

| **Series Title:** Resilient Faith – Lessons from 2 Timothy |
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| **Weekly Title:** Resilient in Grace |
| **Date:** Sunday November 3 2024 |
| **Bible Passage:** 2 Timothy 2:1-13 |
| **Purpose of Preach:** To challenge people to become strong in Grace by doing the four things Paul commands us to do. |
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| **Introduction:**  We are continuing our series “Resilient Faith”, and are moving into chapter 2 and how Paul now champions Timothy into “Resilient Grace”. As we saw last week it felt to Paul that “all of Asia” had given up on him when he was rearrested. The church in Ephesus must have been rocking and feeling very unstable and vulnerable as many it seemed had given up and Paul was locked in prison awaiting his death. In the midst of the brokenness and seeming hopelessness Paul reminds Timothy in v.2 of the need to rebuild a healthy vibrant community of Jesus followers – Jesus entrusted the gospel to Paul (cf. Galatians 1:11-12), Paul taught and entrusted the gospel to Timothy (cf.1:14), Timothy is now to guard the truth of the gospel and pass it onto the remaining faithful followers of Jesus and they are to teach it to others too. It is about teaching and guarding the truth of God’s word. This verse is primarily about how Timothy should build the leadership team and build the local church. But there are principles here for all of us regardless of whether we are in a position of church leadership. In v.1 Paul reminds us that we are all to become stronger and stronger in Grace. |
| **#1: v.3-4 Be ALERT**  Being a Christian means being like a soldier and expect that there will be hardship and battles as we step out and into this mission. Paul says “share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.” Soldiers on active duty do not expect a safe or easy time. A soldier takes suffering, sacrifice and risk as simply a part of the course. On this mission we will be ridiculed and at times marginalised as we share the gospel. Christians are suffering far worse than this around the world. We need to be alert that we are in the midst of a huge spiritual war that is raging and not be surprised when the enemy attacks. We need to be like a soldier and not allow any distractions but simply focus on doing what Jesus. Paul says “no soldier gets entangled in civilian pursuits, since his aim is to please the one who enlisted him”. We must keep our focus on God’s heart and call over our lives. We need to make sure that the pressures and battles don’t take us away from God’s heart for our lives. We need to wholeheartedly surrender ourselves to Jesus and obey His commands and heart for our life.  When you’re a teenager and still at school, sometimes it might feel like God hasn’t given you a something specific to do to get distracted from but he has. All the disciples were your age and were called to know Jesus deeply and tell everyone else about him. That’s exactly what you’ve been asked to do - get to know Him deeply and go and tell everyone about Him!  **Questions;**  Do you need to see afresh that following Jesus is costly and painful at times?  What things make us distracted from our job as Chrsitians?  How can we be alert to the things happening around us? |
| **#2: v.5. Be DISCIPLINED**  Paul now turns from the image of the Roman soldier to that of an athlete competing in the Greek games. No athlete, however gifted or strong or amazing, were “crowned” unless they had competed according to the rules. In this mission we need to be disciplined in how we “compete” and obey the rules set out for us in God’s word. This is not just about how we live but also about keeping it all about Jesus, sharing the gospel from a place of being personally secure and strong in His love etc.  **Questions;**  How intentional and disciplined are we in our walk with Jesus?  How are we training ourselves mentally, physically and spiritually?  Do we know what things trip us up in our walk with Jesus?  What could we start doing this week that would help us stay on track?  \*A lot of your non-Christian friends will be involved with things that aren’t healthy for us and it can be hard to be friends with them without falling into the trap of getting involved in what they are involved with (like Halloween, drinking, sexting etc) |
| **#3: v.6. Be HARD WORKING**  Paul is says being strong in grace will at times require hard work and just like a farmer require patience, sacrificial commitment and perseverance. Hard work is indispensable to good farming – if you are half hearted or lazy then you will never receive the harvest. However, poor the soil, harsh the weather, or unwilling they feel, a farmer must keep at their work. Also, the work of a farmer is hard because it can be lonely, mundane, boring and without immediate fruit. The key to being a farmer is hard work and a rhythm of keeping on keeping on sowing the seed and doing all the right stuff – this is the only way the harvest will come in.  **Application**  If we are going to run into all that Jesus has for us it will need us intentionally stepping into it, being sacrificial and at times going the extra mile.  What are our reactions when things feel boring or pointless?  How an we keep pushing through and support ourselves and others through this? |
| **#4: v.7-13. Be AUTHENTIC**  We can only be strong in the faith when we are personally real and genuine with God and other people.  a) Paul tells Timothy “think over what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything.” As we step into this enduring mission we need to be personally persuaded and authentic in our faith. This does not mean we don’t have questions or doubts but it does mean we have grappled with stuff and have a thought through and personal faith.  b) So often there are two sides to the coin of revelation; God does it and gives us understanding, but it involves our personal study and engagement with His word. We need to have authentic and personal faith that is the result of the Holy Spirit speaking to us through the Bible.  **Application**  Could it be that you need to come back to God today, to personally respond to Him. |
| **Application**  ***Here are some examples of ways you might want to conclude the message. You could use some or all of them; develop them into different ideas or to fit with the Location***  Surrender afresh to Jesus.  Use one of all of the images that Paul gives us in the passage.  Soldier:  Reflect on areas of your life where you may have allowed distractions or other pursuits to take your focus off Jesus. Commit to wholeheartedly serving Jesus without distraction.  Athlete:  Assess your spiritual discipline. Consider how intentional and disciplined you are in your walk with Jesus. What areas need more focus - your time in God's word, your prayer life, your physical/mental/spiritual training? Make a plan to grow in spiritual discipline. What will you do next?  Farmer:  Evaluate your work ethic. Are you putting in the hard work, sacrifice and perseverance required to see the spiritual harvest God wants to bring? Identify areas that need more diligence and commitment. What could you sow today that could reap a harvest in your life?  Deepen your authentic faith. Spend time in personal reflection and prayer, allowing God to speak to you through His word. Commit to wrestling with tough questions and allowing the Holy Spirit to give you understanding.  **Story from prayer partners - Open Doors. Pray for the persecuted church. *This example can be used within the sermon.***  PRAY WITH AGUNG  Agung\* and his wife chose to follow Jesus, after growing up as Muslims in Java. The decision means they face rejection – but Agung knows it’s worth it: “My name has been taken off the list of family members. I was shunned by others around me. However, you can’t compare any of that to the salvation I received from Jesus.”  Agung started sharing the gospel with Muslims, and this grew into planting house churches.  It comes with great risk. He says, “Both the authorities and extremist Islamists persecute me on multiple occasions. Many people come to my house and drive me to the police station. They slander me. Yet, I can testify how amazing God’s protection is for me and my family!”  You’re helping Agung in his ministry. “I’m very thankful that I met Open Doors partners,” he says.  “With the books they provided for my discipleship groups, I am able to reach hundreds of Muslims and bring them to Jesus. Nothing can stop us because God is with us!”  Please pray:  » That God will open the doors of Agung’s ministry in unreached areas  » Agung’s wife suffered a stroke last year – please pray for the family’s health  » For God’s wisdom and protection for Agung and his family as they disciple and equip house  church leaders. |