God's will for Timothy was to be a preacher. What do you think God's will is for your life?

God will never "will" you to do anything that He has not already gifted you to do. With giftedness comes responsibility. What kind of preparation or training is necessary for you to do what you believe God has called you to do?

according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus: Paul (facing death at any time) kept his focus on the promise of everlasting life through Christ Jesus. Finish the following verses and explain how Paul viewed death and eternal life from each verse.

Philippians 1:21

How could this passage encourage Paul as he faced death?

Romans 6:23

How could this passage encourage Paul as he faced death?

2 Timothy 1:10

How could this passage encourage Paul as he faced death?

to Timothy, my dearly beloved son: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord. Again, everyone would love to have a friend like Paul: Paul had genuine, loving, unselfish concern for Timothy's success in the ministry. Paul, writing his last and final letter on this earth, does not refer to the chariots he owned, the number of churches he started, his educational accomplishments, or even the miracles he witnessed—his heart goes to his spiritual children. Have you had the privilege of leading anyone to Christ and helping them grow in the last two years?

Who are you now praying for that they will receive Christ and be willing to be discipled?

**Fearless character is strengthened by praying, serving,
loving friends like Paul.**

Character in Crisis—Week 1
**Animosity against the Gospel is increasing daily—
fearless character is needed.**

2 Timothy 1:3-5

Tuesday—Thankfulness and purity were not lacking in Paul's character.

I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day; greatly desiring to see thee, being mindful of thy tears, that I may be filled with joy; when I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also.

I thank God: It is a rare and unselfish man that thanks God for the privilege of praying for others. If anyone had reason to be a complainer it was Paul. Stuck in a smelly, damp prison waiting for his execution he tells us what he is thankful for. When he wrote to the Thessalonian Christians saying, **In everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you** he not only meant it, he lived it. What three things are you thankful for today? Take a minute and thank God for them right now.

Paul was saying, **“Night and day, as I pray, I thank God for you** (the same God whom I serve with a clear conscience just the way Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, and others did).” If you want to encourage someone, not only thank them, but let them know that you have thanked God for the way He used them in your life—then they realize that they were both used by God and a blessing to you. List three people that you are thankful for and explain why.

greatly desiring to see thee, being mindful of thy tears, that I may be filled with joy: Timothy, your tears made me smile because I know you really care more about me and the Lord's work than you do for yourself. The words **greatly desiring** describe a yearning or a longing—Paul missed Timothy. Have you ever been really homesick? Like your stomach hurt and you were on the verge of tears? Paul missed Timothy that much. What do the adult leaders in your life think about you? Are you a challenge or a blessing to them? When

they pray for you, do they smile or frown? This coming year, how could you become a greater blessing to the spiritual leaders in your life?

Being mindful of your tears: Timothy cried the last time he had to say “good-bye” to Paul. When do you cry? Why do you cry? Some cries are because you feel hurt, unloved, or rejected and other cries are because you hurt for someone else and can't imagine the pain that they are bearing at that time. When was the last time you cried over your sin? Can you remember crying because an unsaved friend or family member rejected Christ? Don't write anything, just stop and think about this.

that I may be filled with joy; when I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee: Timothy was real. When you meet someone who is genuine and real, you remember them. What is the difference between those who have a “real” relationship with God and those who “pretend” they are right with God?

thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice, and I am persuaded that in thee also: Paul knew three generations by name—three generations of genuine, unpretentious believers. Paul was convinced by Timothy's kind words and life attitude that his faith was genuine and not just a hand-me-down faith. Hand-me-down clothes are one thing; hand-me-down faith is something quite different. Even though you may have been raised by godly parents in a good church, explain when your faith became real to you.

Unfeigned faith has stepped off the stage and refuses to pretend that it is something that it is not. It admits its weakness and cries out to God to increase and strengthen it. **Unfeigned faith** refuses to wear a mask. It does not pretend to be a sin-hater in public while at the same time loving sin in private. It is real. How real is your faith?

**Your sincerity should mean as much to you as it does to God.
Fearless character is genuine. Sincerely love your God and live for Him.**

Character in Crisis—Week 1
**Animosity against the Gospel is increasing daily—
fearless character is needed.**

2 Timothy 1:6

Wednesday—Fearless character uses its giftedness for God.

**Wherefore, I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God,
which is in thee by the putting on of my hands.**

Timothy, just as I remember something about you when I think of you, I want you to remember something about me when you think of me. I am reminding you of your “gift” from God. Don’t ever let the fear of man or the pressures of life keep you from using the “gift” that God gave you!

“Gifts” are not earned, deserved, or something you should be proud of. They are gifts. They may cause more work, more stress, and more sacrifice than we ever desired, but they are “gifts” given by God and must be used for God. What do you think are your greatest God-given gifts?

Timothy was both gifted and ordained by God (symbolized by Paul’s laying hands on Timothy while he acknowledged God’s gift in prayer) to be involved in the ministry of preaching the Word of God and continuing where Paul would leave off at his death. But it is obvious that Timothy struggled with doing what God called him to do.

- Timothy had frequent physical problems. (1 Timothy 5:23)
- Timothy was naturally timid and fearful. (1 Corinthians 16:10)
- Timothy was still a young man. (1 Timothy 4:12)
- Timothy had many in Ephesus that opposed him. (1 Timothy 4:1-3)
- Timothy could be imprisoned like Paul for his faith. (2 Timothy 1:8)

Humanly speaking, Timothy had a good, long list of excuses. List three excuses that you have used when you have been too afraid to witness or serve God in some way. How do your excuses compare with Timothy’s?

stir up the gift of God: Paul gave Timothy a loving reminder to **stir up**, rekindle the coals, or kindle afresh his gift from God. Paul compared Timothy’s spiritual gift with a fire that was burning low and almost out. All of

us (even you) are gifted by God in a very unique way. The way you use your gifts matters to God. So, how fervently is your fire burning?

Some believers put their “gift-fires” out quickly by smothering them as you would a campfire with a blanket or a bucket of water. Even though Paul warns us in 1 Thessalonians 5:19 to **quench not the Spirit**, many do just the opposite. The quickest way to put a fire out is to smother it. The quickest way to quench your God-given gifts is to live in selfishness and sin. Is there any life-dominating sin, habitual selfishness, or paralyzing fear that keeps you from serving God the way He has gifted you to do? If so, explain.

Other believers starve their fires and grieve the Spirit of God. No fire can burn unattended. It has to be stoked and refueled every day. Our spiritual fervency cannot continue to burn without both quality and quantity time with God. How is your devotional life? Is your prayer life still strong? Could you describe your local church attendance and involvement as consistent? When was the last time you took time to memorize a verse of Scripture that dealt with a spiritual struggle you were facing? In other words, describe the spiritual disciplines in your life that keep your flame burning brightly and your gifts on fire for God.

All believers should **stir up** their gifts by reminding themselves of everything that God has done for them and how unworthy they are for such blessings. If we keep a high view of God and a humble view of self, we will live the kind of God-dependent lives that keep our fires of spiritual fervency burning brightly. God is pleased and glorified when we use His gifts to draw others to Him. How have you used your own spiritual gifts in a way that impacted others for the cause of Christ in the last couple months?

**We can smother our gifts, starve our gifts, or stir up our gifts—
I think we know which pleases God the most.**

Character in Crisis—Week 1
**Animosity against the Gospel is increasing daily—
fearless character is needed.**

2 Timothy 1:7

Thursday—Fearless character is of God; fear is not.

For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

Timothy struggled with fear and almost allowed his timidity to keep him from following God's will for his life. Fear can be paralyzing. Fear does not come from God. We fear because we choose fear over trust in God.

How does fear affect how you witness?

How does fear affect peer pressure?

How does fear affect surrendering your life to God for full-time service?

For God hath not given us the spirit of fear: Since our fear does not come from God, it cannot be used as an excuse. Even though we try to blame our fearfulness on our personalities, upbringing, or just-the-way-we-are, we cannot deny the fact that fear is a personal choice. We choose to fear what “may” happen rather than trust God to control what “will” happen. Like Timothy, most of us struggle with fear at some level. It may be a fear of the future, a fear of poverty, a fear of sickness or an accident, a fear of pain, a fear of rejection, a fear of loneliness, and the list goes on. Try to describe your top-five-fears and why they seem to dominate your thoughts and paralyze you from doing what you know you should do.

but of power: We fear because we do not trust our almighty, omnipotent God. God is all-powerful! We fear because we don't really believe (trust) that God has the power to handle the situation that is producing our fear. Look up the following verses that describe the power of our almighty God and explain how these verses should shatter our fears.

Jeremiah 32:17

Matthew 19:26

Luke 1:37

Isaiah 40:28

and of love: We fear because we do not trust our merciful, compassionate God. God is all-loving. We fear because we don't really believe (trust) that God loves us and wants a close, personal relationship with each one of us. God is immutable and does not change in His love or compassion. He does not love us more when we are really good or less when we are really bad—He just loves us. From the verses below, explain how implicit trust in a loving God can dispel all fear.

Lamentations 3:22

Psalms 86:25

1 John 4:8-19

and of a sound mind: We fear because we do not trust our wise, omniscient God. God is all-knowing. We fear because we don't really believe (trust) that God knows and wants what is best for our lives. A sound mind behaves sensibly because it possesses a thoughtful awareness that God will accomplish His best in our lives. What do the following verses say about a wise, trustworthy God?

Psalms 104:24

1 Timothy 1:17

Romans 11:33

It is hard to fear anyone or anything when you know that you have a powerful God who protects you, a compassionate God who loves you, and a wise God who always wants His best for your life.

Character in Crisis—Week 1
Animosity against the Gospel is increasing daily—
fearless character is needed.

2 Timothy 1:8

Friday—Fearless character refuses to be ashamed of the Gospel.

Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the Gospel according to the power of God.

Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner: We should be ashamed of ourselves if we are ashamed of the Lord, the Gospel, or those who are living for God. This command is easy to memorize and simple to understand, **Be not ashamed!**

What does it mean to “be ashamed”? Are you embarrassed when non-believers find out that you are a believer? Do you feel inferior to unbelievers? Do you fear ridicule or disapproval by those who mock God and laugh at Christianity? Are you ashamed to be a Christian?

There are some who think it would be humiliating or even disgraceful to leave their life of sin and become a Christian. Such thinkers will have all eternity to regret such a decision. Explain Mark 8:38 in your own words. **Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of Me and of My words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when He cometh in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.**

Paul knew what he was talking about. He was beaten—yet not ashamed. He was imprisoned—yet not ashamed. He was thrown out of cities and left for dead—yet not ashamed. Why? He tells us in Romans 1:16. Write out this verse and explain why Paul was not ashamed to be a Christian.

It was not that Paul was never ashamed of anything; in fact, he reminded the young Roman believers what we should be truly ashamed of—our sin. **For**

when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. (Romans 6:20-21) In essence, Paul was saying: “in the days before you trusted Christ for forgiveness, you didn’t think too much about doing good, and now looking back, you are ashamed to even think about those things you used to do.” A newly saved foreign exchange student from Germany once asked me, “Why do most of the Christians in my Christian school want to do everything that God just saved me from?” Good question. How would you answer that question?

God’s Holy Spirit dwells in those who are truly saved and although there may be fear of rejection or suffering, a true believer’s heart will not be ashamed of his Lord. One motivating reason is that God is not ashamed to be called our God. Write out Hebrews 11:6 then take a minute and thank God for everything He has done, is doing, and will do for us.

One of the worst feelings anyone has to deal with is the feeling of being alone, rejected, unwanted, and unloved. Don’t forget that God is always there, always cares, and always wants the best for you.

but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the Gospel: Be not ashamed; be ready. Ready for what? Ready to suffer the same kind of affliction that Paul suffered—rejection, ridicule, and loneliness. Why do you think a life lived in total surrender to God could be such a lonely life?

according to the power of God: How can anyone endure constant ridicule and rejection? Answer: With the strength that only God gives. We can be **more than conquerors** through our Lord who loves us so much. Together, loneliness and rejection is conquered. Together, suffering and affliction is conquered. Ask God for such divine strength for today...He will give it to you. I promise.

**Fearless character understands the
indwelling power of an almighty God.**

2 Timothy 1:9-11

Saturday—Fearless character finds confidence and strength in the Gospel.

Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel: whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.

This one, long sentence is packed full of enough spiritual blessings and theology to keep us thankful for years to come. The key thought in this 78 word sentence is found in the 3 words, **through the Gospel**. In your own words, describe the Gospel.

Although research papers have never been on my top-ten list of fun things to do, they do have a way of consolidating our thoughts. From the following list of key word definitions and explanations, write a short research paper on, “The Blessings of the Gospel Message” and how it impacts your life.

- **saved**—rescued, delivered from danger
- **holy calling**—a special invitation to God’s kingdom and all its privileges
- **according to His own purpose**—God’s good pleasure to undeserving man
- **grace**—a favor done without expectation of return; the absolutely free expression of the lovingkindness of God
- **before the world began**—this was done in God’s timing
- **but is now**—that which was prophesied in the Old Testament times became the “now” just a few years before Paul’s ministry when Christ came to earth
- **manifest**—made known, visible, conspicuous; you can’t hide the fact of Christ’s birth, life, death, and resurrection even if you try
- **appearing**—the Messiah appeared; God came to earth as a man
- **Savior**—our Savior saved us
- **abolished**—to render inactive, useless, and ineffective

- **hath brought...to light**—Christ put the spotlight on eternal life for all to clearly see
- **life and immortality**—life that has no capacity for corruption; untouchable or unreachable by the hands of an impotent devil
- **the Gospel**—the good news of redemption and reconciliation
- **appointed**—to set, to put in place
- **preacher**—the town crier, proclaimer to read aloud for all to hear
- **apostle**—a sent ambassador
- **teacher**—an instructor, a master teacher
- **Gentiles**—the ones God called Paul to serve

The Blessings of the Gospel

**Fearless character glories in the power and
the blessings of the Gospel message.**

Sunday Review: 2 Timothy 1:1-11

2 Timothy 1:1-2

Monday—Paul was a friend with fearless character.

