

*2 Timothy: The Good Fight  
Finishing Well in Christ*

**Lesson 40—2 Timothy 2:1-13**

**Basic Math**

I received my teaching credential after the fall semester and desperately needed to find employment but unfortunately, mid-year teaching jobs are few and far between. Usually the only vacancies in January are the result of a death, a birth with maternity leave, or a disaster. That year in all of Southern California, there were only two openings in my teaching specialty. Job #1 was a birth; a science teacher had a baby girl, at a high school in Palos Verdes Peninsula. For my job interview, I parked in the student parking lot and realized my 1970 Plymouth didn't quite fit in with the Mercedes and BMWs the students drove. It was a bad fit and I didn't get the job. Job #2 was a disaster. The job was teaching middle school science and one math class at a junior high in the Inland Empire. The students had managed to chase off seven different teachers in the first semester. You couldn't read the clock on the wall because it was completely covered with spit wads. It looked like a perfect match for me.

The principal told me if I took the job the science courses would be a breeze, the sticking point would be the one math class. The class consisted of all ninth graders, mostly boys, that assessments had shown mastery of only addition and subtraction. Before you can move onto more advanced concepts you must master the basic operations of multiplication and division normally taught in grade three. I believed that motivation, not ability, was limiting the students' success. On day one after introducing myself, I gave them their first problem. I showed them a large bag of wrapped candy and told the students it contained exactly 287 pieces of candy, which I would allow them to eat in class if they could solve the problem before them. The class had six rows of seats with each row containing six student desks. Every desk was filled with a student. Without counting, they needed to figure out

how many students were in the room, how many pieces of candy each would receive and how many pieces would be left over for the teacher. After they showed me on paper how they solved the problem they got their candy. All 36 of my charges quickly solved the problem and enjoyed their reward, thus proving my point.

Paul writes to Timothy explaining the same basic mathematic operations are necessary for a healthy church body. In 2 Timothy 2 we will see that multiplication is essential while division must be avoided at all costs. Tucked away in verse 2, “that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also” (NKJV), is the process of Christian multiplication which we call discipleship. While Jesus taught multitudes, He invested Himself most heavily in the lives of an inner circle of followers. In turn, these first disciples shared the gospel, teaching and mentoring others who in turn repeated this essential process. On the Day of Pentecost, most commentators feel there were no more than 120 followers in the upper room when the Holy Spirit came upon them. By the time Paul wrote this letter to Timothy there were over one million Christians in the Roman Empire. Today 2.07 billion people profess Jesus as their Savior, almost all as a result of the process of making disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:19–20).

On this concept William Barclay writes, “But it is not only a privilege to receive the Christian faith; it is a duty to transmit it. Every Christian must look on himself as a link between two generations.”<sup>1</sup> Each of us is involved in this process as we first grow under the mentoring of a disciple maker and then in turn make disciples of others. John MacArthur points out that on a large scale those mentoring maturing believers are pastors, but on a smaller scale it must include discipleship of friends and family members. How are we equipped to be a disciple maker? Paul gives us the answer in verse 15: “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” A Barna survey in 2014 showed that only 15% of Christians claimed to read the Bible daily while another 13% read it several times a week.<sup>2</sup> By way of comparison, a recent survey in Britain showed people spend more time on their electronic devices than they do sleeping.<sup>3</sup> We all need to do the math. By subtracting the extraneous from our schedules and adding more of God’s Word into our hearts, the Holy Spirit promises to empower us, and we can be a part of the multiplication of those who put their faith in Christ.

---

<sup>1</sup> Barclay, William. *The Letters to Timothy, Titus and Philemon*. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1960 181. Print. Bible Study.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.americanbible.org/uploads/content/state-of-the-bible-data-analysis-american-bible-society-2014.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-2989952/How-technology-taking-lives-spend-time-phones-laptops-SLEEPING.html>

## **Prayer**

Start by praying over the passage and asking the Holy Spirit to give you fresh insights and wisdom in understanding it. Then read through the entire passage two or three times. The depth of theology is so great that I would strongly advise using the New Living Translation for one of your Scripture readings.

