

Community Group Sermon Notes



Strength for the Long Road – Pastor Stephen Chang

Series: *Guard the Gospel & Adorn the Truth: The Pastoral Epistles*

Ice Breaker

Think about something worthwhile in your life that required perseverance over a long period of time. What helped you keep going when progress was slow or the experience became difficult?

Read & Reflect on the Scripture Passage – 2 Timothy 2:1-13

Sermon Application Discussion

1. **Receive the Grace — Where does our strength come from? Read 2 Timothy 2:1–2 and 2 Timothy 1:7.**

Paul tells Timothy, “**Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.**” The sermon emphasized that Paul is not simply telling Timothy to toughen up or try harder. The strength he needs comes from Christ.

- What is the difference between relying on your own strength and being strengthened by Christ’s grace?
- Where are you most tempted right now to live as though everything depends on you?
- How might remembering what God has already given you—His grace, power, love, and Spirit—change the way you approach that situation?
- What practices help you regularly receive and depend upon God’s grace?

2. **Entrust It to Others — Who are you helping follow Jesus? Read 2 Timothy 2:2 and Matthew 28:18–20.**

Paul describes a chain of discipleship: the gospel was entrusted to Paul, Paul entrusted it to Timothy, Timothy was to entrust it to faithful people, and they would teach others.

- Who has intentionally invested in your spiritual growth? What difference did that person make in your life?
- Who might God be inviting you to intentionally encourage or disciple?
- What could it look like practically to help someone learn to pray, understand Scripture, or follow Jesus?

3. **Accept the Cost — What might be entangling you? Read 2 Timothy 2:3–4 and Hebrews 12:1–2.**

Paul compares the Christian life to that of a soldier who refuses to become entangled because he wants to please his commanding officer. The sermon pointed out that even good things—comfort, success, reputation, recreation, or other priorities—can become entanglements when they keep us from freely obeying Christ.

- What is the difference between enjoying a good thing and becoming “entangled” by it?
- What priorities, fears, comforts, or desires have the greatest potential to distract you from following Jesus?
- Whose approval are you most tempted to seek?
- Is there something you sense Christ asking you to loosen your grip on so that you can follow Him more freely?

4. **Remain Faithful — What do the athlete and farmer teach us? Read 2 Timothy 2:5–7, Galatians 6:7–10, and 1 Corinthians 15:58.**

The athlete reminds us that **how** we pursue something matters to God. The farmer reminds us that faithful work and visible fruit are often separated by time.

- Where might you be tempted to take a shortcut, compromise your character, or focus more on results than faithfulness?
- Where have you been faithfully “planting” or “watering” without seeing much fruit?
- Why is waiting for God’s timing sometimes difficult?

- How could believing that “your labor in the Lord is not in vain” change the way you approach a relationship, ministry, family situation, or other area where you are waiting?
- Discuss the statement “God requires us to be faithful, not successful.”

5. Remember the King — What truth needs to govern your life? Read 2 Timothy 2:8–13 and Hebrews 12:2–3.

At the center of Paul's encouragement is a simple command: “**Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, descended from David.**” Remembering Jesus means more than knowing facts about Him—it means allowing the truth of who He is to shape the way we interpret our circumstances.

- Why do you think Paul points Timothy to Jesus rather than primarily focusing on Timothy's circumstances?
- What truth about Jesus do you know intellectually but sometimes struggle to live as though it is actually true?
- How does remembering that Jesus is risen and reigning give us strength when life is difficult?
- Looking at verses 8–13, what truth about Jesus gives you the most hope for the “long road” ahead?

Going Deeper

Read 2 Timothy 2:1–13 again slowly. As you read, consider the sermon's three invitations:

1. **Receive the Grace:** Where am I relying primarily on my own strength rather than Christ's? Begin each day this week by asking Jesus for the strength and grace you need for that day.
2. **Accept the Cost:** Consider the soldier, athlete, and farmer. Which picture best describes what God may be teaching you right now—undivided allegiance, obedient faithfulness, or patient perseverance? Write down one practical response you can make this week.
3. **Remember the King:** Memorize **2 Timothy 2:8: “Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, descended from David.”** When you feel discouraged, anxious, weary, or impatient this week, pause and intentionally remember who Jesus is and what is true because He is risen and reigning.

Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You that the strength we need does not ultimately come from ourselves, but from Your grace. Help us lay aside what entangles us, remain faithful when obedience is costly, and persevere when we cannot yet see the fruit of our labor. Keep our eyes fixed on You, our risen and reigning King. Give us courage to faithfully receive the gospel, live it, and entrust it to others. Amen.

Faith in Action

Prayerfully identify one person you can intentionally encourage in following Jesus. Take one simple step this week—pray with them, open Scripture together, invite them into conversation, serve alongside them, or simply reach out and encourage them in their faith.

Discipleship Process

LOVE GOD – Attend Worship: Traditional Service (9:00 AM) & Contemporary Service (10:30 AM).

LOVE OTHERS – Welcome to the 1st week of Community Groups!

SERVE THE WORLD – Plan and put on your calendars your Community Group service project.