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus, to Timothy, my dearly beloved son: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

What did you learn from Monday's study on 2 Timothy 1:1-2?

2 Timothy 1:3-5

Tuesday—Thankfulness and purity were not lacking in Paul's character.

I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day; greatly desiring to see thee, being mindful of thy tears, that I may be filled with joy; when I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also.

What did you learn from Tuesday's study on 2 Timothy 1:3-5?

2 Timothy 1:6

Wednesday—Fearless character uses its giftedness for God.

Wherefore, I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands.

What did you learn from Wednesday's study on 2 Timothy 1:6?

2 Timothy 1:7

Thursday—Fearless character is of God; fear is not.

For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

What did you learn from Thursday's study on 2 Timothy 1:7?

2 Timothy 1:8

Friday—Fearless character refuses to be ashamed of the Gospel.

Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the Gospel according to the power of God.

What did you learn from Friday's study on 2 Timothy 1:8?

2 Timothy 1:9-11

Saturday—Fearless character finds confidence and strength in the Gospel.

Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel: whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.

What did you learn from Saturday's study on 2 Timothy 1:9-11?

**Animosity against the Gospel is increasing daily—
fearless character is needed.**

Character in Crisis—Week 2
**Animosity against the Gospel is increasing daily—
fearless character is needed.**

2 Timothy 1:12

Monday—Fearless character is confident in God.

For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day.

For the which cause: Paul's **cause** was his reason for living. What is your **cause** for living? Why do you get up every morning? What drives you to do what you do each day? What cause, bigger than yourself and your life, have you attached yourself to?

I also suffer these things: Why did Paul suffer? Just because! Just because he preached to the Gentiles, Paul was put in prison. Just because he had been appointed by God to preach the Gospel to “outsiders” of Israel, he suffered rejection. He was God's ambassador, put in place by God, and he continued to teach and preach until the Roman guards took his head and God took his spirit home to heaven. **These things** not only included prison, but also loneliness, rejection, opposition, pain, incredible discomfort, and death. Just because Paul shared the Gospel with the Gentiles, he suffered such **things**! What is the worst **thing** that has ever happened to you just because you shared Christ with someone?

These things included “prison” which in Paul's day was commonly called the “house of darkness.” Bob Fraser in *Prisons in Paul's World* states:

The prison in which Paul was kept was dug out of solid rock and underground. Prisoners, their guards, and their provisions were lowered through an opening the size of a manhole. This manhole was the only means of entrance and exit. Rain and debris from the market and from animals easily dropped into this “house of darkness.” Neither animal waste nor that of the prisoners found its way out easily. Its appearance is disgusting and horrible, by reason of the filth, darkness and stench. Lighting was indeed poor, primarily coming from torches or oil lamps. Prisoners were manacled using different lengths of chain, probably reflecting the security risk, the nature of the accusation, and the attitude of the guards. A short chain could hold a prisoner continually upright, dependent upon others for everything. A longer chain might permit a prisoner to take a step or two from the wall and to sit or to lie down.

Can you imagine such suffering? Other prisoners were sent to work in underground salt mines—never to see daylight again. Still others were chained to the huge oars of ships as galley slaves until they died. Although some of us have suffered some ridicule, rejection, and loneliness, we have no idea what real suffering is all about. And still we hesitate to witness for our Lord. Explain what Peter wrote, **If any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God on this behalf.** (1 Peter 4:16)

nevertheless I am not ashamed: **Nevertheless** is a great word. It is a word to draw our attention to the “opposition-to” and “transition-from” what was just said. Paul's attitude was simply, “In spite of all this suffering, I am not and will never be ashamed of my wonderful Lord! I've been thrown in this terrible Roman prison where they treat you with less respect than an animal. It's cold and damp; the stench will gag you at times; there is a little hole in the ceiling for some light and some air; and I will be executed soon—but I am not ashamed.” Write out the following verses and explain Paul's heart. Philippians 1:20-21

for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day. Again, as we take a peek into Paul's heart we can almost hear him say. “I believe the Gospel! And just as Jesus was executed, buried, and resurrected, God is going to do the same for me. He will raise me up and reunite me with my new eternal body. I have committed my entire life to Him. He is able to take care of me.” As we close today's study, read Romans 8:35-39 and write a thank-you note to the Lord for His promise of never-ending love.

God loves me! Why would I ever be ashamed of Him?

**Animosity against the Gospel is increasing daily—
fearless character is needed.**

2 Timothy 1:13-14

Tuesday—Fearless character understands conviction with compassion.

Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us.

Hold fast the form of sound words: Paul was encouraging fearful Timothy to stand for the truth that he was taught by Paul. Don't let go for any reason! Hold tightly even when life gets scary. If we desire those we love to be spiritually safe and sound, we are to teach with strong, impactful words that are based on sound doctrine. No impurities, false opinions, pet peeves, or hobby horses, but just simple, sound, unadulterated teaching from a heart that loves others, is confident in Christ, and studies and knows the Word of God. When you face a difficult cultural or biblical question, what is your plan of study to find the answer to share with those who are asking?

in faith and love: The spirit in which we share **sound words** is vitally important. We could say the right thing in the wrong way and lose our listeners. What we teach must come from a loving, believing heart. God's precious Word is to be held with conviction and compassion. This should never be a duty, but a demonstration of genuine **faith** and intense **love**. If our goal is to "give the Truth of God with the love of God," then we will see "lives changed for the glory of God." How does preaching that is compassionate, convicting, and full of great content impact the listeners?

How does preaching that is harsh and irrelevant impact the listeners?

That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us: By the indwelling Holy Spirit, guard the good deposit entrusted to you! God has committed a treasure for you to guard and watch over. Paul knew his days were numbered but still held on to and guarded the simplistic truth of the Gospel. Paul was now asking Timothy to do the same while encouraging him to realize that God's indwelling Spirit would enable him to do so. There are a number of ways to **keep** or guard the Gospel message. Comment on each of the following.

Keep (guard) the Gospel from error:

Keep (guard) the Gospel from neglect:

Keep (guard) the Gospel from oversimplification:

Keep (guard) the Gospel from theological imbalance:

When it comes to the purity of the Gospel, there should be no compromise. Tolerance is admirable in many areas of life, but we should be intolerant with those who seek to change the Gospel to fit their own desires. List the names of three individuals who need to hear the simple, life-changing truth of the Gospel from a confident and compassionate friend—a friend like you.

When the Gospel is clear, there is no need to fear.

2 Timothy 1:15-18

Wednesday—Fearless character refuses to run and hide.

This thou knowest (you are aware), **that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me; of whom are Phygellos and Hermogenes. The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain: but, when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found me. The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day: and in how many things he ministered unto me at Ephesus, thou knowest very well.**

Paul ended this section of his letter with a real-life illustration as he compared the fearful with the fearless.

The fearful: Phygellos and Hermogenes

The fearless: Onesiphorus

- Which are you—fearful or fearless?

The fearful: Phygellos and Hermogenes are described by 10 words—**they which are in Asia be turned away from me.**

The fearless: Onesiphorus is described by 67 words including **mercy, refreshed, not ashamed, sought...diligently, found me, and ministered.**

- If someone wrote a few words to describe your fearfulness or your fearlessness, what would they write?

The fearful: Phygellos and Hermogenes must have been ashamed of Paul.

The fearless: Paul was not ashamed (1:12); Onesiphorus was not ashamed (1:16); Timothy must not be ashamed (1:8); we are not to be ashamed. How do the following passages help us to be “not” ashamed of our Lord?

- Romans 5:2-5
- 1 John 2:28

The fearful: Phygellos and Hermogenes are only mentioned here in Scripture and are mentioned by name as failures. These two men were afraid to stand with Paul or serve him in any way.

The fearless: Onesiphorus **often refreshed** Paul. Not knowing if he himself would be lifted out of the prison pit, Onesiphorus allowed himself to be lowered into the Roman kennel where he served Paul by possibly bringing food, washing his clothes, reading to him, or cleaning the human waste out of the prison hole.

- Who do you serve other than yourself? How do you serve them? How often do you serve them? Does your service cost you anything?

The fearful: Phygellos and Hermogenes **turned away** from Paul and did not even try to find him or help him. They ran and hid.

The fearless: Onesiphorus **very diligently sought out and found** Paul. You can see why Paul emphasized to Timothy the danger of debilitating fear.

Visiting a prisoner could be dangerous. A prison visitor was no longer one of the anonymous crowd. Someone might associate the visitor with the alleged crimes of the accused. Thus, when early Christians obeyed their Lord and visited those who were in prison, they did more than perform an inconvenient or unpleasant act. Let down into the prison by rope, they left only at the pleasure of the guards. In the Letter to Philemon, Paul speaks of the slave Onesimus, who had somehow made his way to the imprisoned apostle. Paul suggests that the ministry of Onesimus was valuable to him. Possibly, this man risked his life daily by bringing Paul food and by carrying out the unpleasant task of cleaning Paul's place in the prison. What a remarkable ministry this would be! And what a challenge to us today.

(www.mpumc.org)

- How would this impact you today? I am sure we would be fearful, but hopefully we would not allow that fear to paralyze us. Onesiphorus was loved and highly respected by Paul. In what ways do you want to be like Onesiphorus?

The fearful: Phygellos and Hermogenes **turned away** from Paul and did nothing for him—not even ordinary and common comforts.

The fearless: Onesiphorus **often refreshed** Paul. Onesiphorus was a biblical, walking AC unit and air freshening system—Febreze® in the flesh.

While most were hiding from Paul, this guy was seeking for Paul. Maybe Onesiphorus was not gifted in speaking, in leading, in preaching, or in anything that would impress men, but he was a blessing to Paul.

- What spiritual leader in your life needs a refreshing friend and an encouraging word? How can you be his personal Onesiphorus?

Fearful or fearless—it is our choice.

Section 2

Living by the Gospel is being scorned— strong character is needed!

2 Timothy 2:1-26

1-7 Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier. And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully. The husbandman that laboreth must be first partaker of the fruits. Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things.

8-13 Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel: wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, even unto bonds; but the Word of God is not bound. Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with Him, we shall also live with Him: if we suffer, we shall also reign with Him: if we deny Him, He also will deny us: if we believe not, yet He abideth faithful: He cannot deny Himself.

14-21 Of these things put them in remembrance, charging them before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers. Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth. But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some. Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity. But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honor, and some to dishonor. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work.

22-26 Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart. But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes. And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.

Living by the Gospel is being scorned—strong character is needed.

2 Timothy 2:1-2

Thursday—Strong character is dependent on the grace of God.

Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.

Thou therefore: You, Timothy, knowing how others have bailed, run, and hid, don't be fearful, don't be ashamed, don't be disloyal to our Lord, our cause, the Gospel, or to me. The **therefores** in Scripture are God's wonderful way of keeping us closely tied to the context. What did you learn from 2 Timothy 1:1-18 that would make Paul write, **Therefore...be strong?**

my son: Paul's personal plea reminds Timothy of his relationship with Paul and his responsibility before God. The imperative, **Be strong**, is a command wrapped in compassion. Paul understands Timothy's fear and timidity, but can confidently command him to **be strong** because he knows (by personal experience) that God will empower him through His grace. Who has been like a spiritual parent to you?

What would hinder you from attempting to disciple someone younger than you? What would keep you from being a kind of spiritual parent?

be strong: What are the elements of a strong spiritual life? What makes some stronger than others? Why are some Christians strong and other Christians weak?

be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus: The source of true spiritual strength is Christ who strengthens through His enabling grace. In your own words, define grace.

According to James 4:6 and 1 Peter 5:5 who does God offer His grace to?

To whom does He refuse to give His grace?

It is an all-powerful God that gives power. It is an almighty God that gives might. It is a strong Sovereign that gives strength. Write out the following verses and take a few minutes to thank God for His strength.

Ephesians 6:10

Philippians 4:13

Colossians 1:11

And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.

God has a plan to proclaim His Word. He uses trustworthy, teachable people to teach trustworthy, teachable people. As we grow in the Lord we should strive to "be" Timothys and to look for Timothys to disciple.

faithful: Describe a **faithful** man.

Are you faithful? Are you trustworthy? Can others count on you to do what you have promised to do quickly and completely?

able to teach others: A humble, teachable spirit is a rarity today. To teach others you must have a driving passion to learn. What do the following passages say about "learning" with a teachable spirit?

Matthew 11:29

John 7:15

Ephesians 4:20

Philippians 4:9

Luke 11:1

Babies and toddlers cannot be college professors; neither can those immature in Christ be good teachers. Compare the teaching of Hebrews 5:11-14 with Colossians 3:16 and explain what hinders some from being godly teachers and what motivates others to be godly teachers.

Those who are strong in grace are strong in character.

Living by the Gospel is being scorned—strong character is needed.

2 Timothy 2:3-4

Friday—Strong character is committed to pleasing God and not self.

Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.

Paul started this chapter reminding us to **be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus**. As we saw yesterday, it takes strength to be the spiritual example and teacher we need to be. It also takes divinely enabled spiritual strength to endure hard times. Nothing is much harder than being a soldier at war knowing that at any second you could lose your life.

endure hardness: Both physical and spiritual endurance takes fortitude, resolution, durability, patience, stamina, and persistence. It is much easier to quit than to fight. Read the passages below and match them with the proper motivational statement.

1 Corinthians 13:7-8; Hebrews 11:24-27; Hebrews 12:2-4; 1 Peter 2:19-20

Love for God and others motivates endurance.

Joy of being in the presence of God someday motivates endurance.

Faith in the invisible God motivates endurance.