## **Scripture Meditation/Memorization**

One of the most fundamental and rewarding Christian disciplines that pays back in full spiritual dividends is Bible meditation/memorization. It is an absolutely fundamental in the formation of your spiritual development, spiritual walk and faith growth. In Psalm 1:1-2 (NLT), the Psalmist warrior, King David said,

*“Oh, the joys of those who do not follow the advice of the wicked,  
or stand around with sinners, or join in with mockers.  
But they delight in the law of the Lord,  
meditating on it day and night.”*

### ***Memory Verse***

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

## **Study Format**

We have all had weeks in which the time available for preparation of our Bible study evaporates under an unexpected event or a pressing project at work. To enable everyone to complete the study, even when time is at a premium, questions are being divided into two categories: essential and expanded. The Essential Questions are those necessary to understand key points of the passage. The Expanded Questions or growth questions help expand knowledge and gain deeper insight into the Scripture.

If you are concerned about having enough time to complete the whole study, it is suggested that you start by first answering the Essential Questions for each day and answer the Expanded Questions as time permits.

---

## 2 Timothy 2:1-6—*Elements of A Strong Spiritual Life*

In this section, Paul gives three examples for Timothy and us to follow in Christian service but starts this passage with a fundamental mathematical operation. Multiplication is essential for the survival and spread of our Christian faith. Timothy was ordered to follow the same protocol and entrust the facts of our faith with a few good men.

### Essential Questions:

1. Being a disciple and making disciples of others is not for the fainthearted; as the bumper sticker says, “Real Men Love Jesus.”

a. What advice does Paul give in verse 1? (Note: this is an imperative/command given in the passive voice meaning it has to be done but the source of the strength is given unto Timothy.)

---

---

---

---

b. How is this similar to the command given by Moses (Deuteronomy 31:6) and the Lord to Joshua (Joshua 1:5–8) as he assumed the mantle of leadership from Moses?

---

---

---

---

2. It has been said that Christianity is only one generation away from extinction, meaning if our generation fails to fulfill the Great Commission, Christianity will fade into oblivion. Indeed each generation is a link in a chain that stretches back to Paul and the first-century apostolic church. Evangelism must be coupled with discipleship for effective growth. What do you learn from?

a. 2 Timothy 2:2

---

---

---

---

b. Matthew 28:19-20

---

---

---

---

3. Paul then uses three examples for Timothy to follow in verses 3–6. What character traits or behaviors can you glean from each of them?

a. Soldier

---

---

---

---

b. Athlete

---

---

---

---

c. Farmer

---

---

---

---

**Expanded Question:**

4. Most commentators feel the call to disciple others occurs not only to lift up new leaders in the church but also to help friends and family to attain spiritual maturity. What does discipleship mean to you? (Hint: 1 Corinthians 11:1 should help.)

---

---

---

---

5. Paul loved to use examples very familiar to those receiving his letters to illustrate spiritual truths:

a. The soldier is told not to entangle himself in civilian affairs. The Greek for entangle is *pramateia* from which we get our word *pragmatic*. The same word appears in Hebrews 12:1–2 and 2 Peter 2:20. What do you learn from these passages about avoiding entanglement?

---

---

---

---

b. Paul loved athletic metaphors as seen in 1 Corinthians 9:24–27. What do you learn from this passage?

---

---

---

---

c. One aspect of farming is the long waiting period between sowing and reaping. How does Paul address this in Galatians 6:9–10?

