

THE PASTORAL EPISTLES: GOD'S DIRECTIVES FOR HIS UNDERSHEPHERDS

III. II Timothy: Church Ministry Amid Hardship

D. Staying Spiritually Strong When Others Fail

(2 Timothy 1:15-2:2)

I. Introduction

- A. Christ in Matthew 13:24-43 taught that a great spiritual war exists in the discipling of people, and those who minister God's Word risk falling for Satan's lures to turn from Biblical beliefs unto error. (2 Timothy 4:1-5)
- B. Thus, in 2 Timothy 1:15-18, Paul reminded Timothy that all his past colleagues in Asia had abandoned him in spiritual failure, what could discourage any servant of God. However, Paul told Timothy to be strong in the grace that is in Christ (2 Timothy 2:1) and to keep discipling (2 Timothy 2:2). We view this passage to learn **how** to stay strong in God's grace amid the failures of colleagues (as follows):

II. Staying Spiritually Strong When Others Fail, 2 Timothy 1:15-2:2.

- A. The Apostle Paul faced the humanly difficult circumstance of seeing many colleagues fail, 2 Timothy 1:15-18:
 1. Paul related how Timothy himself knew that all his past colleagues in ministry from the province of Asia had abandoned him in his sentencing to be executed by the state, 2 Timothy 1:15a; 2 Timothy 4:6. Phygellus and Hermogenes were two of these former colleagues, 2 Timothy 1:15b.
 2. However, a sterling example of faithful support was to be found in the household of Onesiphorus, for he had often refreshed Paul and was not ashamed of His imprisoned condition, and he even searched for Paul earnestly until he had found him to minister to him, 2 Timothy 1:16-17. Indeed, Paul reminded Timothy of all the service Onesiphorus had rendered in Paul's behalf while he was at Ephesus, 2 Timothy 1:18b.
 3. Paul thus desired that the Lord would grant that Onesiphorus might find mercy from God on the Day Christ judged believers at the Judgment Seat of Christ. (2 Timothy 1:18a with 2 Corinthians 5:10)
- B. Thus, Paul directed Timothy on functioning well when he himself faced similar challenges, 2 Timothy 2:1-2:
 1. 2 Timothy 2:1 begins with the word "you" (*su*) in the emphatic position (U. B. S. Grk. N. T., 1966, p. 733), so Paul applied the situation he faced in 1 Timothy 1:15-18 to Timothy and what he also would face.
 2. Thus, for **Timothy's own** benefit amid the failure of many colleagues that Timothy would **also** face, Paul urge that he be strong in the grace that is in Christ, 2 Timothy 2:1. Paul mentioned twelve items of God's grace in Christ Jesus provided for him and for Timothy, so we review them (as follows):
 - a. Timothy was to be strong in the **office** of God given to him, 2 Timothy 1:1a: Paul was appointed to be an apostle, and Timothy held the office of pastor at Ephesus that was given to him by God and accordingly would be sustained by God regardless what difficulties Timothy faced, 1 Timothy 1:3.
 - b. Timothy was to be strong in the **will** of God, 2 Timothy 1:1b: Paul was an apostle by God's will, and Timothy was a pastor by God's will, so Timothy could rely on God to support him in his role as a pastor.
 - c. Timothy was to be strong in the **authority** of God Whom He served, 2 Timothy 1:3a.
 - d. Timothy was to be strong in the **spiritual gift** for supernatural service God had given him, 2 Tim. 1:6.
 - e. Timothy was to be strong in the **Spirit of God** by Whom he ministered as a pastor, 2 Timothy 1:7a.
 - f. Timothy was to be strong in the **Spirit's power** in exercising **power, love** and **self-discipline**, v. 7b.
 - g. Timothy was to be strong in the **Holy Spirit's power** in **suffering for the Gospel**, 2 Timothy 1:8.
 - h. Timothy was to be strong in the **calling** he had to the ministry as it was of God, 2 Timothy 1:9a.
 - i. Timothy was to be strong in the **purpose** and **grace** of God given to him in Christ **before the beginning of time**, knowing that what hardships he faced, they still were not beyond God's plan for him, 2 Tim. 1:9b.
 - j. Timothy was to be strong in the **salvation Gospel** of God he was to preach, 2 Timothy 1:10.
 - k. Timothy was to be strong in the **standard** of **sound words** he received of the apostles, 2 Timothy 1:13.
 - l. Timothy was to be strong in **guarding** his **theological accuracy** by the **Holy Spirit's power**, v. 14.
 3. Second, for the benefit of the Church universal, Timothy was to entrust the teachings he had heard from Paul among many witnesses to faithful men who would be able to teach others also, 2 Tim. 2:2. Paul had implied through the good example of Onesiphorus that Timothy, too, would find men with similar sterling faithfulness to whom Timothy himself was to commit valuable Biblical truths for the discipling of others.

Lesson: *Amid the spiritual failure of many other colleagues, Paul taught Timothy to be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and thus positioned, to remain committed to discipling faithful men to disciple still others.*

Application: *Amid the failure of many others, may we stay strong in the grace that is in Christ and keep discipling.*