Knowing that God is pleased motivates endurance.

as a good soldier of Jesus Christ...that warreth: Realizing that Satan has declared war on God and all who are His, we must acknowledge that we are at war with evil and should live with a wartime mentality. Such a mindset admits that we can never be at peace with the world, our flesh, or the devil. If you are not presently fighting, than you have already been captured and are being controlled as much as any prisoner of war. Read 2 Corinthians 10:3-5 and Ephesians 6:11-14 and to the best of your ability describe “spiritual warfare.”

entangleth himself with the affairs of this life: I remember brushing the tangles out of my little sister’s hair—it was no fun for either of us. It hurt! The only relief was Johnson’s® No More Tangles® shampoo. We all wish that the entanglements of life were as easy to deal with. When our hearts become interwoven with sinful or selfish habits the sure consequence is addiction. Describe the potential consequences of an alcohol addiction, a drug addiction, or a pornography addiction.

Entanglement can end up in enslavement, bondage, and addiction. The interweaving of sin, selfishness, and sensuality can totally shackle a mind to corruption. **While they promise them liberty, they themselves are slaves of corruption; for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage. For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow, that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.** 2 Peter 2:19-22

You cannot become entangled with anything that you keep at a distance. A simple “no thank you” the first time you are asked is a sure-proof way to avoid entangling addictions. Using these thoughts and 2 Peter 2:19-22, write the kind of note you would send a friend struggling with a sinful addiction.

that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier: A life consumed with pleasing self will fall prey to an addictive lifestyle; a life committed to pleasing God will rejoice to hear, “Well done. You’ve been good and faithful.” There are just two choices on the shelf, pleasing God or pleasing self. If self you choose then you will lose; if God’s your choice you will rejoice. Who do you want to please? You or God?

Strong character is committed to Christ and never consumed with self.

Living by the Gospel is being scorned—strong character is needed.

2 Timothy 2:5

Saturday—Strong character strives and struggles to win.

And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully.

2 Timothy 2:5 is the second of three illustrations Paul used to describe a disciplined life. Instant gratification is not an option for a teacher, an athlete, or a farmer. The disciplines of today bear fruit for tomorrow—it takes time for fruit to grow. The athlete, striving to be a true champion, strives without cheating, shortcuts, or steroids. In your own words, describe the difference between instant gratification and deferred gratification.

strive for masteries: These three words describe an athlete. The Complete Word Study Dictionary of the New Testament defines it this way:

αθλεω, athléō; a contest either in war or sport, especially a contest for a prize. To contend, to be a champion in public games such as boxing, throwing the disc, wrestling, running. (The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament © 1992 by AMG International, Inc. Revised Edition, 1993)

Striving emphasizes competition complete with a winner and a loser. Although today we see such competitors on ESPN, in Paul's day they battled in the Olympic stadium, and in David's day they were the Goliath's of the battlefield. It takes more than eating Wheaties® each morning to be a champion. What is your favorite sport to play? What would it take for you to become a professional in your favorite sport?

Striving has the idea of agonizing exertion as it struggles and makes every effort to be what it is striving to be. Success in sports does not come to the undisciplined. In what areas of life do you struggle with disciplined consistency in your life?

Paul clearly explained the importance of **striving** in his spiritual life to the young Corinthian Christians in 1 Corinthians 9:25-27. Read the paraphrase of this passage below and explain what it means to you.

In most races, many run but only one person gets the first prize. Run your race to win. To win you must deny yourself of everything that would keep you from doing your best. An athlete denies himself just to win a temporal trophy or an Olympic medal, but we run for a heavenly reward that never disappears. I run straight towards my goal with purpose in every agonizing step I take. I fight to win. I'm not just shadow-boxing or playing around. Like an athlete I punish my body, treating it roughly, disciplining it to do what it should do and not what it wants to do. Otherwise I fear that after encouraging others to run the race, I myself might be declared unfit and ordered to stand aside.

yet he is not crowned, except he strive lawfully: Cheaters never prosper—neither do the undisciplined. Those who were crowned victors in the early Olympic games received a laurel wreath as their prize. The glory and value of the prize was certainly not in the wreath that withered in a matter of days, but in what it represented. If you won the race (knowing you cheated, took a shortcut or steroids) the “win” would not be very satisfying. Have you ever cheated on a test or in a game? Explain the feelings of either being “caught” cheating or the feelings of the “fear of being caught.”

Of course Paul was not helping Timothy train for a 26.2 mile marathon, but encouraging him to take the baton for the next leg of the spiritual relay race that he was about to finish. Paul already shared the “rules” in 2 Timothy 1:13. **Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou has heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.** In other words, “give the Truth of God with the love of God.” How could someone violate rule #1: Guard the truth of the Gospel?

How could someone violate rule #2: Give the Truth in love?

Are you committed to running your race without any violations?

Strong character strives in a way that pleases God.

Sunday Review: 2 Timothy 1:12-2:5

2 Timothy 1:12

Monday—Fearless character is confident in God.

For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day.

What did you learn from Monday's study on 2 Timothy 1:12?

2 Timothy 1:13-14

Tuesday—Fearless character understands conviction with compassion.

Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us.

What did you learn from Tuesday's study on 2 Timothy 1:13-14?

2 Timothy 1:15-18

Wednesday—Fearless character refuses to run and hide.

This thou knowest (you are aware), that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me; of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes. The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain: but, when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found me. The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day: and in how many things he ministered unto me at Ephesus, thou knowest very well.

What did you learn from Wednesday's study on 2 Timothy 1:15-18?

2 Timothy 2:1-2

Thursday—Strong character is dependent on the grace of God.

Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.

What did you learn from Thursday's study on 2 Timothy 2:1-2?

2 Timothy 2:3-4

Friday—Strong character is committed to pleasing God and not self.

Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.

What did you learn from Friday's study on 2 Timothy 2:3-4?

2 Timothy 2:5

Saturday—Strong character strives and struggles to win.

And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully.

What did you learn from Saturday's study on 2 Timothy 2:5?

Living by the Gospel is being scorned—strong character is needed.

2 Timothy 2:6-7

Monday—Strong character is willing to work hard, to work patiently, and to work alone.

The husbandman that laboreth must be first partaker of the fruits. Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things.

Simply put, Paul was saying, “The hardworking farmer ought to be the first one to receive a share of his crops. Think about this and the Lord will help you to understand all the things I have been writing about.”

The husbandman that laboreth must be first partaker of the fruits: We couldn’t live without farmers today. There was a time when most people raised or grew their own food; today we simply go to the grocery store or the restaurant and buy it. No farms, no food. Share what you know about either farming or gardening from your personal experience.

laboreth: A farmer knows how to work hard, work long, and be content with his work. He is a loner who cannot take a sick day and is not deterred by rainy days. Unlike Paul’s other illustrations, the farmer does not have the thrill of the short race, the excitement of the students, or the victory in battle, but just the mundane, day-by-day work hoping for a successful crop. Some say that our society is losing its strong work ethic. Are you a hard worker? Do you work without complaining until the job is finished? Have you considered an “ant” lately? How do the following verses compare hard working ants with us?

Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise: which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest. How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? When wilt thou arise out of thy sleep? Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep: so shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man. (Proverbs 6:6-11)

Patient endurance is necessary for any farmer. A farmer, like his old John Deere® tractor, faithfully continues working hour after hour for that once-a-year joy called harvest. Have you ever raised a small garden? Grown tomatoes? Lettuce? Carrots? If you have, you know the joy of picking and eating what your hands have personally put in the ground and watched grow. You now get the feeling of the patient farmer’s joy at harvest time.

According to Colossians 1:11, where does patience and longsuffering come from?

According to 1 Thessalonians 1:3, for what were the young Thessalonian believers remembered?

According to James 1:3-4, what is the result of a patient spirit?

Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things: Paul simply said, “Reflect and think about what I am saying and the Lord will give you the insight and understanding in all things.” What things? Match the references with the principles below from 2 Timothy 2:1-6.

Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus:

Just like I did for you, pour your life into others:

It won’t be easy—there will be suffering along the way:

As a soldier, endure the hard times of life:

As an athlete, strive to win without cheating or shortcuts:

As a farmer, be content to work hard and long:

understanding: Once again, here is the incredible weaving of man’s responsibility with God’s divine enablement. Paul said, “Timothy, consider!” Paul prayed “Lord, give.” **Understanding** is a wonderful thing. To grasp or comprehend truth is essential in the renewing of our minds. What do the following verses from Psalm 119 teach about **understanding**?

Psalm 119:34

Psalm 119:73

Psalm 119:104

Psalm 119:130

Psalm 119:169

**Strong character works like it all depends on itself
and trusts like it all depends on God.**

Living by the Gospel is being scorned—strong character is needed.

2 Timothy 2:8-10

Tuesday—Strong character endures suffering so others can enjoy Christ.

Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel: wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, even unto bonds; but the Word of God is not bound. Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel: Jesus was all man and all God. As God, He left heaven and was born as a baby being the great, great (and a number of more greats) grandson of David. Sometimes I need to remind myself that Jesus left heaven for me. Jesus lived for me! Jesus died for me! Jesus rose from the dead for me! (And you!) We need to thank Him every day for what He did for us. Paul explained this same truth to the young Roman believers. Read Romans 1:3-4 and then write a short “thank you” prayer-note to the Lord for all He did to make salvation available to you. Concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.

wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, even unto bonds (chains): Isaiah warned, **Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil.** (Isaiah 5:20) Paul was viewed as an **evil** criminal deserving of the filth and stench of a Roman dungeon simply because he preached the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The **trouble** he suffered included the claustrophobic and humiliating feelings associated with the shackles on his hands and feet. The chains kept the prisoners from escaping the cruel brutality of the inhumane Roman guards. Paul was about to die and probably anticipated the relief from the torture, brutality, and cruelty he suffered. What is the worst thing that has happened to you because you shared Christ?

but the Word of God is not bound (chained): Paul could not move more than a few feet from his dungeon wall, but the Word of God continues to travel around the world. Even though our world despises and ignores the Bible, it continues to influence their lives. It is amazing how government, laws, dates, holidays, a seven day week, a 21st century calendar, our pledge of allegiance, and even our money marked with “In God We Trust” is part of American life. According to www.biblica.com the Bible is translated into over 2,287 languages and dialects worldwide. The only thing that seems to “bind” the Word of God is an army of Christians who choose to not memorize or meditate on its truths. List the last three verses or passages that you have memorized and explain why you memorized those verses.

Therefore (for this reason) **I endure all things for the elect's sakes that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with** (and with it) **eternal glory: Therefore**, because Christ lived, died, and rose again; **therefore**, because the Word of God is not bound; **therefore**, because my time here on earth is almost over, **I endure**. Paul was willing to bear, tolerate, and suffer for the Gospel's sake. Paul did not live for himself, but for others. Paul had God's heart and was not willing that anyone should perish. List the top five unbelieving individuals that you would love to see God save in the near future.

The **elect** must **obtain salvation**—the mystery continues.

The chains, the discomfort, the loneliness, and the rejection will someday seem so insignificant when we stand in the never-ending joy of God's glorious presence. They are **eternal**. What a great word. **Eternal**. It is not confined by time but is free to be what it is. Forever. Everlasting. Never ending. Infinite. Endless. Ceaseless. Timeless. Always and forever. Paul endured great suffering so others would enjoy eternal life in heaven. In your lifetime, do you think you will have to endure what Paul endured?

Strong character is enduring character.

Living by the Gospel is being scorned—strong character is needed.

2 Timothy 2:11-13

Wednesday—Strong character is willing to suffer for the Gospel.

It is a faithful (trustworthy) saying:

For if we be dead (we died) with Him, we shall also live with Him:

if we suffer, we shall also reign with Him:

if we deny Him, He also will deny us:

if we believe not, yet He abideth faithful:

He cannot deny Himself.

Paul seems to be quoting the chorus of an early church hymn. From what he just said in verses 8-10, we can assume that the first part of the hymn said something about dying such as, “We will remain faithful to our Lord even to death for Christ’s sake.” How did our Lord describe great love in John 15:13?

Extreme love is seen in the willingness to die for the one loved. What did Paul teach the Romans about God’s love in Romans 5:6-8?

In the verses that we are studying today, what is promised to those who die for the cause of Christ?

We all know John 3:16 but overlook the simple truth of John 3:15. Write it out below.

For those who have suffered for the Lord, there are two incredibly comforting passages—Romans 8:17 and 1 Peter 4:13-16. Read both of them and share how they would comfort those who are suffering.

The **deny** part of this song is for those who reject Christ and deny that He is the Son of God. Don’t think that God will overlook unbelief or those who deny Him. There will not be the “Oh, that’s ok. You tried even though you rejected and denied that I was the Savior, the Son of God.” God is faithful to His Word and will deny those who have denied Him. God cannot lie. If we believe in eternal, everlasting life, we must believe in eternal, everlasting death. According to Romans 6:23, what are the **wages of sin**?

What is the **gift of God**?

Denying that Jesus Christ is the Son of God is an eternal mistake that will be regretted forever. For those who reject the Gospel, the following passages are sad. Read each passage and then write how you would try to explain the foolishness of denying Christ to an unbelieving friend.

Whosoever therefore shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny Me before men, him will I also deny before My Father which is in heaven.

(Matthew 10:32-33)

Also I say unto you, Whosoever shall confess Me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God: but he that denieth Me before men shall be denied before the angels of God.

(Luke 12:8-9)

The result of suffering and death is an eternal life of reigning with Christ. Those who have tried to hurt us have helped us. Those who attempt to stop us from glorifying our Savior will only enable us to do the same unshackled by this wicked, selfish flesh. Our best days of submission, sacrifice, and service on earth will pale in comparison with our opportunities to serve, honor, and glorify our Lord Jesus Christ throughout all eternity.

Strong character is willing to die for the sake of the Gospel.

Living by the Gospel is being scorned—strong character is needed.

2 Timothy 2:14-15

Thursday—Strong character studies before it ever strives.

Of these things put them in remembrance, charging them before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers. Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth.