---

---

---

---

---

## **2 Timothy 2:7-13—Faith and Heritage**

John Bunyan, the author of *Pilgrim's Progress*, which is the second most read book in the English language behind the Bible, was incarcerated for preaching the gospel. It was said that from the window in his prison cell all he could see was the outer wall of the prison. Bunyan, the ever-faithful evangelist, preached daily through the open window while hundreds gathered outside the prison walls to hear him proclaim the gospel. The prison walls could not restrain God's Word from being proclaimed and many came to faith while Bunyan was imprisoned.

### **Essential Questions:**

1. In verses 7 and 8 Paul prescribes a little R & R for Timothy.

- a. What are these two Rs and how is this admonition also important to us? (Both are imperatives/commands and in the present tense, meaning they should be continuously ongoing.)

---

---

---

---

- b. Timothy was the Bishop of the church in Ephesus and what similar advice did Jesus give to this church in Revelation 2:4–5?

---

---

---

---

- c. What is the essence of Paul’s gospel (verse 8)? (1 Corinthians 15:1–5 may help.)

---

---

---

---

2. Paul makes the powerful statement, “but the Word of God is not chained.” What do you learn about the power of God’s Word from the following verses?

- a. Isaiah 55:11

---

---

---

---

- b. 2 Timothy 3:15-16

---

---

---

---

c. Matthew 24:35

---

---

---

---

d. Hebrews 4:12

---

---

---

---

3. Paul makes five trustworthy statements in his Pastoral Epistles, his letters to Timothy and Titus, and one occurs here in verses 11–13, which are actually one long sentence in the Greek. In your own words, what does this statement mean?

---

---

---

---

**Expanded Question:**

4. C.S. Lewis once wrote that God never wastes pain. Knowing that suffering and trials are filtered through God’s will and always have a purpose in the life of a believer is a huge source of comfort. What was Paul’s perspective on his plight in verses 9–10?

---

---

---

---

---

***Lesson 40 Summary/Take Away***

If one of your friends at work or a neighbor were to ask you what you did on Tuesday, you would tell them you went to a Bible study. The next question would likely be, “What did you learn?” We often summarize an entire athletic contest or a movie in a few brief sentences and easily convey the essence of the event. Now apply these same skills to give a summary of the passage in a sentence or two. Then, in an additional sentence or two, describe what impact this passage will have on how you live.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Memory Verse**

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

**Key Words/Phrases**

Write out the definition of these key words. You can use a regular dictionary or go to one of the Greek sources listed in the Tool Box at the end of the study. You may also use a concordance to see where else and how the word is used in the Bible.

The Word of God Is Not Chained (2 Timothy 2:9)

---

---

---

---

## **Tool Box**

**Step 1: The Bible.** Read the passage in a couple of different versions. If you are having trouble understanding a passage, choose a more dynamic version such as *New Living Translation*. To focus in on the exact meaning of a verse, choose a more literal translation such as *New King James Version*, *New American Standard Bible* or *English Standard Version*. *The Amplified Bible* is another excellent version.

**Step 2: Study Tools.** Use these to help you dig deeper. Background Information: 1) Unger's Bible Dictionary, 2) Bible Dictionaries online at biblestudytools.com and blueletterbible.com. (recommend both David Guzik and Chuck Smith's commentaries/study notes); Word Studies: 1) Zodhiates' *The Complete Word Study New Testament*, 2) Vine's *Complete Expository Dictionary*, and 3) Strong's *Dictionary of Bible Words*.

**Step 3: Commentaries.** Commentaries should not be used in place of studying God's Word directly, but they can give you additional insights. Some good commentaries include: Warren Wiersbe, J. Vernon McGee, F.F. Bruce, *the Expositors Bible Commentary*, *NIV Application Commentary*, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary* (edited by Walvoord & Zuck), *the Tyndale New Testament Commentaries*, and William Barclay (\*great for background and culture, but be careful of his spiritual applications).

**Step 4: Online Assistance.** Should you have a specific question about the study please e-mail your inquiry to: [mannyqwcm@gmail.com](mailto:mannyqwcm@gmail.com)