Of these things put them in remembrance: What things? If we die with Christ we will live with Him. If we suffer for Christ we will reign with Him. If we deny Christ, He will deny us. We are easily distracted people who struggle with spiritual focus. What are some of the simple hints and suggestions that you use to keep Bible principles in the forefront of your mind? Refer to the Old Testament days (before iPads and smartphones) by reading Deuteronomy 6:6-9.

charging them (earnestly exhorting) **before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit:** “I am warning you, and God is my witness. Don’t spend your time striving, quarreling, or arguing about anything! Spend your time studying and either you will know that you are right and won’t need to argue, or you’ll see that you are wrong and not want to argue.” How could serious study on controversial issues before we discuss them impact unity and understanding between Christian brothers?

the subverting (the catastrophic destruction) **of the hearers:** Senseless arguments and profitless words can lead to a true spiritual catastrophe. Whether it is war, a Tsunami, or a hurricane, the catastrophic destruction and ruin left for those affected is devastating. Some seek to rebuild and others give up in defeat, never to return. False teaching is devastating—just ask those who come out of the traditionalism of Catholicism, the extremism of Islam, the externalism of extreme fundamentalism, or those pacified but still lost in easy-believism. False teaching is catastrophic. How has false teaching affected one of your friends or family members?

There is an easy answer to all the wrangling and false teaching. Study! **Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth:** Examine everything carefully. Earnestly, diligently, and eagerly dig deep into Scripture until God gives you the understanding and intent of each passage. Describe your normal Bible study habits.

approved unto God: Who would want anything less? We should seek to please God with a genuine faith that is free from hypocrisy. David explained it well in Psalm 119:80, **Let my heart be sound in Thy statutes; that I be not ashamed.** If we live by our opinions, we may be ashamed. If we live by God’s written Word, God will approve. How can we do this?

a workman that needeth not to be ashamed: As an unashamed, hard-working farmer who knows early mornings and very few days off, the true student of God’s Word is not lazy in his study. He does not use junior high tactics of cramming the night before to get a passing grade on his Sunday morning message. He does not pull an “all-nighter” just to look good on Sunday. He knows how to use a commentary and do a word-study. He is a critical student but trusts the gifted abilities of many ancient and modern day commentators. Why do you think intense Bible study is such hard work?

rightly dividing the Word of truth: A preacher who is diligent and disciplined in his study is likened to an orthopedic surgeon with the Bible. He knows how to cut it just right to explain how every part fits together to explain God’s redemptive plan. He cannot be accused of last minute plagiaristic preaching. He does not find a crutch verse and spend an hour entertaining with pet-peeve preaching. He never seeks to impress by confidently stating what he himself does not understand. He is very, very careful in the way he handles the precious Word of God. List some of your favorite preachers or Bible teachers and explain why.

Strong character is strengthened with diligent, disciplined study.

Living by the Gospel is being scorned—strong character is needed.

2 Timothy 2:16-18

Friday—Strong character warns of false teaching and ungodly living.

But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some.

Do you remember diagramming sentences in English class? It was not one of my favorite pastimes. The three verses we are studying today are more easily understood when put in a diagram.

- **Shun** (16-18)
 - **profane and vain babblings**
 - **they will increase ungodliness**
 - **they will eat away like a canker** (cancer)
 - **Hymenaeus**
 - **Philetus**
 - **have erred with the truth of the Gospel**
 - **saying the resurrection is past**
 - **overthrown the faith of some**

Shun: To keep from ungodly strife, we must learn to diligently study and lovingly shun. It takes a ton of discretion and a boat load of discernment to lovingly put distance between yourself and those who are consumed with irreverent, empty chatter. List three simple ways to stay out of lengthy conversations with critical, contentious unbelievers.

profane and vain babblings: The words **vain babblings** have the idea of worthless, empty, senseless jabber which is void of any divine or spiritual character. **Profane** has the concept of not just being impious or unholy, but actually hateful towards God. Such talk is normally found in college philosophy classes, late night talk shows, and many popular comedians. So how can believers today avoid such senseless, ungodly talk and counsel?

Why? Why did Paul re-emphasize this to Timothy here as he did in his first letter (1 Timothy 4:7; 6:20) and does so again in this letter (2 Timothy 2:14; 3:13)? The answer: because **they will increase unto more ungodliness and eat as doth a canker** (eat away like cancer). It is amazing how many love to gang up on God and everything His Word stands for. It is much more popular to accept sinful behavior and sexual perversion than to accept the absolute commands of God's Word. Ten minutes on CNN or FOX News will reveal how ungodly our world has become. What scares you the most about the increase in wickedness in our world today?

The “life without God” philosophy is like a cancer that starts small, takes its time to spread, and then kills. If we are not careful, we too will start accepting the ungodly philosophy that dominates the world's thinking today. Do you spend enough time with the Lord to combat the ungodliness you see in the media and entertainment each night?

Hymenaeus and Philetus: Hymenaeus was a spiritual shipwreck. Shipwreck was Paul's best modern day, visual picture of what happens when someone fills their minds with unbiblical, unscriptural, profane, godless, irreverent teaching. Those who are shipwrecked lose everything—everything except their lives and the memories of how their lives were ruined. All we know about Philetus is that he hung around the wrong kind of friend, namely Hymenaeus. Ungodly people usually take others down with them. Who do you know that has “shipwrecked” their life and now regrets their choices? What can you learn from them?

who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some: Obviously these guys were not around during the 40 days that Jesus Christ taught about heaven and did a number of “infallible” miracles. Jesus died. Jesus defeated death. Jesus rose from the dead. Hymenaeus and Philetus will have eternity to regret the lives they impacted by their lies and false teaching. Are you impacting lives for evil or for good? How?

Strong character avoids all empty, irreverent, foolish counsel.

Living by the Gospel is being scorned—strong character is needed.

2 Timothy 2:19

Saturday—Strong character stays far from sin and close to God.

Nevertheless the (solid) foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, **The Lord knoweth them that are His. And, Let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.**

What is this sure **foundation of God** referring to? Some think this is referring to Christ Who certainly is a sure, solid foundation to build your life on, but the preferred interpretation for this passage would be the church. In our crazy world today, we really don't need to fear that the church is going to fall apart, dissolve, or disappear. God will take care of His church. Paul's focus here is those individuals who make up God's church by trusting in the finished work of Christ on Calvary through His life, death, and resurrection. Just for fun, write your personal testimony of salvation and take a few minutes to thank God for saving you.

This seal should comfort us! Take to heart what is written on the seal—God's loving decree and man's loyal response both of which receive equal emphasis. Can you trust God to do His part in this sealed promise? Can God trust you to keep your part in this sealed promise?

The Lord knows those who are His.

Let everyone that names the name of Christ depart from sin.

The first is eternal; the second limited by time.
The first is a comfort; the second is a command.
The first we must believe; the second we must obey.
The first exalts God's mercy; the second our duty.
The first gives security; the second demands purity.
(Thoughts taken from commentators Wuest and Vincent)

The Lord knoweth them that are His: He knows who are His and loves them, keeps them, and protects them.

Comment on each passage below that supports God's promise that **The Lord knoweth them that are His.**

Nahum 1:7 **The Lord is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and He knoweth them that trust in Him.**

Matthew 7:23 **And then will I profess unto them, "I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."**

John 10:14 **"I am the good shepherd, and know My sheep, and am known of Mine."**

1 Corinthians 8:3 **But if any man love God, the same is known of him.**

God's part—He keeps me close to Him; My part—I stay far from sin.

Let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity: Most want to keep their sin even after salvation. Paul reminded Timothy a number of times to personally separate from sin. You see, a lack of separation shows a lack of character and weakens your Gospel witness. Define each bolded word below from Paul's second letter to Timothy.

No entanglement *with the affairs of this life* (2:4)

Shun *profane and vain babblings* (2:16)

Depart *from iniquity* (2:19)

Purge *yourself from these* (2:21)

Flee *youthful lusts* (2:22)

Avoid *foolish and unlearned questions* (2:23)

having this seal: God's divine protection, ownership, and certification seals those who make up His church. Remember that the Holy Spirit of God has sealed us unto the day of redemption. Amen and amen.

Strong character never lacks in separation from sin.

Sunday Review: 2 Timothy 2:6-19

2 Timothy 2:6-7

Monday—Strong character is willing to work hard, to work patiently, and to work alone.

The husbandman that laboreth must be first partaker of the fruits. Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things.

What did you learn from Monday's study on 2 Timothy 2:6-7?

2 Timothy 2:8-10

Tuesday—Strong character endures suffering so others can enjoy Christ.

Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel: wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, even unto bonds; but the Word of God is not bound. Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

What did you learn from Tuesday's study on 2 Timothy 2:8-10?

2 Timothy 2:11-13

Wednesday—Strong character is willing to suffer for the Gospel.

It is a faithful (trustworthy) saying: For if we be dead (we died) with Him, we shall also live with Him: if we suffer, we shall also reign with Him: if we deny Him, He also will deny us: if we believe not, yet He abideth faithful: He cannot deny Himself.

What did you learn from Wednesday's study on 2 Timothy 2:11-13?

2 Timothy 2:14-15

Thursday—Strong character studies before it ever strives.

Of these things put them in remembrance, charging them before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers. Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth.

What did you learn from Thursday's study on 2 Timothy 2:14-15?

2 Timothy 2:16-18

Friday—Strong character warns of false teaching and ungodly living.

But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some.

What did you learn from Friday's study on 2 Timothy 2:16-18?

2 Timothy 2:19

Saturday—Strong character stays far from sin and close to God.

Nevertheless the (solid) foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His. And, Let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

What did you learn from Saturday's study on 2 Timothy 2:19?

Living by the Gospel is being scorned—strong character is needed.

2 Timothy 2:20-21

Monday—Strong character is honored by God.

But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honor, and some to dishonor. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work.

Paul uses a current (for his day) and powerful illustration to help us understand what he had been emphasizing in his letter to Timothy. In various ways, Paul has referred to the **vessels of honor** and **dishonor** either by name or by principle. In the comparison chart below, write in the proper references that can be found in 2 Timothy 1-3.

	Vessels of Honor		Vessels of Dishonor
2:20	Gold and Silver	2:20	Wood and Earth
	Paul and Timothy		Hymenaeus and Philetus
	Unfeigned, real faith		Pretenders and phonies
	Unashamed of the Gospel		Fearful
	Onesiphorus		Phygellus and Hermogenes
	Good soldiers		Entagled, selfish soldiers
	Competitive athletes		Deceitful athletes
	Hard working farmers		Lazy farmers
	Studies and shares God's Word		Empty, irreverent babblers
	The Lord knows those who are His		Depart from Me, I never knew you
	Fit for the Master's use		Unfit for the Master's use
	Meekly instructs the vessels of dishonor to repent		Captives of the Devil who do his will and oppose God's truth
3:10-17	Lives godly, loves Christ	3:1-9	Lovers of self
	Mature men of God		Deceived men of evil

Sin is contagious. Sinful attitudes from so-called believers who justify their open sin can contaminate our thoughts and desires if we are not careful. Purging needs to be done. It is amazing how we allow both sinful friends and selfish acquaintances to stunt our spiritual growth. The garbage pails and chamber pots that surround us can easily spill over and cause a bigger stink than we ever imagined. Which of the descriptions from the chart above describe the majority of your closest friends?

The following list taken from The MacArthur New Testament Commentary series describes nine traits that are seen in the kind of character that stands strong even when Gospel living is scorned. After each characteristic, write a personal prayer-goal. A prayer-goal is something that you would love to see God instill into your life this coming year.

NINE CHARACTERISTICS OF A VESSEL OF HONOR

1. He will have a cleansed life (21a)
2. He will have a sanctified soul (21b)
3. He will be useful to God (21c)
4. He will be prepared for service (21d)
5. He will have a pure heart (22)
6. He will have a discerning mind (23)
7. He will have a gentle manner (24)
8. He will have a humble spirit (25a)
9. He will have a compassionate attitude (25b-26)

God gives each one of us a choice. We can choose to be **vessels of honor** or **vessels of dishonor**. It greatly depends on who we allow to impact and influence our lives on a daily basis. Please, be careful.

Strong, godly character is essential to be fit for God's use and honorable in God's eyes.

Living by the Gospel is being scorned—strong character is needed.

2 Timothy 2:22

Tuesday—Strong character seeks friends with strong character.

Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

Have you ever felt out of touch with God, like your life direction is in some way displeasing to God? To get on tract with God, 2 Timothy 2:22 gives some simple counsel—**Flee** and **Follow**. There are some roads that will lead to total destruction—flee those; others to a peaceful security—**follow** those. Why do you think it is so easy to wander off the path that God has for your life?

Youthful lusts (passions) are more powerful than most want to admit. We are passionate about what we think about and we think about what we love. Breaking from an intense passion is like breaking an addiction. Paul shares his two-fold plan for radical change with Timothy.

1. **Set specific goals**—pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace
2. **Get some help**—pursue friends passionate about purity and prayer

Flee: Escape! Run! Become a fugitive by running so far and so fast that the lusts cannot find you. Youthful lusts can involve much more than sexual immorality. Many are consumed with acceptance of others, defiance of authority, laziness, living for entertainment, etc. If you had to list three intense “desires” that you wish would disappear, what would they be?

1. **Set specific goals.** As we **flee** we need to know where we are going or we will run in circles and end up right back at the same lusts that we fled from. **Follow:** To change a direction you must change a desire. Paul listed four specific goals for Timothy (and us) to follow. The pursuit of these goals is actually a pursuit of Christlikeness. Desire Christlikeness and you will be different!

- Pursue **righteousness:** God is righteous. Even though God imputes Christ’s righteousness to us in salvation, we still are commanded to follow a moral righteousness. To **flee** and **follow** we must **overcome evil with good**. The pursuit of righteousness is a result of serious study and

consistent obedience to God’s Word. What does Matthew 5:5 say about our pursuit of righteousness?

- Pursue **faithfulness:** God is faithful. Faithfulness is both a fruit of the Spirit and what Jesus called a “weightier matter” in life. Faithfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, and dependability are important to God and should be important to us. In what ways do you struggle with faithfulness?
- Pursue **love:** God is love. Love is a choice and not just a feeling. It is so focused on others it totally forgets about self. It is all the Ten Commandments wrapped up in one command—love God and others. Selfishness is the number one enemy of selfless love. How can meditating on how much God loves you help you to love others?
- Pursue **peace:** God is peace. **If it be possible...live peaceably with all men** (Romans 12:18). If we are not right with others we are not right with God. Pursue relationships with God and others that are free from strife or misunderstanding. Do you need to reconcile with anyone?

2. **Get some help:** Find a group of like-minded friends who love to pray together, seek pure lives, and encourage each other to run from sin. Can you list four or five such friends?

Purity is the unsoiled character that has successfully battled and held at bay the intense passions and unrelenting lusts of flesh and mind. It involves a moral excellence and purity of spirit that radiates to others. Read 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8 and 5:22-23. What safeguards are in your life to keep you pure in mind and body?

Does your entertainment (movies, sports, web-presence) desensitize you to God’s view of sin? Are those who know you scared for your lack of personal purity or concerned because of your lack of consistent time in the Word? Find someone today who is as passionate about prayer and purity as you are, and then pray with them.

Strong character finds pure friends who know how to talk to God.

Living by the Gospel is being scorned—strong character is needed.

2 Timothy 2:23-26

Wednesday—Strong character is discerning, patient, and meek.

But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes. And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.

Define discernment.

Discernment is a part of strong character. Discerning people are not easily distracted. Discerning people are not extreme on issues that gender strife and division. Discerning people know that any position wrapped in love will be much more readily received than positions wrapped in paper with “we’re-right-and-you’re-wrong” written all over them.

But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes. And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men: Even though the current day, cultural arguments that Paul and Timothy faced were different than what we face in our web-based world today, the definition of a gentle, approachable servant has not changed. What kind of questions are we to avoid? Comment on these thoughts.

If the question cannot be answered biblically, avoid it.

If the question cannot be answered without undermining the authority of the parents, avoid it.

If the question has raised controversy throughout history without a solid answer, avoid it.

If good, godly, wise men disagree among themselves as to the answer to the question, avoid it.

Now, just because we avoid questions publically does not mean that we should ignore them personally. Know what you believe and why you believe and then live it. Let your life and not strife define your positions.

apt (able) to teach: Being **apt to teach** is not as easy as putting an app (or an **apt**) on your smartphone. States have lists of teacher’s qualifications that must be met. What do you think God’s “Teacher Qualifications” look like?

The servant of the Lord knows his subject well, knows how to communicate in a real, life-changing way, and knows both the needs and the understanding levels of his audience. If Satan can keep truth-tellers apathetic, boring, and non-interesting, he will win many battles. Has God burdened your heart to teach or preach? If so, what do you need to do to prepare yourself so you are “able to teach”?

patient (enduring evil): The Gospel seems to be a target for animosity. Even when you share the Gospel truth with a meek, approachable, patient spirit there will be those who reject the Gospel and therefore reject you. How can Matthew 5:11-12 comfort those who are hated for the sake of the Gospel? **Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake. Rejoice, and be exceedingly glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.**

in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will: Not all who oppose the truth are enemies, but simply confused and scared unbelievers. People fear what they do not understand. If we keep a meek attitude towards those who oppose us, it might be that God will use us to help them come to their senses and break free from the Devil’s grip on their lives. Make a list of confused unbelievers, pray for them, and seek to love them to the Lord.

Strong character focuses on others in a gentle, patient, meek way.

**Proclaimers
of the
Gospel
are being
attacked—
godly
character
is
needed!**

1-5 This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

6-9 For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith. But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs also was.

10-13 But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience, persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord delivered me. Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.

14-17 But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; and that from a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

Proclaimers of the Gospel are being attacked—godly character is needed.

2 Timothy 3:1-2a

Thursday—Godly character is hard to find during the last days.

This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves...

This know also: For the first 988 words of this letter, Paul has been reminding Timothy of his heritage in the Gospel, his giftedness to preach the Gospel, the power of the Gospel, the losers who have rejected the Gospel, and his responsibility to be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus and as he lives by the Gospel. Now he turns his attention to the type of people that will oppose him and his message. How about you? How hard is it to live a godly life in your world? How hard is it to share the Gospel with your friends and acquaintances? Is it hard? Why?

that in the last days: The **last days** have lasted a long time. What seems like forever to us (over 2,000 years) is just a couple days to the Lord (a thousand years is as one day). Paul would not have told Timothy to keep his distance from self-loving people that would live 2,000 years later. Therefore, the **last days** are not limited to the last couple years before the Lord returns for His church. Timothy was living in the **last days** and so are we. How can we live every day like it is the “last day” before the Lord returns?

perilous times shall come: **Perilous** is a colorful word describing the seasons the church will face between Christ’s coming as a baby when He was born to die, and Christ’s coming as a King when He will reign forever. The dispensation of time that we are now living in will have **seasons** that can be described as violent, fierce, grievous, and dreadful. Even in our world today, there are places where persecution is a way of life for Gospel believing Christians. We are beginning to see again what early believers suffered at the hands of God-hating men. Hebrews 11:36-39 describes persecuted believers

of whom the world was not worthy. From that passage, list some of the inhumane, **perilous** situations that they faced.

For men shall be lovers of their own selves: It is not the seasons or the times, but the people living in these times that will cause all the grief. These human beings, created by God, foolishly believe (or at least pretend to believe) that there is no God, and that no God that can tell them what to do and what not to do. Their self-love is manifested in many ways, 18 of which are listed in 2 Timothy 3:1-5. For the next few days, we will study each of these in a bit more detail. Read through the list and write down the top 5 that you see around you every day.

Remember, the unbelievers described in 2 Timothy 3:1-9 live their lives without the power or the grace of God to change. As believers, we have God’s divine enablement and still struggle with elements of self-love.

- Self-love is a deadly sin that grips the human heart and is the foundation of all other sin.
- Whenever love for self is raised, love for God and others is lowered.
- Self-love is so self-focused it forgets all about God and others.
- Although some say love is blind, self-love is even more blinded to its own selfishness and sinfulness.
- Self-love is often seen in dating situations. If a guy tries to talk a girl into a physical relationship, he doesn’t love her, he loves himself.

Godly character chooses to love God and others, but not self.

Proclaimers of the Gospel are being attacked—godly character is needed.

2 Timothy 3:2b

Friday—Godly character is not attracted to self-love.

...covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy.

We live in a world consumed with self. A selfish world. A world that justifies and normalizes sin. It is normal for those without Christ to be **covetous**. It is accepted that many unbelievers are **proud boasters**. Ten minutes watching news on TV will reveal a world of **unthankful, unholy blasphemers**. Just because we live in this world doesn't mean we need to be like this world. For the next four lessons we will seek to understand the selfish, sinful tendencies of self-loving people so we know what to avoid. After each characteristic, comment on how such tendencies could creep into our own lives and what we must do to avoid them.

covetous: The covetous desire that which God never intended for them to have. Their cravings create a constant, insatiable desire for the newest and latest stuff which has a very short satisfaction-shelf-life. Those who live with an eternal focus lose their appetites for anything temporal. They have learned to never love anything that cannot love them back. Hebrews 13:5 **Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.**

boasters: Boasters exaggerate their abilities, their accomplishments, and their reputations. Boasters are empty pretenders who promise what they cannot perform and are always the heroes in their own stories. Boasters forget that great men need no introduction (especially by themselves) and that godly character needs no applause. Boasters do not understand Jeremiah 9:23-24. **Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory (boast) in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory (boast) in his might, let not the rich man glory (boast) in his riches: but let him that glorieth glory (boasts boast) in this, that he understandeth and knoweth Me, that I am the LORD who exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD.**

proud: In the secret heart of a proud man, there is contempt for everyone else. In the heart of a proud man there is a little altar where he bows down before himself. Pride turned an angel into a devil, a powerful king into a mad cow, and is the root

source of all sin. If you want God to fight against you, to resist you, and to keep His strengthening grace from you, live every day with a proud heart. Proverbs 6:16-17a **These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto Him: a proud look.**

blasphemers: A blasphemer is an abusive and slanderous reviler. Blasphemy, based on human arrogance, seeks to dispute God's power, desecrate His name, and violate His glory. Blasphemy is a "thought-crime" against a holy Judge. Those who love themselves more than they love God will ultimately look favorably on themselves and look down on God and all who submit to God. Timothy 1:20 **Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.**

disobedient to parents: Children who are "lovers of their own selves" cannot properly obey their parents quickly, sweetly, and completely. They are literally unwilling to be persuaded. Radical role-reversal has impacted the American family: wives who insist on being in charge, husbands who refuse to take leadership, and kids who want to be the parents. Families are all mixed up. Colossians 3:20 **Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord.**

unthankful: The person who loves himself feels that he deserves everything that he has. An unthankful heart never has enough. Thankless thinking rules his thoughts. Gratitude is recognizing that someone other than ourself is responsible for all the good that we have. 1 Thessalonians 5:18 **In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.**

unholy: The unholy person, with no thought of morality or decency, is driven by self-love to gratify his lusts and passions of whatever sort. They are polluted with wickedness with no regard for godly living, godly people, or God. 1 Peter 1:16 **Be ye holy; for I am holy.**

Godly character avoids those who are covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, and the unholy.

Proclaimers of the Gospel are being attacked—godly character is needed.

2 Timothy 3:3

Saturday—Godly character refuses to be hateful in any way.

...without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good.

As we continue our study of the selfish, sinful tendencies of self-loving people, just like yesterday, comment on how such selfish tendencies could creep into our lives and what we must do to avoid them.

without natural affection: The man who loves himself is without the common, ordinary love for family members. Abortion is a mother's unnatural lack of love for her baby. Abuse is parents' unnatural lack of love for their kids. Rebellion is an unnatural lack of love for parents. Self-loving people violate 1 John 4:20. **If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God Whom he hath not seen?**

trucebreakers: Irreconcilable trucebreakers refuse to change no matter how much they have hurt others in their families. Antagonistic, argumentative, untrustworthy trucebreakers are determined at having their own way regardless of the circumstances. Trucebreakers are beyond reasoning. Their self-love is so extreme that absolutely nothing matters except doing as they please. They ignore Ecclesiastes 5:4-5, **When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed. Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay.**

false accusers: Malicious gossips make it a point to hurt others and take perverse pleasure in damaging reputations and destroying lives. The word “diabolos” is used 37 times in the New Testament: 34 in reference to the devil and 3 in reference to devil-like malicious, slanderous, false accusers. You are never more like the devil than when you falsely accuse a brother in Christ. We had better be dead-level, Bible-sure of any negative accusation that we say about a brother before we attack their methods, motives, or heart. If we falsely accuse, we are acting like devils. John 6:70-71 **Jesus answered them,**

Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil? He spake of Judas Iscariot the son of Simon: for he it was that should betray Him, being one of the twelve.

incontinent: Powerless. Without strength. Unable to control one's own appetites. The incontinent man gives in and over to temptation and fleshly desires quickly. He has no self-control. He is intoxicated with acceptance and desire. He refuses to voluntarily place limitations over his own freedom. The incontinent is like a car out of control heading for a disastrous wreck. The lover of self eventually loses control of his own life and becomes a slave to his passions and lusts. 2 Peter 2:19 **While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.**

fierce: Wild. Vicious. The fierce are savage men whose nature is to tear their enemies in pieces. Jude accuses some men of being like brute beasts. The storybook fantasy called “Evolution” is actually in reverse. Instead of evolving, many are devolving. Devolution? Evolution says that a monkey became a man; devolution says a man becomes a monkey. Wild beasts live solely for food, water, and sex. Nothing else matters. Nothing else counts. It is as base of an existence that any man can devolve to. Genesis 49:7 **Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel: I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel.**

despisers of those that are good: Self-lovers become good haters—hating what should be loved and loving what should be hated. Self-lovers despise, mock, and make fun of all those who want to please God. They are hostile towards good men—even the Lord. Isaiah 53:3 **He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from Him; He was despised, and we esteemed Him not.**

Godly character avoids those who oppose God.

Sunday Review: 2 Timothy 2:20-3:3

2 Timothy 2:20-21

Monday—Strong character is honored by God.

But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonor. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work.

What did you learn from Monday's study on 2 Timothy 2:20-21?

2 Timothy 2:22

Tuesday—Strong character seeks friends with strong character.

Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

What did you learn from Tuesday's study on 2 Timothy 2:22?

2 Timothy 2:23-26

Wednesday—Strong character is discerning, patient, and meek.

But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes. And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.

What did you learn from Wednesday's study on 2 Timothy 2:23-26?

2 Timothy 3:1-2a

Thursday—Godly character is hard to find during the last days.

This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves...

What did you learn from Thursday's study on 2 Timothy 3:1-2a?

2 Timothy 3:2b

Friday—Godly character is not attracted to self-love.

...covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy.

What did you learn from Friday's study on 2 Timothy 3:2b?

2 Timothy 3:3

Saturday—Godly character refuses to be hateful in any way.

without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good.

What did you learn from Saturday's study on 2 Timothy 3:3?

Living by the Gospel is being scorned—strong character is needed.
Proclaimers of the Gospel are being attacked—godly character is needed.

Proclaimers of the Gospel are being attacked—godly character is needed.

2 Timothy 3:4-5

Monday—Godly character loves God more than any pleasure.

Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

We are reminded to “turn away” from those who love self. Again, after each characteristic below, comment on how such tendencies could creep into our own lives and explain what we must do to avoid them.

traitors: Self-loving traitors turn against their own family and friends. Like chameleons, when they are with the good they are fine and when they get with the worldly they turn their backs on the godly. Traitors are unfaithful and untrustworthy. You would never want to marry one. Very few parents would name their child Judas Iscariot today. Judas walked with the Son of God! Judas saw miracles first hand. Judas saw Jesus love little children, heal cripples, calm the Sea of Galilee, and walk on water—and he still betrayed Him! Judas was a traitor, and once he saw himself for what he was, he committed suicide. Matthew 27:5 **And he (Judas) cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself.**

heady: The heady are careless, negligent, and rash. They are so preoccupied with their own interests that they do not notice the people around them. Selfishly self-absorbed, headstrong, and reckless, they rush into situations without thought of any consequences. The heady are often hot-headed and fall into impetuous, reckless behavior without taking time to count the cost. Proverbs 22:3 **A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself: but the simple pass on, and are punished.**

highminded: Conceited. Those in love with themselves have a much higher view of self than they should. The highminded think they are the greatest and expect everyone else to agree and live accordingly. Swollen with conceit, their haughtiness makes them look like spiritual pufferfish. They are so highminded, they look down on everyone, even God. 1 Timothy 3:6, 6:4 **Not**

a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings.

lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God: Self-love doesn't seem to quit. Lovers of self have no love for God. They don't love pleasure just “more” than they love God; they love pleasure “rather” than loving God. They are so focused on how they can please themselves today, they forget that they will kneel before God in the future. Luke 16:13 **No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.**

having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: These people lack spiritual dynamite! Powerless pretenders. Because they are proud they are resisted by God. Since they are resisted by God they do not receive His divine enablement (grace) and have to live in their own strength. Their outward piety is just a show to be liked, accepted, or to avoid embarrassment. Those who blindly accept what their religious leaders say without comparing it with Scripture are prime candidates for this club of powerless pretenders. Titus 1:16 **They profess that they know God; but in works they deny Him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.**

from such turn away: In times of peril and great difficulty, you had better be careful who you choose as friends. Shun those who shun God. Shun those who shun the clear teaching of God's Word. Shun those who lack the fearless, strong, godly character that God desires of us. Proverbs 4:14-15 **Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away.**

Godly character does not feel comfortable with heady, highminded traitors who are so in love with themselves, they cannot love anyone else...even God.

Proclaimers of the Gospel are being attacked—godly character is needed.

2 Timothy 3:6-9

Tuesday—Godly character refuses to give in to spiritual bullies.

For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith. But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs also was.

The verses we are studying today describe two different types of people: the corrupted creeps (the immoral bullies) and the **captive silly women** (the easily swayed bullied). Out of these circles of self-lovers, there are those people who creepily worm their ways into homes and capture vulnerable women already weighed down with sin and easily led away with all kinds of evil lusts, passions, impulses, and desires.

silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts: Immaturity is seen in those who are too weak to say no, too insecure to jeopardize their acceptance, and too silly to see that the consequences outweigh the thrills. Such immaturity is easily **led away** thinking that their beauty and physical appearance will give them all the acceptance, money, popularity, and love they can imagine. How does this mindset impact the purity of many of your friends or acquaintances?

ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth:

Immaturity sits in class with rapt attention on something a million miles away. Immaturity is never able to come to the knowledge of the truth—not even willing to learn enough to say “no” to its lusts. The “truth of the Gospel” will lead you away from fleshly lusts if you truly study it, learn it, and understand it. The truth truly will set your heart and mind free. You can live free from sinful addictions, free from selfish ambitions, and free from senseless attractions. In a way, we need to set our spiritual GPS on biblical truth and listen every time we hear “take the next exit” or rightly respond when we hear “recalculating.” Can you in any way compare yourself with a silly woman? Does sin easily win in your life? If you concentrated on one specific area of temptation that consistently leads you astray, what would it

be and what plan of attack should you follow? Who wants to be likened to an immature, silly woman?

Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood (took a stand against) **Moses, so do these also resist** (oppose) **the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate** (unapproved) **concerning the faith. But they shall proceed no further** (they won’t get very far): **for their folly** (senseless lack of understanding) **shall be manifest** (obviously clear to all) **unto all men, as theirs also was:**

Who are the “J” brothers? We know that God inspired Paul to use to very descriptive words—corrupt and reprobate. Exodus 7:11 begins the account of Pharaoh’s Egyptian magicians who withstood Moses and deceptively tried to one-up Moses on his miracles. If you remember, Moses’ staff became a serpent—so did Jannes and Jambres’ staffs—but Moses’ snake ate their snakes and the magicians lost their walking sticks. Moses used his snake-rod to turn the Nile River to blood—the magicians copied him once again with enchantments (since they didn’t have any staffs anymore). Moses brought stinky, slimy frogs—again, the magicians somehow copied him. Then God used Moses to bring irritating lice on the whole land. The magicians tried to copy him, but this time they couldn’t—but they did get lice which revealed that they were lousy magicians after all.

Don’t be overwhelmed with these self-loving creeps. Like Pharaoh’s magicians, these corrupt, truth-hating bullies will look foolish in the end.

1. God has set the limits—**they shall proceed no further**
2. Their foolishness will be seen by everyone—**folly manifest unto all**

What can we learn from potential bullies like Jannes and Jambres? Explain how giving in to the peer pressure of bullies and allowing them to influence us is both foolish and hurtful?

How are we encouraged to deal with spiritual bullies in the verses below?

Psalms 1:1

Proverbs 1:10

Proverbs 4:14-15

Proverbs 13:20

Godly character is not easily intimidated.

Proclaimers of the Gospel are being attacked—godly character is needed.

2 Timothy 3:10-11

Wednesday—Godly character lives for all to see.

But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience, persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord delivered me.

But thou hast fully known my...manner of life: Paul is reminding Timothy that men of character have nothing to hide. Such men are an open book freely available for all to read. Paul is also emphasizing the difference between those who live for the kingdom of self and those who live for the kingdom of God. Again, true servants are open books. Does your family or closest friends know the real you? How do you think others would describe your character?

my doctrine: Men of character know what they believe and are consumed with teaching those truths to all who are willing to hear. Paul did not swerve, sway, or stagger with every other “wind of doctrine” that came around. Paul taught the truth that Jesus Christ taught him. What do you do to stay committed to what you believe about the truth of the Gospel?

my manner of life: Timothy knew the way that Paul lived his life. No pretense. No drama. No two-facedness. The Gospel is subject to ridicule when a selfish and ungodly life contradicts its message. Can you think of anyone who has hurt the cause of the Gospel because what they do does not match up with what they say they believe? Explain.

my purpose: Paul was resolute. His purpose was supported by his resolve. A man’s purpose is driven by a passionate heart and demonstrated by a pure life. We should all desire to say, “God has a purpose for my life and I have purposed in my heart to fulfill His purpose.” How has God’s purpose become your purpose in life? What are you doing to prepare for or fulfill God’s purpose for you?

my faith: Faithfulness built on conviction. We must be fully persuaded that what God says in His Word is true and faithfully obey every command regardless of the opposition or persecution. What do you know about Paul that proved his faithfulness to the Gospel?

What do others know about you that proves your faithfulness to the Gospel?

my longsuffering: Long-forbearance with those who are a bear to bear. Self-restraint before saying or doing anything. Longsuffering is seen in a person who is able to avenge himself yet refrains from doing so. How do you show **longsuffering** with the prickly people in your life who are hard to love at times?

my charity (love): Men of character are not afraid to use the word love. Leaders, who care well, lead well. Since God is a God of love, none of His servants should be characterized by an unloving heart. Those who appear to be unloving, harsh, or uncaring do love and care deeply—but only themselves. How would others rate your ability to love?

my patience: Paul refused to allow creature comforts, self-love, self-fulfillment, or self-preservation to be of any importance to him. He persevered with patient endurance under horrendous circumstances. What difficult situation are you currently facing in life that would demand grace-empowered patience to accept?

my persecutions and afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra, but out of them all the Lord delivered me: Paul, the persecutor became the persecuted with persecution being his constant companion. In **Antioch** the Gospel message was blasphemed; in **Iconium** Paul had to flee for his life; and in **Lystra** Paul was stoned and left for dead. The Lord rescued Paul from all of this and took him to heaven. Amen. Whatever trial you face will be over someday—as you enter the New Jerusalem. How does that comfort your heart?

Godly character is hidden in the heart but easily seen in the life.

Proclaimers of the Gospel are being attacked—godly character is needed.

2 Timothy 3:12-13

Thursday—For godly character to become a reality it must start as a desire.

Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.

What do you think it means to **live godly in Christ Jesus**?

Yea, and all that will: This is my desire. This is my wish. This is what I want! Being driven by desire is not bad when your desire lines up with what God desires for you. Do you desire to live for your Lord no matter what kind of rejection or persecution comes your way? Why?

live godly: To live is to live, to spend your time, to pass your life away. You only get one chance to live your life. You can live for you and be totally disappointed at the end of your life or you can live for God and end your life with no regrets. To **live godly** is to be so devoted to Christ that you strive to know Him and to be like Him every day of your existence. In what ways do you attempt to **live godly** in your home every day?

In Christ Jesus: In means in. In the Greek language, in—(en) is not to be confused with (ek) out of, or, (eis) going into. You are not on your way in or on your way out. You are in! For those of you who know you are **in Christ**, love being **in Christ**, and are not ashamed for others to know that you are **in Christ**, your desire to live godly (not caring if you are rejected or ostracized) will result in a unique reward—persecution. What do the following verses teach about being **in Christ**?

2 Corinthians 5:17

2 Timothy 2:10

Romans 3:24

shall suffer persecution: What does **shall suffer persecution** really mean? The Greeks only used one word to explain these three words. The word *dioko* portrays the feeling of being chased by a police dog or hunted down by a pack of wild wolves. It means to follow, to press hard after, or to pursue with earnestness and diligence. Self-loving God-haters will pursue the godly for one reason—to torment, torture, and tyrannize them. Persecution is not only inhumane, it is insane and inexcusable. It will never make sense. Those who hate the **godly in Christ Jesus** appoint themselves as both the judge and the jury condemning the godly to the most severe sentences imaginable. Describe the latest example of worldwide Christian persecution you heard on the news recently.

Now describe the worst thing that ever happened to you because you took a stand for the truth of the Gospel and identified with Jesus Christ.

But evil men and seducers (imposters) shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived: The self-lovers of 2 Timothy 3:2-9 are described as **evil men** and **impostors**. These wicked phonies are on a downward spiral to inferiority—inferior in moral integrity; inferior in moral excellence; inferior in moral character. Their lives of deception will someday boomeranging back to deceive themselves. In what ways do you think self-love leads to self-deception?

The ultimate, eternal “deception” that such evil men insist on believing is that they are not accountable to God and will never have to kneel before the Lord Jesus Christ. They will have forever to regret such unbelief. Write out the simple but profound truth found in Romans 14:11-12.

In tomorrow’s study we will see that the **godly in Christ Jesus** will not be deceived as they read, learn, and trust in the holy Scriptures.

Godly character, saturated with the Word of God, is not easily deceived.

Proclaimers of the Gospel are being attacked—godly character is needed.

2 Timothy 3:14-15

Friday—Godly character is wise through faith in Christ Jesus.

But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; and that from a child (from infancy) thou hast known the holy Scriptures (the sacred writings), which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

But continue thou: You will never be deceived if you continue your course in the opposite direction of the self-lovers described in our study. The direction that Paul taught, Timothy's mom taught, and Timothy's grandmother taught is the path to godly living chosen by individuals who love God and others more than themselves. Let the Scriptures guide you. Be different! Instead of being a charter member of the "Selfish Club" described in 2 Timothy 3:2-9, be godly. Finish each phrase below and then from the list of verses add the reference that best addresses each issue.

Instead of being **covetous**, be

Instead of being a **proud boaster**, be

Instead of being **disobedient to parents**, be

Instead of being **unthankful**, be

Instead of being **traitors**, be

(Ephesians 6:1-2; 1 Peter 5:5-6; Hebrews 13:5; Matthew 6:24; Colossians 3:15)

continue in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them: The word **continue** means to remain, to abide, to dwell, or to settle down and live there. The phrase **assured of** means to be convinced, established, and left with no doubt. If you have made it this far in our study of 2 Timothy, I assume that you are confident in the Word of God and its truths have become a way of life for you. Don't quit! Continue. Don't get lazy. Continue. Don't be easily swayed by false application. Continue. Don't get distracted by any extremes. Continue. List the names of those who have impacted your life through their teaching

or preaching of God's Word (don't forget family devotions).

What is the best way to **continue** in what you have learned?

thou hast known the holy Scriptures: Notice the emphasis on the **holy Scriptures**. Preachers, parents, your friends, and even you must be careful not to teach personal opinions or hand-me-down truths from a "that's-just-the-way-we-do-it" mentality. Scripture is always the final authority. God's Word is the final word. I love the way David exalts God's Word in Psalm 19. Share your thoughts on each of David's comments below.

7a **The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul:**

7b **The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple:**

8a **The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart:**

8b **The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes:**

9a **The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever:**

9b **The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether:**

which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus: Scripture makes us wise unto salvation by clearly explaining the Gospel message of Christ's sacrificial death and glorious resurrection. We are all sinners in need of a Savior to rescue us from the penalty of our sin. Sin's penalty involves separation from God for eternity. Our part is to simply believe the Gospel is true through faith in Christ Jesus. Even though Timothy was raised in a Gospel-centered home, he still had to personally exercise faith in order to become a child of God and gain forgiveness and salvation from his sins. When did you trust Christ and Christ alone for your salvation?

Godly character is thankful for those who taught the Scriptures.

Proclaimers of the Gospel are being attacked—godly character is needed.

2 Timothy 3:16-17

Saturday—Godly character and spiritual maturity are best friends.

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

Men of character are men of the Word. The holy Scriptures, spoken through the breath of God, are God's way to instill strong, fearless, godly, and enduring character in those who are His. Strong character and spiritual maturity are best friends.

Read 2 Timothy 3:16-17 five times and then without looking, write it out.

All Scripture: The Bible is not a huge buffet line where we can choose the items we like and overlook the entrees we dislike. The entire Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, is given to us to read, to know, and to obey. Have you ever read the entire Bible through?

Purpose in your heart right now that next January you will either follow a one-year Bible reading plan or you will purchase the *One-Year Chronological Bible* by Tyndale Publishers to study **all Scripture**.

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God: You cannot speak without breathing. The God who created our universe, the God who walked on this earth, the God who promises to return and rule as the King of kings, had something He wanted us to know. So He spoke it to some of His friends like Moses, David, Luke, Paul, and John to write it down for us. What do the following verses teach about God's Word?

2 Peter 1:21

Acts 3:18

Hebrews 1:1

Note: If you are interested in studying a few more passages that refer to God's Holy Spirit inspiring men to write His Word down for us, here is a list of passages to study. (Exodus 20:1; 2 Samuel 23:2; Is. 8:20; Malachi 4:4; Matthew 1:22; Luke 24:44; John 1:23; 5:39; 10:34, 35; 14:26; 16:13; 19:36, 37; 20:9; Acts 1:16; 7:38; 13:34; Romans 1:2; 3:2; 4:23; 9:17; 15:4; 1 Corinthians 2:4-10; 6:16; 9:10; 14:37; Galatians 1:11, 12; 3:8, 16, 22; 4:30; 1 Thessalonians 1:5; 2:13; Hebrews 1:1, 2; 3:7; 9:8; 10:15; 2 Peter 1:21; 3:16; 1 John 4:6; and Revelation 22:19).

and is profitable: Although there are hundreds of self-help and do-it-yourself books on the market, there is not a more helpful, useful book than the Bible. It is **profitable**. It is beneficial and worthwhile to all who will read it and believe it. How has the Word of God "profited" you recently? How has it comforted you? How has it convicted you? How has it challenged you?

More specifically, in what ways has God's inspired Word fulfilled its promise to you? In what way has God recently taught you something about Himself that you should desire in your life (**profitable for doctrine**)?

Has God recently had to reprove you for some sin in your life (**profitable for reproof**)? How have you dealt with it?

Has God revealed His plan for change in this area? How has His inspired Word counseled you to make the wrong right (**profitable for correction**)?

What plan has God given, enabling you to keep right what was wrong and is now right with God (**profitable for instruction in righteousness**)?

that the man of God may be perfect (mature), **thoroughly furnished unto all good works:** The goal of the written Word is that we become just like the living Word—changed to Christlikeness. Spiritual maturity, godly character, and Christlikeness are synonymous. How are these all increasingly evident in your life today?

Godly character is Christlike living.

Sunday Review: 2 Timothy 3:4-17

2 Timothy 3:4-5

Monday—Godly character loves God more than any pleasure.

Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

What did you learn from Monday's study on 2 Timothy 3:4-5?

2 Timothy 3:6-9

Tuesday—Godly character refuses to give in to spiritual bullies.

For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith. But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs also was.

What did you learn from Tuesday's study on 2 Timothy 3:6-9?

2 Timothy 3:10-11

Wednesday—Godly character lives for all to see.

But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience, persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord delivered me.

What did you learn from Wednesday's study on 2 Timothy 3:10-11?

2 Timothy 3:12-13

Thursday—For godly character to become a reality it must start as a desire.

Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.

What did you learn from Thursday's study on 2 Timothy 3:12-13?

2 Timothy 3:14-15

Friday—Godly character is wise through faith in Christ Jesus.

But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; and that from a child (from infancy) thou hast known the holy Scriptures (the sacred writings), which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

What did you learn from Friday's study on 2 Timothy 3:14-15?

2 Timothy 3:16-17

Saturday—Godly character and spiritual maturity are best friends.

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

What did you learn from Saturday's study on 2 Timothy 3:16-17?

Proclaimers of the Gospel are being attacked—godly character is needed.

**The truth
of the
Gospel
is being
ignored—
enduring
character
is
needed!**

1-2 I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, Who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom; preach the Word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.

3-5 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.

6-8 For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing.

9-13 Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me: for Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia. Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry. And Tychicus have I sent to Ephesus. The cloke that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments.

14-18 Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works: of whom be thou ware also; for he hath greatly withstood our words. At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge. Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto His heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

19-22 Salute Prisca and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus. Erastus abode at Corinth: but Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick. Do thy diligence to come before winter. Eubulus greeteth thee, and Pudens, and Linus, and Claudia, and all the brethren. The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit. Grace be with you. Amen.

The truth of the Gospel is being ignored—enduring character is needed.

2 Timothy 4:1-2

Monday—Enduring character is a patient teacher.

I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, Who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom; preach the Word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.

I charge thee: These are Paul's last words. With great sobriety, he earnestly charges Timothy to preach the Word. Last words are important. If you knew you were going to die and you had the chance to share your heart with those closest to you, what would you want to say?

before God and the Lord Jesus Christ: God is our witness Who not only sees what we do, but knows why we do it. Jesus is the Judge of all judges. The Judge who will have all to kneel before Him. My work must not just be good enough to satisfy men, it must satisfy Jesus Christ. It is His “well done” I am striving to hear. Knowing that I am ultimately accountable to Jesus Christ and Him alone, how does this one simple truth impact my choices of what I do with my life?

Who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: The Lord is coming back and He will take charge—the King is coming! When ancient Emperors visited various towns in their kingdoms, the townspeople would make sure everything was in perfect order, clean, and presentable. We should live every day in “expectation” of the return of our Lord Jesus Christ. If you knew that the Lord was coming to visit you this week, what would you have to do to be ready to meet Him?

preach the Word: When? How? With what kind of spirit? To preach Christ means to announce Him as Messiah, the Son of God, and urge the reception of His Gospel. Guys, have you ever considered being a preacher? Guys and Girls, in what ways can you creatively proclaim the precious Word of God to others?

be instant in season, out of season: When should we preach? Whenever you get the chance—so be ready! Take or make every opportunity even though there will be opportunities in inopportune times. If you are a hunter, there are scheduled seasons for deer, for bear, and for orangutans. The **season** to share Christ with others is open all year long. Describe the last time you had the privilege to share the Gospel in depth with an interested party.

reprove, rebuke, exhort: Biblical preaching involves three very important ingredients. The absence of any of the three causes a bitter, repulsive taste in the mouth of the listeners. We can't always blame the congregation for being disinterested in our preaching if we refuse to follow God's recipe for preaching.

reprove: This word carries the idea of causing conviction by proving that someone is in the wrong, thus causing shame and hopefully repentance. Our sin should shame us. What does Jeremiah 6:15 say about sin and shame?

rebuke: Strongly admonish with urgency and authority. Lovingly confront for the good of the one being confronted. It takes a ton of love to rebuke. What does Revelation 3:19 say about the Lord and rebuking?

exhort: The key to exhortation is encouragement. Love them to the Lord and support them by being there (by their side) for them. In light of this, explain 1 Thessalonians 5:14.

with all longsuffering and doctrine: Preach? How? Two words. Patiently teach! Give those you are preaching to the same patience to change that God gives you! Be a teacher and not “just” a preacher. Don't just tell them what, tell them why and how! Who has been incredibly patient with you?

Whom can you show the same kind of patience towards?

Enduring character is ready to preach and quick to be patient.

The truth of the Gospel is being ignored—enduring character is needed.

2 Timothy 4:3-5

Tuesday—Enduring character pities those who will not endure sound doctrine and turn their ears away from Bible truth.

For the time will come (is coming or has already come) **when they will not endure** (tolerate) **sound doctrine** (wholesome teaching); **but after their own lusts shall they heap** (accumulate) **to themselves teachers, having itching ears** (they will look for teachers who will tell them whatever their itching ears want to hear—not enough to bring conviction and change, but enough to scratch the itch); **and they shall turn away their ears from** (listening to) **the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.**

they will not endure/they shall turn away: Who are the **they** mentioned twice in these three verses? Those whose hearts are rocky or thorny and in whom the Word of God did not take root or produce fruit. These are unbelievers who have become nominal believers, whose profession of faith is only superficial. What will **they** do? They will accumulate teachers who will scratch their itch and make them feel good about themselves. They will become intolerant with the absolute Word of God in a world that cries tolerance. They will only choose speakers that raise the comfort level of sin, justify sin, or simply overlook sin so as not to offend anyone. John MacArthur said, “They reject as unloving anyone who presumes to hold them accountable to doctrinal beliefs and moral standards they deem outmoded or irrelevant.” The **they** are all around us both in-life and on-line. What preachers, churches, or Christian ministries do you personally know who...

- Avoid mentioning sin so you can feel good about yourself?
- Are intolerant with Scripture that speaks against sinful lifestyles?
- Forbid their speakers to deal with sinful issues that are culturally accepted?
- Reject as unloving those who hold to biblical moral standards?

Why is it heartbreaking that so many in our world today reject biblical mandates and **turn their ears away from the truth**? With such an erroneous

world view, what are the potential consequences for their children and grandchildren?

and they shall turn away their ears from (listening to) **the truth, and shall be turned unto fables:** A deliberate rejection of God’s truth prepares the heart for a thoughtless reception of Satan’s lying myths. A fable is normally a fictional short story, typically with animals as characters, intended to teach a lesson or convey a moral. What did Paul warn Timothy about in his first letter (1 Timothy 4:7-8)?

When the truth of God is deemed offensive and replaced with cute stories with moral implications, a false hope, a false security, and a false assurance replaces the simplicity of the Gospel message. We are sinners in need of a Savior without which we will be separated from God for all eternity.

But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist: Timothy, get serious! Be sober-minded and watchful in all that you do. Be level-headed, stable, and unwavering. Sobriety exercises self-control in **all things**—specifically sober-minded endurance, sober-minded evangelizing, and sober-minded excellence.

What does sober-minded endurance look like to you?

What does level-headed evangelism look like to you?

make full proof of thy ministry: Just as a bullet-proof vest makes someone invulnerable to bullets, a fool-proof plan is designed to be invulnerable to fools. When we are fully convinced and persuaded that God’s Word is true, we can live with extreme confidence. How does Matthew 5:11-12 encourage your heart when you are misunderstood by others? **Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.**

Enduring character never fears rejection or misunderstanding.

The truth of the Gospel is being ignored—enduring character is needed.

2 Timothy 4:6-8

Wednesday—Enduring character gives to the very end.

For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing.

In these verses we are getting a glimpse of the very heart of Paul. He is telling Timothy “I am ready to die. It’s time for me to go. I have already been poured out as a drink offering and have nothing left to give. Timothy, serve God just like I taught you.” Paul was ready to die—are you? What do you fear most about death?

Commentator William Barclay gives a number of thoughts on the phrase **my departure is at hand**—all of which are a comfort in the face of death.

1. Unyoking an animal from a cart or a plow—Paul’s death was to be a rest from years of toil and weariness.
2. Loosening a prisoner’s bonds or fetters—Death for Paul was a release—exchanging the dark, Roman prison for the courts of heaven.
3. Loosening the ropes that anchored the tent to the ground—For Paul, it was time to strike camp and set out on a new journey that led to God’s presence.
4. Loosening the mooring-ropes of a ship—Paul had sailed the Mediterranean many times and had felt the ship leave the harbor for the deep waters. Now he is to launch out to cross the waters of death and to arrive in the calm haven of eternity.

So, we could say that death is laying down our burdens in order to rest; death is laying aside our shackles in order to be free; death is striking camp to take up residence in our heavenly home; death is casting off the ropes which bind us to this world to set sail on the voyage which ends in the presence of God. How would you use these thoughts to comfort someone you love who is close to death?

I have fought a good fight (I am ready to die): Paul could have said, “I wrestled through this good fight without complaining, cheating, or giving up. I got knocked down and beat up but I kept fighting.” Staying close to God often involves fighting—fighting our flesh, fighting our selfishness, and

fighting our laziness. In your endeavor to walk closely with God, what two things do you have to “fight” and how does Ephesians 6:10-12 help you in your fight?

I have finished my course (I am ready to die): Paul suffered greatly, but kept going. He often ran alone, but kept going. Paul finished strong. It is much easier to start something than to finish it. It only takes a few driven visionaries to start a ministry; it takes an army of solid servants to keep the ministry going. How do the following verses encourage you in the “race” that God has called you to run?

Philippians 3:13-14

Hebrews 12:1-2

I have kept the faith (I am ready to die): The truth will be attacked, twisted, distorted, and compromised. Paul kept his eye on the simple Gospel message and did all he could to protect its purity. Paul’s faith never flickered but burned bright right to the end. Many times it is not that the truth has been changed, just that the follow spot has switched positions. Beware of distractions that pull your focus away from the simple Gospel. Comment on the simplicity of Luke 11:28...**blesed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.**

Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing: Paul could have written, “Nobody noticed my race on earth. In fact, the stands were empty when I finally crossed the finish line. No applause, no citations at the denominational conference, no news interviews, just me stumbling across the finish line. But that’s ok. God had a victor’s wreath, kind of like an Olympic medal, waiting for me. Once the Lord gave the crown to me, I realized that it was really His enabling grace that got me through the race anyway—so I gave it back to Him. Don’t think that makes me great. I promise. When you see the Lord, you will do the same.” What do you have **laid up** for you in heaven?

Enduring character finishes strong.

The truth of the Gospel is being ignored—enduring character is needed.

2 Timothy 4:9-13

Thursday—Enduring character spends time with God and loves others.

Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me: for Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia. Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry. And Tychicus have I sent to Ephesus. The cloke that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments.

Paul's last days on earth were spent in a dingy, dark, dank prison. But instead of focusing on his problems or his own discomfort, his mind went to two things—the people God had called him to serve and the time he could spend with his Lord in the Scriptures (he did mention his woolen blanket-like cloak to keep him warm while he was studying). Wow—time with God and people to love—kind of sums up his life. How much of your life is spent in knowing God and serving others? How does that look on a daily schedule?

Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me—Demas, Crescens, Titus, Luke, Mark, Tychicus, and Carpus: Paul was about to see his Lord and righteous Judge, but until then what did he focus on? Paul loved mentoring and discipling young believers who had a heart for God. “Timothy, I am lonely. So hurry up and get here.” Paul knew a number of young guys not only by name, but by heart. Paul was broken over those who turned on him and on God—like Demas. Paul prayed for guys like Titus, Crescens, and Tychicus who had their own responsibilities in ministry. Paul encouraged Dr. Luke who was near, but busy writing his history book about the miraculous actions of the Apostles. Paul loved people. List the names of five individuals that either God is already using you to impact their lives or you would love to reach out to and encourage to grow in the Lord.

Passionate, unselfish, Scripture-saturated Paul did not list the number of churches he started, just the friends he impacted. Let's get a quick glimpse of two of his friends—Demas and Titus.

for Demas hath forsaken me: Forsaking godly friends is a direct result of loving the present world. Ask Demas. I doubt he found a friend like Paul in Thessalonica. In Philemon 24 **Demas** is listed as Paul's **fellow-laborer**. In Colossians 4:14 Demas is mentioned without any comment at all. Then in 2 Timothy 4:9 Demas has forsaken Paul because of his love for the present world. Devoted Demas became indifferent and ended up a deserter. Who do you know that once loved the Lord, became apathetic, and then completely quit on God?

Did their choices make them happier, more fulfilled, or satisfied?

What do you think motivates a person to turn against the Lord?

having loved this present world: Maybe Demas loved comfort more than Christ. Maybe Demas loved the easy way of conformity and acceptance rather than the tension caused by godly living. Maybe Demas loved the prosperous way rather than a life of mediocrity or even poverty. Maybe Demas loved his sin more than his Savior and the simple yet unrelenting lusts of the flesh caught him, controlled him, and consumed him. Maybe Demas once loved God as much as you do now! Which one of the “loves” just mentioned would most tempt you?

The cloke that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments: Bring my cloke. I am not sure of the significance of Paul's cloak (woolen garment), but if he was like me, I often carry a blanket with me while I travel. On those cold nights when I sleep and during those chilly mornings when I study, it is such a comfort to have “my” blanket. Bring my tablet—the one with my favorite Bible study software on it. The **books** were probably papyrus scrolls of the Old Testament and the **parchments** were usually expensive, long-lasting vellum sheets made from animal hides. Either they had some of Paul's inspired letters on them or he needed them to write more. Paul, facing death with his **time of departure at hand**, never wanted to quit studying and writing. Time with God and people to serve—that was Paul. If you knew you had only a few days to live, what would you ask your family to bring to you?

Enduring character loves to serve others and spend time with God.

The truth of the Gospel is being ignored—enduring character is needed.

2 Timothy 4:14-16

Friday—Enduring character is no stranger to loneliness.

Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works: of whom be thou ware also; for he hath greatly withstood our words. At my first answer (before a judge in court) **no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge.**

Alexander may have thought that he was just an enemy of Paul—he now knows that he was also an enemy of God. He may have put a lot of pressure on Paul, but now in hell, he is in no place to pressure anyone. We can only speculate on what he did to “withstand” the truth. Like Demetrius the silversmith (Acts 19:24), Alexander may have crafted copper idols and Paul’s encouragement to turn from idols hurt his business. Paul did not take revenge in his own hands, but released Alexander to God for God to take vengeance. What do you think Paul meant as he prayed for the **Lord** to reward Alexander **according to his works**?

At my first answer (defense before a judge), **no man stood with me, but all men forsook me:** Paul was simply saying, “I was all alone. Everyone deserted me.” Have you ever experienced such loneliness that you felt like no one supported you and everybody abandoned you? Loneliness is a terrible feeling. Our Lord warned His disciples of loneliness when He said, **Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man’s sake.** (Luke 6:22) Describe a time that you were ignored or even rejected because of your love for the Lord and your hatred of sin.

Cheer up! You are not alone. Paul understood loneliness as did Moses, Daniel, David, Jeremiah, Isaiah, John the Baptist, John the Beloved, and of course, our Lord Jesus Christ Himself. **He (Jesus) came unto His own, and His own received Him not.** (John 1:11) Jesus was no stranger to loneliness. **He (Jesus) is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from Him; He was despised, and**

we esteemed Him not. (Isaiah 53:3) From what you can remember from Scripture, describe some of the times of hatred, rejection, sorrow, or grief that our Lord Jesus experienced during His days on earth.

David wrote, **I am become a stranger unto my brethren, and an alien unto my mother’s children.** (Psalm 69:8) If compromising God’s Word is the only way to keep a co-pilot, we must be willing to fly solo. Those who closely follow Christ know that rejection, ridicule, backstabbing, gossip, scorn, and derision are just part of their daily schedules. There are two ways to cope with loneliness.

**Be aware of God’s presence.
Be alert to other’s needs.**

We may have our lonely moments, but such loneliness can be overshadowed by a focus on God and others. Just as an ingrown toenail can cause pain and discomfort to your toe, an ingrown eyeball can cause pain and discomfort to your soul. Paul could have said, “All abandoned me—well, not all—the Lord stood with me and gave me strength.” As a child of God you are never truly alone. Which of the following passages comfort your heart the most? Briefly explain why it is such a comfort.

Hebrews 13:5-6; Deuteronomy 31:6; 1 Samuel 12:22; Isaiah 41:10

As a servant of God you can always find someone to serve. As we serve others, not only does our circle of influence increase, so does our circle of friends. Remember, our Lord Himself came not to be served, but to serve (Mark 10:45; Philippians 2:7). We are never more Christlike than when we serve. List five individuals that you are presently serving.

**Enduring character is aware of God’s presence
and alert to other’s needs.**

The truth of the Gospel is being ignored—enduring character is needed.

2 Timothy 4:17-22

Saturday—Enduring character endures because of the comforting presence and the extraordinary power of our wonderful God.

Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto His heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. Salute Prisca and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus. Erastus abode at Corinth: but Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick. Do thy diligence to come before winter. Eubulus greeteth thee, and Pudens, and Linus, and Claudia, and all the brethren. The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit. Grace be with you. Amen.

Paul's final farewell centers on the Lord's presence—in the past, in the present, and in the future. God meant it when He promised, "I am with you always."

Past: **The Lord stood with me and strengthened me—**

Present: **The Lord shall deliver me from every evil work—**

Future: **The Lord will preserve me unto His heavenly kingdom—**

The Lord stood with me and strengthened me: Paul lived an extraordinary life through extraordinary strength from an extraordinary God. Write out the one phrase from each verse below that reminds us of God's offer of His strength and His presence.

Ephesians 6:10

2 Timothy 2:1

Isaiah 40:31

that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: Paul reminded Timothy that he never lacked the strength or the courage to do what God had called him to do. With God standing by your side you are a majority in every situation. Paul, like Timothy, was called by God to be a preacher. Paul, looking back, had no regrets in doing what God called him to do with the enabling power of God. Will you be able to do the same? What is God empowering you to do with your life?

and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion: Although **the mouth of the lion** is used to picture inevitable death (which the prophet Daniel experienced in reality), we all are faced with a similar danger as Satan (likened to a roaring lion) seeks to destroy and devour us but has absolutely no ultimate power over those of us who belong to Christ. Compared to God, Satan is anemic. Death is simply a doorway to the very presence of God. Believers don't need to fear death, but unbelievers should. Why do you think those who reject God should fear death?

Salute Prisca and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus. Erastus abode at Corinth: but Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick. Do thy diligence to come before winter. Eubulus greeteth thee, and Pudens, and Linus, and Claudia, and all the brethren: Paul had friends all over the Middle East—they just could not be in Rome when he needed a friend by his side. Paul, in the midst of loneliness and abandonment, remembered who his real friends were and focused on them. Paul was definitely a people person—here he is, ending his last letter before he dies, listing names of those he has lovingly served with. This should be a clue to us as to what is really important in life. If you have time, read about each one of Paul's friends and share one or two characteristics from each of their lives.

Aquila and Prisca (Acts 18:18-28):

Onesiphorus (2 Timothy 1:16):

Erastus (Romans 16:23; Acts 19:22):

Trophimus (Acts 20:1-12):

Eubulus, Pudens, Linus, Claudia (Faithful unknowns):

Paul ends his book (and his life) with a focus on God and others! Amazing! Paul is a true example of strong, fearless, godly, enduring character. Paul prayed for Timothy (and all who read 2 Timothy which includes you!) that the presence of God would be evident in his life. I pray the same for you.

The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit. Grace be with you. Amen.

Sunday Review: 2 Timothy 4:1-22

Monday—2 Timothy 4:1-2

Enduring character is a patient teacher.

I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, Who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom; preach the Word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.

What did you learn from Monday's study on 2 Timothy 4:1-2?

Tuesday—2 Timothy 4:3-5

Enduring character pities those who will not endure sound doctrine and turn their ears away from Bible truth.

For the time will come (is coming or has already come) when they will not endure (tolerate) sound doctrine (wholesome teaching); but after their own lusts shall they heap (accumulate) to themselves teachers, having itching ears (they will look for teachers who will tell them whatever their itching ears want to hear—not enough to bring conviction and change, but enough to scratch the itch); and they shall turn away their ears from (listening to) the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.

What did you learn from Tuesday's study on 2 Timothy 4:3-5?

Wednesday—2 Timothy 4:6-8

Enduring character gives to the very end.

For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing.

What did you learn from Wednesday's study on 2 Timothy 4:6-8?

Thursday—2 Timothy 4:9-13

Enduring character spends time with God and loves others.

Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me: for Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia. Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry. And Tychicus have I sent to Ephesus. The cloke that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments.

What did you learn from Thursday's study on 2 Timothy 4:9-13?

Friday—2 Timothy 4:14-16

Enduring character is no stranger to loneliness.

Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works: of whom be thou ware also; for he hath greatly withstood our words. At my first answer (before a judge in court) no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge.

What did you learn from Friday's study on 2 Timothy 4:14-16?

Saturday—2 Timothy 4:17-22

Enduring character endures because of the comforting presence and the extraordinary power of our wonderful God.

Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto His heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. Salute Prisca and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus. Erastus abode at Corinth: but Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick. Do thy diligence to come before winter. Eubulus greeteth thee, and Pudens, and Linus, and Claudia, and all the brethren. The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit. Grace be with you. Amen.

What did you learn from Saturday's study on 2 Timothy 4:17-22?

2 TIMOTHY

CHARACTER IN CRISIS

Dear Study Partner,

I hope you enjoyed our study together for these past 6 weeks and were challenged by God to be ready, available, and eager to face the crisis that we face today.

Remember, in this last letter from Paul before he was beheaded and freed from his earthly prison to his eternal home, he pled with young Timothy to continue running the very difficult spiritual marathon that he had started. Timothy did continue and so have many others since him. Now it is our turn.

Also remember that the real crisis is not the four-fold attack on the Gospel message...

1. Animosity against the Gospel is increasing daily. (2 Timothy 1:1-18)
2. Living by the Gospel is being scorned. (2 Timothy 2:1-26)
3. Proclaimers of the Gospel are being attacked. (2 Timothy 3:1-17)
4. The truth of the Gospel is being ignored. (2 Timothy 4:1-22)

The real crisis is a lack of character in the face of the Gospel attacks. I am sure that your prayer is that we will live with the fearless, strong, godly, and enduring character that God inspired and Paul wrote about.

1. Fearless character that is never ashamed. (2 Timothy 1:1-18)
2. Strong character that is grace dependent. (2 Timothy 2:1-26)
3. Godly character that is Bible centered. (2 Timothy 3:1-17)
4. Enduring character that does not quit. (2 Timothy 4:1-22)

Pray that God will continue to instill such character in each of our lives.

Desiring character that pleases God,



Rand Hummel

**Animosity against the Gospel
is increasing daily—
fearless character is needed!
2 Timothy 1**

**Living by the Gospel
is being scorned—
strong character is needed!
2 Timothy 2**

**Proclaimers of the Gospel
are being attacked—
godly character is needed!
2 Timothy 3**

**The truth of the Gospel
is being ignored—
enduring character is needed!
2 Timothy 4**



Since 1969, The Wilds Christian Camp and Conference Center has been serving the local church with a wide variety of camping programs. Our summer season, with over 11,000 campers, focuses on juniors with our Junior Boot Camp, teens with our junior high/senior high camps, and families with our week-long Family Camps. Fall and spring bring an entirely different look to the mountains and a different array of camps including Couples' Retreats, school and church retreats, high school Senior Trips, Senior High Leadership Camps, Ladies' Retreats, Father/Son Campouts, Senior Adult Retreats, College and Career Retreats, and specialized conferences including a Music Conference, a Youth Workers' Conference, Deacons' Conferences, and a Pastors' Conference. During this non-summer season we annually serve more than 10,000 campers of all ages.

The Wilds is located in the beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains of western North Carolina and is a stunning piece of God's handiwork. Blessed with four spectacular waterfalls, meandering streams, and miles of hiking trails on the property, the campsite shows forth the handiwork of God. In this beautiful setting, thousands of campers of every age have accepted Christ as Savior and Lord and have surrendered to His will and to His service.

Natural outgrowths of this active camp ministry are a music publication ministry, offering the most refreshing of conservative Christian music, cantatas, CDs, a song and chorus book, piano books, and choral books for men, ladies, and mixed groups. As an outgrowth of the strong preaching and teaching ministries of the camp, The Wilds has produced a great variety of Bible study helps, scripture memory programs, personal devotional helps, and books for individuals and group studies. In addition, CampsAbroad, the missions arm of The Wilds, assists missionaries and nationals all over the world in the development and operation of Christian camp ministries. In 2009 The Wilds of New England began ministry at our campsite in Deering, New Hampshire. In this peaceful, rural setting we experienced good growth in attendance at our summer camps as well as in our limited fall schedule programs. We anticipate a continuing steady growth and expansion of the ministry at this New England location.

For more information about any of our camping programs, music publications, or other products from The Wilds, please visit our website at www.wilds.org, or contact the administrative office:

The Wilds Christian Association, Inc.

PO Box 509 • Taylors, SC 29687-0009

Phone: (864) 268-4760 • Fax: (864) 292-0743

E-mail: info@wilds.org • Website: www.wilds.org

For more information about The Wilds of New England camping programs contact:
The Wilds of New England

1181 Deering Center Rd • Deering, NH 03244

Phone: (603) 529-0001 • Fax: (864) 292-0743

E-mail: info@wilds.org • Website: www.thewildsofnewengland.org